VyRal

A LeakReceipts Field Guide

LeakReceipts for Commercial Fishing

The Field Guide: where the money leaks, how to prove it, and how to close it

For: Commercial Fisherman — Dock Settlement

by VyRal Dynasty

LeakReceipts for Commercial Fishing The Field Guide: where the money leaks, how to prove it, and how to close it

First edition, November 2026, revised 12 November 2026. Built from VyRal's lane research as it stood on 11 November 2026.

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How every number in this book is labeled.

- **VERIFIED** means the figure comes from a named, dated source, and the source is printed next to it.
- **CALCULATED** means it is arithmetic on verified numbers or on your own numbers, and the math is shown.
- **ESTIMATE** means a reasoned range, and it is always called one.
- **STRUCTURAL** marks a standing rule of the trade (a law, a contract term, how the paperwork works), not a market figure.
- **STILL BEING MEASURED** means VyRal has not verified a figure yet, so no number is printed.

If a number is not labeled, it is a blank for you to fill from your own paper.

What this book is not. This is education, not legal, tax, accounting or financial advice. Where a fix says a professional decides, a professional decides. Nothing here says that any company, customer or person did anything wrong. The fixes show you how to check your own paper and ask in writing.

About how this book was made. This book was assembled with AI from VyRal's sourced research on this trade and checked against those sources. AI can make mistakes. Before you act on a figure, check it against the source printed beside it. Rules and rates change, and every figure carries its date for that reason.

Before you share any document with anyone, Vera included, black out account numbers, Social Security numbers and anything else you would not hand a stranger.

Contents

1. The short answer for your trade
2. What people in your trade say hurts
3. Get your paper together
4. Leak 1: 1099 Box 5 — 'Fishing Boat Proceeds,' Not a Wage
5. Leak 2: No Written Share Agreement Required Below 20 Gross Tons
6. Leak 3: Wage-Job Floor for Comparison: $17.61/hr
7. Leak 4: The Grader Is the Buyer
8. Leak 5: The Permit or Quota Is the Wall, Not the Boat
9. Leak 6: Self-Employment Tax on Every Settlement (SECA)
10. Leak 7: The Boat Itself Is Never the Leak
11. Leak 8: A Quota Lease Charge Can Come Off the Top of Your Settlement
12. Grow it: the next rung
13. The household side: TrueNET
14. Your 30-day leak plan
15. Take it into LeakReceipts
16. Sources
17. Your leak log

The short answer for your trade

The dealer who buys your catch also grades it and calculates your settlement — and in most ports there's no public grading standard and no outside referee checking whether the number on your check matches the fish you brought in.

Your leak map

Every leak this book covers, biggest first. The size grade is VyRal's research grade for how much money a leak tends to move in this trade. It is a grade, not a dollar figure. Your own paper sets the dollars.

#	Leak	Size grade	Evidence	Fixes
1	1099 Box 5 — 'Fishing Boat Proceeds,' Not a Wage	Significant	VERIFIED	1
2	No Written Share Agreement Required Below 20 Gross Tons	Significant	VERIFIED	1
3	Wage-Job Floor for Comparison: $17.61/hr	Moderate	VERIFIED	1
4	The Grader Is the Buyer	Major	STRUCTURAL	1
5	The Permit or Quota Is the Wall, Not the Boat	Major	STRUCTURAL	1
6	Self-Employment Tax on Every Settlement (SECA)	Not graded	STRUCTURAL	1
7	The Boat Itself Is Never the Leak	Not graded	STRUCTURAL	1
8	A Quota Lease Charge Can Come Off the Top of Your Settlement	Major	STILL BEING MEASURED	1

What people in your trade say hurts

Before we built a single fix, we went and read what people in this trade say out loud: forums, trade press, regulators' complaint files and court records. These are the pains that kept coming up, the ones with the most sources first. If one of them is yours, you're not imagining it.

Fuel comes off the top before my crew share, so high diesel cuts my pay

On most boats, fuel, ice and food are taken out of the catch before shares are split. When dock diesel jumps, every deckhand's share shrinks, even if the catch is the same. Some boats now stay tied up.

Found in 13 public sources; newest dated 2026-10-25. VERIFIED count from VyRal's public research log; the sources are listed at the back.

I deliver my fish without knowing the price, and the buyer tells me what I got later

In many fisheries the buyer sets the dock price, sometimes after I've delivered. Under Bristol Bay's open-ticket system the price is blank at delivery, the base price comes mid-season and any bonus the next spring. Crabbers have alleged in court that big buyers coordinate the opening price.

Found in 8 public sources; newest dated 2026-08-13. VERIFIED count from VyRal's public research log; the sources are listed at the back.

