

WCGOP Training Requirements

New Trainees

All new observer trainees must attend a 15-day training provided by the West Coast Groundfish Observer Program (WCGOP), fully participate during classroom exercises, and achieve minimum performance standards as set by the WCGOP. The purpose of the training is for trainees to gain an understanding of how to collect fishery data which can be used to manage the groundfish stocks on the West Coast. Trainees will learn how to work efficiently under the strenuous conditions of commercial fishing vessels. In general, the training consists of an intensive overview of commercial fishing gear and strategies, sampling protocols, safety at sea, and identification of fish, invertebrates, birds, and mammals of the West Coast. Trainees must pass a series of tests with a minimum score of 80 percent. Additionally, several homework assignments must be completed accurately and on time. Through the exams and homework trainees will demonstrate their understanding of, and ability to apply the following concepts:

- Observer priorities and duties
- Methods of independent catch estimation
- Proper recording of catch data
- Methods of sampling and recording species composition data
- Fish identification and use of dichotomous keys
- Gender determination and measurements of fish and crab
- Procedures for collection of biological structures
- Safety and survival skills

Trainees must also meet the following classroom and safety requirements to pass the training.

Classroom Training Requirements include:

- Arrive for training on time and participate in all in-class lectures and assignments.
- Successfully complete all homework assignments and make any corrections requested by trainers.
- Pass a final exam with a minimum score of 80%.
- Pass a fish identification exam with a minimum overall score of 80%, and correctly identify:
 - 4 of 7 rockfish species
 - 2 of 4 flatfish species
 - 5 of 9 miscellaneous fish species
 - 1 of 3 invertebrate species

The Safety Training Requirements include at minimum:

- Arrive for training on time and participate in all in-class lectures and assignments.
- Demonstrate the proper way to test an EPIRB.
- Properly hook up a hydrostatic release.
- Properly don an immersion suit, dry within 60 seconds.
- Demonstrate proper jumping techniques for entering the water while wearing an immersion suit.
- Participate in drills, including Fire, Flooding, Man Overboard, and Abandon Ship.
- Participate in water exercises.

WCGOP Training Requirements

- Demonstrate proper flare firing.
- Additional activities and exercises.

Additionally, new trainees must be able to demonstrate to the instructor that they have the attitude and ability required to perform a difficult job, independently, and to act professionally in stressful situations.

Returning Observers/ Briefings

Observers who have completed a prior contract and whose certification is still valid will be required to fulfill, at a minimum, the following:

- Arrive for training on time and attend a WCGOP briefing in its entirety.
- Successfully complete all homework assignments and make any corrections requested by trainers.
- Pass a fish identification exam with the same requirements as detailed for New Trainees.
- Successfully complete all safety training requirements as detailed for New Trainees.

New Trainees and Returning Observers/Briefings

If for any reason the requirements are not met, the trainee may be re-tested in some areas of the training. Additional homework may be assigned if a trainer does not feel homework was completed adequately. One make-up exam may be given for the fish identification exam, provided that the first test resulted in a score of no lower than 64%. Make-up fish identification exams will be held starting at **noon** on the next BUSINESS day that staff is available.

New Trainees who fail the make-up fish identification exam will not pass training. Trainees are eligible to attend the next full training.

Returning Observers who fail the first fish identification exam will be required to complete new species identification forms for all species. Failing the make-up exam fails the briefing and the observer may no longer deploy. The species identification requirement may only be fulfilled by attending all fish lectures and fish labs during the next full observer training and by passing a fish identification test.

Safety requirements can be fulfilled at the discretion of the WCGOP safety training team on a case by case basis.

There will be no make-up for other exams. Speak to the lead trainer if reasonable accommodations are required for any portion of the training.

X Printed Name: _____ X Date: _____

X Signature: _____