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ABSTRACT

An evaluation of the US Coast Guard's domestic fishery enforcement strategy

The US Coast Guard is the lead agency responsible for at sea enforcement of federal fisheries law spanning the entire US exclusive economic zone. To determine its effectiveness in this mission, the Coast Guard calculates a compliance rate based on the percent of law enforcement boardings that do not reveal a significant violation. Historically, this compliance rate has been reported in the upper 90th percentile. This discussion will explore some factors that may explain the high compliance rates which appear to be inconsistent with Becker's (1967) equation to calculate the expected utility of a crime. The seminar will conclude with a demonstration of initial data collection followed by future research plans to improve the U.S. Coast Guard's ability to detect and successfully prosecute fisheries violations.