I fished on a handshake share, and when settlement came the deductions and retro money didn't add up

Crew get a percentage of what's left, and what counts as a shared cost is up to the boat unless it's in writing. Alaska's labor department says that without a written crew contract it can help only so much. Whether crew get any retro price bonus depends on the contract wording, and things like a blown engine or lost net are a known gray zone.

Found in 4 public sources; newest dated 2026-09-20. VERIFIED count from VyRal's public research log; the sources are listed at the back.

I sold my catch, then the buyer went under and my check bounced

Fishermen are unsecured creditors of the dealers and processors they sell to. When a buyer fails, harvesters can be owed thousands each and wait in

bankruptcy with nothing to show. It happens with small dealers and big processors alike.

Found in 4 public sources; newest dated 2026-02-20. VERIFIED count from VyRal's public research log; the sources are listed at the back.

Get your paper together

Every fix in this book starts with paper, not memory. Memory rounds in the other side's favor. Paper doesn't.

Pull the last 90 days. Put it all in one folder, paper or phone, and label each piece with its date. Black out account numbers and Social Security numbers before you share anything with anyone.

The paper that proves each leak:

- Your contracts, invoices, statements, pay records and the messages around them.

My folder checklist

Last 90 days of statements or pay records _____

Every contract or agreement I work under _____

Every invoice, ticket or settlement for the same 90 days _____

The messages that changed a price, a scope or a date _____

Leak 1: 1099 Box 5 — 'Fishing Boat Proceeds,' Not a Wage

Size grade: Significant · Evidence: VERIFIED

What it is. When a boat runs an average crew of fewer than 10 over the year, the operator reports each crew member's pay in Box 5 of Form 1099-MISC as 'Fishing Boat Proceeds' — your percentage of the catch, cash and in-kind, not a wage.

Why it leaks. Because your income is filed as a share of proceeds instead of a wage, there's no pay stub and no unbiased third party confirming the percentage you were promised is the percentage you actually got.

The number to hold it against. Fishing boat proceeds are reported on Form 1099-MISC when the boat's average operating crew is under 10 over the prior four calendar quarters; crew statements are due Jan 31, IRS filing Feb 28 (paper) or Mar 31 (electronic). Source: IRS 1099-MISC/NEC Instructions, rev. Dec 2026; 26 CFR §1.6050A-1.

VERIFIED · Primary — government or regulator

> **Ask yourself:** Does the percentage on your 1099-MISC Box 5 match the share you were actually told you'd receive?

1. 1099-MISC Box 5 is the only third-party record of your share - and nobody checks it

Fix approved · leak evidence: Verified

Fix 1 — Do it yourself (free).

1. When your 1099-MISC arrives (it is due to you by January 31), find Box 5, 'Fishing boat proceeds.'
2. Add up every settlement for the year from your own sheets.
3. Compare. If Box 5 is higher or lower than what you were paid, write down the gap.
4. Ask the boat operator, in writing, how Box 5 was figured.
5. If it's wrong, ask for a corrected form. Give your preparer both the form and your totals.

Fix 2 — The words to send, under your own name. Fill in the brackets, keep a copy, and send it from your own email or by mail. Nobody sends it for you.

Letter to the boat operator:

Dear [OPERATOR NAME],

My [YEAR] Form 1099-MISC from [BOAT / COMPANY NAME] shows [AMOUNT] in Box 5, Fishing boat proceeds. My settlement sheets for the year total [AMOUNT] (copies attached).

Could you send me the breakdown behind the Box 5 amount, trip by trip? If the form is off, please send a corrected 1099-MISC.

Thank you,
[YOUR NAME]
[ADDRESS] | [PHONE]

Fix 3 — Done for you. **LeakReceipts · Statement Audit**

WE DO: add up your settlement sheets, compare them to Box 5, and draft the request if they don't match. YOU DO: send it and give the final numbers to your preparer.

Keep it closed. Keep every settlement sheet all year so the 1099 can be checked the day it arrives.

What this fix can't decide for you. How to report the income is the preparer's call. We don't say the operator filed wrong - only whether the numbers match.

My receipt for this leak			
Owed by my paper	Paid or billed	Gap (CALCULATED: owed – paid)	Fix 2 sent · answer

FREE FIRST CHAPTER

That's Leak 1 of 8.

The full Field Guide for Commercial Fishing walks through every leak on the map you just read: why it happens, the paper that proves it, and three fixes for each one — one you do yourself for free, the words to send under your own name, and what LeakReceipts can do for you while the decision stays yours.

Get the full guide:
leakreceipts.com/ebooks/commercial-fishing

Run it on your own numbers:
leakreceipts.com

WE WALK BY FAITH NOT BY SIGHT — 2 Corinthians 5:7