Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission

TECHNICAL AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE
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SUPPORTING CCMS WITH TECHNICAL AND COMPLIANCE MATTERS

WCPFC-TCC21-2025-22
8 September 2025

Submitted by the Secretariat

Purpose

1. This paper updates TCC21 on the Secretariat's outreach efforts and support activities to CCMs during 2024 and in the first three quarters of 2025.

2. In addition to informing on recent achievements, this paper outlines ongoing implementation efforts and future priorities to strengthen CCM capacity in relation to technical and compliance matters. The Secretariat invites guidance from CCMs on areas where further support would be most beneficial.

Background

3. In 2023, the Secretariat was tasked with updating and maintaining Annual Reporting Guidance to provide CCMs with greater clarity on reporting requirements for future TCC consideration (WCPFC-TCC19-2023-19, Annex 2). In 2024, TCC20 completed the guidance for CCMs on how to respond to obligations in Annual Report Part 2 (AR Pt2) and the Compliance Monitoring Report (CMR), noting it was to remain a living document and would be updated as required.

4. In 2024, the Secretariat updated TCC on IT upgrades, training, and guidance provided to CCMs in 2023 and CCMs recommended that this support continue.[1] In its 2025 – 2027 workplan, TCC has also identified a priority area of work in the ongoing development of training resources and learning aids for the Information Management System (IMS), and tasked the Secretariat to explore the development of training videos.

5. In 2024, the Secretariat commenced a phased restructuring of the Secretariat's Compliance team with the objective of realigning workloads to match the current and emerging needs of the Commission, including the need to strengthen the Secretariat's support for CCMs in meeting technical and compliance obligations. One of the key outcomes of the restructuring was the establishment of a dedicated CCM Support Officer to coordinate assistance, support the routine maintenance of the Helpdesk online tools, and support the development of practical training and guidance tools for CCMs and Secretariat staff. In addition, a Fisheries Management and Compliance Adviser position was

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[1] *Supporting CCMs with Technical and Compliance Matters* (TCC20-2024-27 - dated 29 August 2024) – prepared by the Secretariat.

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created to broaden the Compliance Team's capacity to deliver support across compliance, monitoring, and fisheries management workstreams.

6. These new roles complement the wider restructuring of the Compliance and MCS Operations which had the objective of leveraging the Commission's vast data holdings and established monitoring systems to support CCM's strengthened decision making. Other outcomes of the restructuring include:

   a. three Vessel Management Officers who are responsible for working more directly with CCMs to ensure data on the RFV (including VMS data) is accurate and up-to-date, and for addressing vessel activity-related issues, including reporting activities in High Seas Pocket One.

   b. two Reporting Analysts who are responsible for managing reporting related to transhipment and high seas boarding and inspections activities, supporting the online Compliance Case file system, and managing other required reporting arising from various CMMs; and

   c. two Data Technicians who support the Compliance and MCS Operations staff and the Fisheries Management and Compliance Adviser by ensuring that data submissions from CCMs to the Secretariat are connected with, and available to CCMs through the relevant Compliance workstreams for their routine tasks to identify reporting gaps and discrepancies in near-real time monitoring. These data sets are also used in summaries presented in Annual Reports to TCC and in the draft CMR.

7. In 2025, the Commission approved a budget for the Secretariat to continue developing and releasing IT enhancements to improve CCMs' user experience with online monitoring and reporting processes, including the Secretariat's internal processes. Since 2023, the Secretariat has also received annual voluntary funding from Canada, which was used to progress work in two areas: development of learning resources and development of a dashboard to support CCMs in meeting their reporting obligations.

8. Cross-team collaboration and integrated workflows within the Secretariat's Compliance Team have strengthened the flexible deployment of existing resources, ensuring that CCMs receive the required level of support. Outreach and maintenance of learning resources/guides is now a routine practice for the Secretariat. The team also aims to strengthen its ability to support and enhance communication with CCMs and partner agencies as needed.

9. Developments during 2024 and in the first three quarters of 2025 relating to the Secretariat's outreach efforts, hosting of attachments, and development of online Helpdesk support materials are outlined below. Updates are also provided on new initiatives currently in progress.

