

**FISHERIES DISASTER RELIEF PROGRAM (FDRP)
ANNUAL REPORT FOR FY 2007**

P.I. Name: Keith Bigelow

P.I. Address: NMFS, Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center, Honolulu

FDRP Project Title and Project No.: Depth and Habitat Exploited by the American Samoa-based Longline Fishery (#657789)

Funding Agency: NOAA

1. Purpose of the Project (one paragraph)

Two research topics are being conducted to improve the understanding of longline fishing in A. Samoa: 1) deployment of time-depth recorders to define the variability in longline gear depth and 2) the relationship between longline gear depth and associated pelagic species such as the target species (albacore), other tuna and billfish species, bycatch species and protected species. The project deploys time-depth recorders (TDRs) by at-sea observers to document longline gear depth and habitat exploited by the pelagic longline fishery based in American Samoa.

2. Progress during FY 2007 (One-two paragraphs, including a comparison of the actual accomplishments to the objectives established for the period, and the reasons for slippage if established objectives were not met):

Twenty (20) TDRs were procured and distributed to the NOAA Fisheries observer program in Pago Pago, A. Samoa. Scientific observers commenced TDR deployment in December 2006. As of June 2007, longline depth was estimated on more than 100 longline sets on five longline fishing trips. Data transfer is efficient as data are downloaded by the NOAA Fisheries Port Coordinator and emailed to the Principal Investigator.

Objective 1 is ongoing with only two problems: one TDR malfunctioned and another was lost at sea due to the mainline parting. Objective 2 will commence when at least 15 longline trips have been completed and the corresponding observer data forms have been entered into the observer database and transferred to the Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center.

3. Plans for project completion:
February 2008

4. List of papers published in refereed journals during FY 2007.
None

5. Other papers, technical reports, meeting presentations, etc.
None