



**TECHNICAL AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE**  
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**INFORMATION PAPER ON A COOPERATIVE MONITORING, CONTROL  
AND SURVEILLANCE ACTIVITY IN THE WESTERN AND CENTRAL  
PACIFIC FISHERIES COMMISSION CONVENTION AREA OPERATION  
NASSE 2022**

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Paper submitted by New Zealand on behalf of Australia, France, New Zealand and the United States



# Summary of High Seas Boarding Activities – Operation Nasse 2022 (Op Nasse 22)



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Australian Fisheries Management Authority

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# Contesnts

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# 1 Executive Summary

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Operation Nasse (Op Nasse 22) is an annual multi-lateral regional maritime Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) operation between Australia, France, New Zealand and the United States of America (referred as the Pacific Quad). Operation Nasse has been conducted annually in the high seas of the south west Pacific Ocean since 2015, with the United States joining in 2016. Op Nasse 22 was the first time since 2019 where New Zealand had undertaken High Seas Boardings and Inspections (HSB&Is) in the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) Convention Area. French surface assets also participated after not being available during Op Nasse 21.

Op Nasse 22 focused on the management of Highly Migratory fish species managed under the WCPFC. Annually between May to September, many longline vessels licenced to the WCPFC, target tuna species on the high seas adjacent to the Australian (including Norfolk Island), the French Territories (New Caledonia and French Polynesia), Fijian, New Zealand, Tongan, Niuean, and Cook Islands exclusive economic zones (EEZs). During Op Nasse 22, the Joint Coordination Centre (JCC) was established in New Caledonia. Previous operations have seen the JCC being held virtually due to COVID-19.

During Op Nasse 22, Pacific Quad Partners conducted HSB&Is, identifying potential breaches of the WCPFC Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs) and Resolutions. Common themes of potential non-compliance included issues with shark retention (CMM 2019-04), use of seabird mitigation measures (CMM 2018-03), and concerns of poor labour standards (Resolution 2018-01). Additionally, joint aerial surveillance of the Op Nasse Area of Operation (AO) and the wider WCPFC convention area, identified a total of 229 fishing vessels. Vessel analysis remains ongoing however several of vessel examined appear to have potential issues with their deployment and use of seabird mitigation measures – specifically tori lines (as specified by CMM 2018-03, Annex 1).

The information obtained from Op Nasse 22, will be used to improve understanding of current fishing practices and to compile intelligence reports about fishing activity occurring on the high seas.

## 2 Aims

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The overall objective of Op Nasse 22 was to support fisheries management objectives by:

- Deterring Illegal, Unregulated or Unreported (IUU) fishing activity.
- Monitoring fishing operator compliance to the WCPFC CMMs.
- Gathering and validating information being reported to the WCPFC. And,
- Continuing to improve MCS tools and multi-lateral communications to support regional and national efforts.

### 3 Operation Coordination

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The Op Nasse 22 Joint Coordination Centre (JCC) was established at the French Armed Forces Headquarters in Noumea, French New Caledonia. The role of the JCC was to coordinate the regional surveillance effort, analyse fishing vessel activity, and provide recommendations and intelligence for individual asset response.

The JCC was staffed with personnel from Op Nasse 22 participating countries and included analysts from the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA), French Armed Forces New Caledonia (FANC), the New Zealand Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI), and the United States Coast Guard (USCG).

#### 3.1 Area of Operation (AO)

The Op Nasse 22 AO is the high seas areas adjacent to the exclusive economic zones (EEZs) of the French Territories (New Caledonia and French Polynesia), Australia (which includes Norfolk Island), Fiji, New Zealand, Tonga, Niue, and the Cook Islands (*Figure 1*).