Secretariat outreach

10. During 2025, the Secretariat maintained an active and flexible programme of outreach to support CCMs to meet their compliance and reporting responsibilities. This was particularly important following the April 2024 release of the Monitoring and Evaluation (MandE) online system, which included a fully upgraded AR Pt2 platform supported by enhancements to the CMM webpage on the WCPFC website.

11. Additionally, recent IT upgrades and associated training resources have focused on enhancing CCM's use of these systems, as well as assisting them in responding to Audit Points. A summary of key enhancements delivered by the Secretariat since TCC20 is provided in Attachment 1 to the TCC21 Executive Director's Annual Report on Technical and Compliance Matters.

12. In addition to ad hoc online discussions, familiarization and orientation sessions were delivered to many CCMs on the following topics:

    a. RFV and VMS Familiarization – Bahamas, Fiji, Nauru, Philippines, Solomon Islands, Chinese Taipei

    b. CCFS Familiarization – Fiji, Nauru, PNAO, Solomon Islands, Chinese Taipei, United States, and FFA CCMs attending FFA MCS Working Group.

    c. Overview of WCPFC Website – Fiji, Solomon Islands

    d. Annual Reporting Process (AR Pt2 and CMR) – Fiji, Nauru, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Chinese Taipei, United States, FFA CCMs attending FFA MCS Working Group, and PNA CCMs attending PNA Compliance Workshop.

13. Participants included compliance officers, national monitoring center staff, vessel licensing and monitoring personnel, port and MCS officials, and systems administrators. Several administrations also requested assistance for new staff involved in WCPFC matters.

14. Several CCMs engaged multiple times in 2024 and 2025 as part of ongoing system rollouts or in preparation for annual reporting. These sessions improved understanding of system functionality, strengthened reporting quality and consistency, and helped reduce downstream compliance risks.

15. In 2025, the Secretariat's CCM Support Officer commenced in the role of coordinating and tracking the assistance delivered by the Compliance Team to CCMs, supporting Compliance and MCS Operations staff in delivering online training sessions to CCMs, and coordinating the review and update of Helpdesk online guides. The Secretariat will continue to maintain a flexible outreach approach to meet individual CCM needs, while progressively embedding new tools and processes into its training framework. The ongoing aim is to improve system usability, build institutional capacity, and support timely and accurate compliance reporting.

16. The team's outreach to CCMs has also emphasised Secretariat reliance on CCM's points of contact being maintained with clearly identified operational contact points, for example, contacts dealing with VMS or transhipment reporting. Options are being explored to better support CCM Party Administrators to provide clear guidance on appropriate contact points.

WCPFC attachments

17. The Secretariat hosted two fisheries officials each from the Solomon Islands and Fiji for a two-week Attachment Programme from 12 - 23 May 2025.[2] This initiative was in response to capacity-building requests from these two CCMs and focused on strengthening the participants' understanding of Commission processes for compliance monitoring, annual reporting, and the use of WCPFC online tools.

18. The Attachment Programme provided foundational and advanced training across WCPFC systems and Commission obligations and was tailored to the specific needs identified by participants. Participants were introduced to:

    a. the functions and structure of the Commission,

    b. Secretariat operations and processes,

    c. the WCPFC website and its functionalities, and

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[2] For further details see *Secretariat Updates – August* 2025, page 10.

d. key tools including the Record of Fishing Vessels (RFV), Vessel Monitoring System (VMS), Compliance Case File System (CCFS), and AR Pt2.

19. An essential part of the Attachment Programme was the combination of hands-on instruction on all WCPFC online systems together with time allotted for independent work to allow the officials to practice and reflect on new information. Training was delivered by staff from the Secretariat's Compliance and Science teams, more specifically on topics including preparation and refinement of AR P2 submissions, understanding and addressing charter notification issues, fished/did not fish reporting, VMS operations including manual uploads, science reporting, Annual Report Part 1 (AR Pt1) data submission, and data access rules and requests. This approach allowed participants to apply the new knowledge and seek targeted guidance during their two-week attachment.

