



**COMMISSION
NINETEENTH REGULAR SESSION**
Da Nang City, Vietnam
28 November to 3 December 2022

Letter to Commission - VMS

**WCPFC19-2022-DP16
28 November 2022**

Government of Philippines



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Agriculture
BUREAU OF FISHERIES AND AQUATIC RESOURCES
Fisheries Building Complex, Bureau of Plant Industry Compound,
Visayas Ave., Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. No. 929-8074 | do@bfar.da.gov.ph | records@bfar.da.gov.ph

November 27, 2022

MR. FELETI TEO
Executive Director
Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
Kaselehlle Street, P.O Box 2356
Kolonia, Pohnpei State, 96941
Federated States of Micronesia

Attention : **MR. ALBERT CARLOT**
VMS Manager, WCPFC

Dear Executive Director Teo:

This is with regard with the impending removal of ARGOS units from the WCPFC approved ALC/MTU list by January 1, 2023, as provided for in Annex 1 of CMM 2014-02.

As you are very much aware, the Philippines is implementing the Integrated Marine Environment Monitoring System (IMEMS) Project for the enhancement of our VMS capability. Part of the project is the installation of transceivers the VMS-100Si to Philippine-flagged fishing vessels operating in domestic and distant waters including the high seas. The intention is to use these VMS-100Si as replacement for all the expiring ARGOS ALC/MTU, come January 1, 2023.

With the conclusion of VMS-100si trial last October 2022, we have been very hopeful that these units will be ready for the use of some of the vessels as replacement for the expiring ARGOS ALC/MTU. Recently however, on 18 November 2022, the VMS Manager advised the Philippines Service Provider that the approval has yet to be circulated to CCMs for the 30-day notification for type approval.

To our mind, situation is now complicated as the decision on the replacement units that we installed on some vessels operating in the convention area is still pending with the Commission. If the Commission so decides to approve the units (of VMS-100Si) before January 1, 2023, then our vessels will be compliant with the Commission rules.

If this is not the case, around 45 of our support vessels that are currently operating in the high-seas will be reporting their positions with two (2) units of transponders, one expired (ARGOS ALC/MTU) and one (VMS-100Si) that is not recognized/approved. We are concerned on the impracticability to advice our vessels to acquire and install a new approved unit as we are expecting for the VMS 100si approval, having completed all the technical requirements. Besides, the replacement will be extremely costly and difficult, all of them are currently in the high seas.

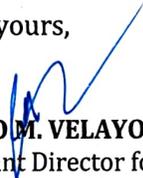


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In this regard, we are constrained to respectfully request for limited extension for the replacement of these ARGOS units pending the decision of the Commission on the approval of VMS-100Si. The requested limited extension will cover only the support vessels that are operating in high seas pocket 1.

Thank you and hoping for the consideration of the Commission.

Truly yours,


ISIDRO M. VELAYO, JR.
Assistant Director for Technical Services
PH Head of Delegation to WCPFC19