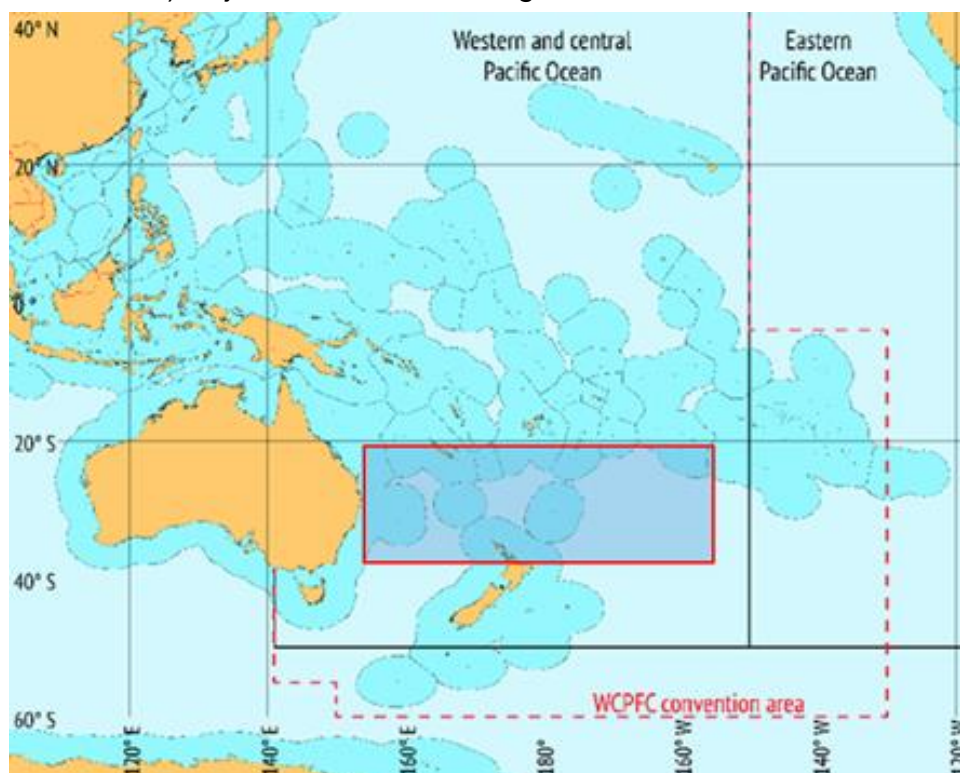


Figure 1. Op Nasse Area of Operation

### 4 Results

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During Op Nasse 22, Pacific Quad Partners completed HSB&Is and radio interrogations (without boarding) of fishing vessels in the WCPFC Convention Area. All fishing and carrier vessels inspected during Op Nasse 22 were cooperative with the inspecting Officers with and were correctly licenced to the WCPFC. Vessels which were inspected were flagged to China, Chinese-Taipei, Fiji, Panama, and Vanuatu.

In total **19** potential breaches of the WCPFC CMM and Resolutions were identified. A summary of potential breaches can be found at *Annex A, Table 1*.

Four common themes of potential non-compliance were identified during Op Nasse 22 HSB&Is, including:

- a. **CMM 2019-04 (Sharks).** During a HSB&I, Authorised Officers were unable to easily identify shark carcasses and the corresponding fins as required by CMM 2019-04 (full utilisation and prohibition on shark finning).
- b. **CMM 2018-03 (Mitigate the impact of fishing on seabirds).** CMM 2018-03 Annex 1, specifies the requirements for seabird mitigation measures for fishing vessels. Several fishing vessels inspected were observed to have potential compliance issues with their on board seabird mitigation measures, notably concerning tori line streamer lengths (vessels >35m). The reporting of seabirds interactions by vessels within the WCPFC Convention Area also remains a significant information gap and is a priority area of focus during inspections and aerial surveillance.
- c. **CMM 2013-05 (Daily Catch and Effort Reporting).** Authorised Officers examined Daily Catch and Effort Records for the month proceeding each HSB&I. During two inspections, fishing crew stated that sharks were cut from lines when caught however, no record of sharks (or other protected species) were sighted in their Catch and Effort Records. While Authorised Officers did not sight the capture of sharks during their HSB&I, WCPFC Scientific Data to be Provided to the Commission, requires all sharks which are caught to be recorded in the Daily Catch and Effort Records. Pursuant to CMM 2006-08, the failure to complete and provide accurate catch records is considered a serious violation.
- d. **WCPFC Resolution 2018-01 (Labour Standards for Crew on Fishing Vessels).** Authorised Officers documented and raised concerns of poor labour standards on one fishing vessel. Allegations by crew included instances of abuse, withholding of food and salary for non-working, and poor living conditions whilst on board the vessels. Further enquiries are ongoing to determine the extent of the allegations.

## Annex A. Inspection Outcomes

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### Summarised potential non-Compliance of WCPFC CMMs detected during Op Nasse 22 HSB&I

Potential Breaches	Total
CMM 2004-03 Vessel Markings and Specifications	1
CMM 2009-09 Vessels without Nationality	1
CMM 2013-05 Daily Catch and Effort Reporting	2
CMM 2017-04 Marine Pollution	1
CMM 2018-03 Seabirds	10
*Resolution 2018-01 Labour Standards	3
CMM 2019-04 Sharks	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>19</b>

Table 1 – Potential Breaches of WCPFC CMMs & Resoluti