20. Feedback from the participants confirmed the value of the Attachment Programme for strengthening their understanding of WCPFC's legal framework, reporting requirements, and operational tools. They highlighted the benefits of hands-on exercises, discussions, and independent work time, noting these helped link national practices with Commission obligations and address daily fisheries management challenges. Participants suggested periodic in-country refresher training by Secretariat staff, which could be considered within existing available resources, particularly when held alongside other meetings attended by the Secretariat, noting that the Secretariat currently provides online training to support workshops and individual CCMs.

Helpdesk online tools

21. In 2024, the Secretariat launched a comprehensive review and expansion of existing Helpdesk materials to ensure support documentation remains accurate, current, and aligned with ongoing system upgrades and reporting requirements. This work is now coordinated by the CCM Support Officer, who facilitates the planning of reviews and contributions from the entire Compliance team, while in parallel ensuring alignment and necessary updates to in-house staff guides.

22. Since early 2024, updated or newly developed guides were published, including:[3]

a. **Record of Fishing Vessels (RFV):** Application Programming Interface (API) access, Fished/Did Not Fish status reporting including bulk uploading, adding/confirming/cancelling charters (Flag and Host CCMs), charter notifications issues, and an overview of the upgrade to the RFV Charter online reporting facility.

b. **High Seas Boarding and Inspection (HSBI):** overview of the HSBI system, submitting new HSBI event details (intent to board), cancelled or refused boardings, completed boarding/interrogation reports, and final submission of completed events.

c. **Annual Report Part 2 (AR Pt2):** locating the AR Pt2, using the Reporting Dashboard and Response Lists, completing responses, and addressing previous year issues including progress on Capacity Development Plans.

d. **Compliance Monitoring Report (CMR):** overview of the CMS process, where to find the CMR, features of the CMR Response List, and guidance on accessing previous final CMRs and related documents.

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[3] These online resources can be located under "Support" at the top of each WCPFC Website site, or through this URL link: https://wcpfc.freshdesk.com/support/home

e. **Guidance for CCMs on Responding to AR Pt2/CMR Obligations**: general guidance plus tailored advice for quantitative limits (QL), implementation (IM), and reporting (RP) obligations, along with Secretariat tips for effective responses.

f. **Vessel Monitoring System (VMS)**: manual reporting changes and procedures for submitting manual reports.

23. These step-by-step resources are designed to embed guidance into daily workflows, provide accessible online tools to support CCMs in resolving data or reporting issues, and promote the consistent use of WCPFC online reporting systems. The evolving documentation effort also complements training and outreach initiatives by providing permanent, accessible references for CCMs.

24. In 2024/25, voluntary funding from Canada enabled the Secretariat to develop targeted learning resources to assist CCMs in meeting their reporting and monitoring obligations. Consultant *Viv Fernandes Pty Ltd* successfully won a bid in late 2024 to work with the Secretariat in the first quarter of 2025 to review the Secretariat's existing training tools and Helpdesk content. The consultancy delivered recommendations for improved formats and delivery modes, and for the Secretariat's internal management of guidelines and training resources. These recommendations were designed to support improved planning for the development and updating of resources within Secretariat workflows and the associated use of design templates to deliver those learning resources.

25. Building on this consultancy, the Secretariat is implementing a forward plan to update, redesign, and expand training materials, incorporating new multimedia formats and improved feedback and version control procedures. A follow-up consultancy is envisaged to begin in 2025/early 2026 to finalise the design template and to support the development of learning resources for CCMs and Secretariat staff. This will see the development of additional and new accessible web-based resources that combine videos, graphics, and interactive modules that can be released and refined over time. Potential prototype topics that are being considered include: the use of Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) online reporting tools, how to notify Article 25(2) cases, and how to respond to CCFS cases using WCPFC online reporting tools.

26. Further updates and new resources will continue to be developed throughout the remainder of 2025 and in 2026 to reflect planned routine improvements of systems aimed to improve ease of use for CCMs as well as necessary system changes to respond to Commission decisions. The Secretariat welcomes feedback from CCMs to ensure these materials remain relevant and user-focused.

