

RCW 77.15.552 Qualifying commercial fishing violations. (1) If a person is convicted of two or more qualifying commercial fishing violations within a three-year period, the person's privileges to participate in the commercial fishery to which the violations applied may be suspended by the director for up to one year. A commercial fishery license that is suspended under this section may not be transferred after the director issues a notice of suspension, or used by an alternative operator or transferred during the period of suspension, if the person who is the subject of the suspension notice is the person who owns the commercial fishery license.

(2) For the purposes of this section only, "qualifying commercial fishing violation" means either:

(a) A conviction under RCW 77.15.500, 77.15.510, 77.15.520, 77.15.530, 77.15.550(1)(a), 77.15.570, 77.15.580, or 77.15.590;

(b) A gross misdemeanor or felony involving commercial fish harvesting, buying, or selling that is unlawful under the terms of the license, this title, or the rules issued pursuant to this title, if the quantity of unlawfully harvested, possessed, bought, or sold fish, other than shellfish, groundfish, or coastal pelagic species of baitfish totals greater than six percent, by weight, of the harvest available for inspection at the time of citation and the cumulative value of the unlawfully harvested fish is more than two hundred fifty dollars at the time of citation;

(c) A gross misdemeanor or felony involving commercial groundfish or coastal pelagic baitfish harvest, buying, or selling that is unlawful under the terms of the license, this title, or the rules issued under this title, if: (i) The quantity of unlawfully harvested, possessed, bought, or sold groundfish or coastal pelagic baitfish totals greater than ten percent, by weight, of the harvest available for inspection at the time of citation and has a cumulative value greater than five hundred dollars; or (ii) the quantity, by weight, of the unlawfully commercially harvested groundfish or coastal pelagic baitfish is ten percent greater than the landing allowances provided under rules adopted by the department for species categorized as overfished by the national marine fisheries service; or

(d) A gross misdemeanor or felony involving commercial shellfish harvesting, buying, or selling that is unlawful under the terms of the license, this title, or the rules issued pursuant to this title, if the quantity of unlawfully harvested, possessed, bought, or sold shellfish: (i) Totals greater than six percent of the harvest available for inspection at the time of citation; and (ii) totals fifty or more individual shellfish.

(3) (a) The director may refer a person convicted of one qualifying commercial fishing violation to the license suspension review committee if the director feels that the qualifying commercial fishing violation was of a severe enough magnitude to justify suspension of the individual's license renewal privileges.

(b) The director may refer any person convicted of one egregious shellfish violation to the license suspension review committee.

(c) For the purposes of this section only, "egregious shellfish violation" means a gross misdemeanor or felony involving commercial shellfish harvesting, buying, or selling that is unlawful under the terms of the license, this title, or the rules issued pursuant to this title, if the quantity of unlawfully harvested, possessed, bought, or sold shellfish: (i) Totals more than twenty percent of the harvest available for inspection at the time of citation; (ii) totals five

hundred or more individual shellfish; and (iii) is valued at two thousand five hundred dollars or more.

(4) A person who has a commercial fishing license suspended or revoked under this section may file an appeal with the license suspension review committee pursuant to RCW 77.15.554. An appeal must be filed within thirty-one days of notice of license suspension or revocation. If an appeal is filed, the suspension or revocation issued by the department does not take effect until after the license suspension review committee has delivered an opinion. If no appeal is filed within thirty-one days of notice of license suspension or revocation, the right to an appeal is considered waived. All suspensions ordered under this section take effect either thirty-one days following the conviction for the second qualifying commercial fishing violation, or upon a decision pursuant to RCW 77.15.554, whichever is later.

(5) A fishing privilege suspended under this section is in addition to the statutory penalties assigned to the underlying crime.

(6) For the purposes of this section only, the burden is on the state to show the dollar amount or the percent of a harvest that is comprised of unlawfully harvested, bought, or sold individual fish or shellfish. [2003 c 386 § 3.]

Findings—Intent—2003 c 386: See note following RCW 77.15.700.