



**NOAA** NATIONAL OCEANIC AND  
ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

## ***Announcing Fisheries Law Enforcement Complaint e-Hotline***

September 27, 2010

NOAA is committed to improving its communications with its constituents and stakeholders, even if it means hearing their complaints. Issues surrounding law enforcement are sensitive, and fishermen may be afraid to come forward to report problems. NOAA already has a web site for the public to provide information involving current investigations or to report possible violations of law (<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ole/cc.html>), and an Enforcement Hotline that is operational 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (1-800-853-1964).

In order to provide further protection to anyone who has information regarding enforcement improprieties by NOAA's Office of Law Enforcement or enforcement attorneys, NOAA will establish another hotline – this one specifically to report unfair or overzealous enforcement actions or other breaches of conduct by NOAA enforcement agents or attorneys. This Enforcement Complaint e-Hotline will be a link on the NOAA homepage that will allow stakeholders to report any issues to NOAA management through a specific email address ([OLE.ComplaintHotline@noaa.gov](mailto:OLE.ComplaintHotline@noaa.gov)) that will go directly to NOAA Headquarters. Any complaints received will be reviewed at Headquarters and, as necessary, investigated further. This should provide fishermen and other members of the regulated community a mechanism for raising issues about NOAA law enforcement without fear of reprisal. NOAA will evaluate the effectiveness of the Enforcement Complaint Hotline after one year to ensure that it is providing an appropriate outlet for enforcement complaints. If it is not working, NOAA will take additional actions to ensure that if the regulated community has issues with NOAA enforcement, they will be heard.