New processes to support CCMs in resolving reporting gaps and update on development of dashboards

27. In 2025, the Compliance and MCS Operations staff began proactive engagement with CCMs to facilitate early resolution of reporting issues throughout the year. This initiative is intended to streamline and improve the overall reporting process for CCMs and the Secretariat.

28. In mid-2025, the Secretariat released the first quarterly reconciliations of transshipment reporting to relevant flag CCMs, which also included relevant coastal CCMs.[4] In the last quarter of 2025, the Secretariat will also begin progressively releasing monthly updates on VMS and RFV reporting gaps to each flag CCM, providing opportunities to resolve these gaps well in advance of TCC.

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[4] Circular 2025/32 *Updates on Annual Reporting and Processes to Reconcile Transshipment and VMS Reporting Gaps* – 5 June 2025.

29. In addition, as part of the 2025 dCMR reconciliation process, the Secretariat has:

    a. implemented cross-checking across multiple datasets to strengthen verification of a vessel's "fished" status and completed the reviews of all CCMs Fished and Did Not Fish reporting in early July, much earlier than in previous years.

    b. provided each flag CCM with a report that highlights any VMS transmission gaps for 2024, and offered each CCM the opportunity to explain gaps (e.g., vessel in port, outside Convention Area) or upload missing position reports.

    c. provided the Philippines with a report for 2024 that highlights HSP1 entry and exit reporting issues, and VMS transmission issues, and is currently supporting the Philippines with addressing the reporting issues for 2024.

    d. worked with CCMs to reconcile and address reporting gaps in transhipment reporting for 2024.

30. Proactive engagement with CCMs to resolve reporting gaps complements and reinforces the importance of outreach efforts and Helpdesk guides, aiming to ensure CCMs have the knowledge and confidence to use WCPFC's online systems to complete their reporting and to address their reporting issues.

31. In mid-2025, the Secretariat retained the services of *Ms. Raijeli Natadra,* in the role of Fisheries MCS Analytical Support Consultant. Ms. Natadra has been working on the development of staff guides to support the Vessel Management Officers and Reporting Analysts to establish routine processes that utilize analytical reporting and workflow tools.

32. Since 2023, Canada has partially funded an initiative that promotes early resolution of reporting issues. It expands quarterly and monthly reconciliation reporting by offering enhanced online dashboard tools for CCMs on the WCPFC website.

33. Canada has indicated that funding is planned for 2025/26 to support the development of new and enhanced online reporting dashboard tools and related consultancy costs. The voluntary funding contributions are expected to conclude thereafter. The Secretariat anticipates that the value of these initiatives will continue to accumulate over time.

34. In conclusion, the delivery of these proactive engagement initiatives leverages the multi-year investments made by the Commission to develop WCPFC's Data-warehouse infrastructure for the Commission's vast data holdings, and the recent analytical tool developments. It is supported by having greater contingency amongst the Compliance and MCS Operations staff arising from the restructuring and their integrated approach to working, which means that routine workflow processes and data entry tasks are more consistently completed. At the time of preparing this paper, the Secretariat confirms that the following WCPFC databases are up-to date with 2025 data and there are no pending updates awaiting Secretariat review:

    a. HSBI Inspection Reporting and associated compliance cases.

    b. Data request records.

    c. MTU Update requests.

    d. Philippines High Seas Pocket 1 Entry and Exit Reports.

    e. Transhipment high seas notification and declarations reporting.

f. CCMs data submissions in response to CMM report obligations, for example bigeye longline monthly catch reporting.

Recommendations

35. TCC21 is invited to:

a. Provide feedback on the Secretariat's updated guidance and Helpdesk resources, including the standing *Guidance for CCMs on how to respond to obligations in the AR Pt2 and CMR*, to ensure materials are clear, relevant, and aligned with CCM needs.

b. Comment on the Attachment Programme, including options for refresher training and possible in-country delivery.

c. Provide feedback on the Secretariat's proactive engagement initiatives.

d. Acknowledge the voluntary funding contribution from Canada toward the development of enhanced monitoring and evaluation tools and resources.

e. Encourage continued collaboration between CCMs and the Secretariat in shaping outreach, training tools, and online support materials, including suggestions for future Helpdesk updates, additional resource development and guidance on appropriate contact points.