



**TECHNICAL AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE  
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**Proposed Updates to the VMS Standards, Specifications and Procedures and Standard  
Operating Procedures to Reflect Upgrades Addressing CCM Feedback**

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**WCPFC-TCC22-2026-13**

**24 August 2026**

**Submitted by the Secretariat**

**Purpose**

1. This paper outlines proposed updates to two supplements to the existing Vessel Monitoring System Conservation and Management Measure - [suppl CMM 2014-02-2](#) "Vessel Monitoring System Standards Specifications and Procedures (SSPs)\_version as at Dec 2021" and [suppl CMM 2014-02-5](#) "Commission VMS Standard Operating Procedures (as approved in Dec 2025 at WCPFC22)".
2. These are presented as two supplements to this paper to facilitate separate review and discussion by CCMs at TCC22:
  - a. WCPFC-TCC22-2026-13\_suppl01: "Standards, Specifications and Procedures (SSP) for the Fishing Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC)"; and
  - b. WCPFC-TCC22-2026-13\_suppl02: "Commission VMS Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)".

**Background**

3. The Secretariat has continued its taskings to continuously improve the Commission VMS with the upgrades to the VMS and VMS Reporting Status Tool (VRST), designed to respond to CCM comments and feedback received during 2025<sup>1</sup>. These upgrades are reflected in proposed updates to the SSPs and SOPs as follows:
  - a. Proposed technical upgrades to improve efficiency through greater alignment and reduced duplication across the FFA VMS and WCPFC VMS to reduce the workload of FFA CCMs, non-FFA CCMs, and the FFA and WCPFC Secretariats;

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<sup>1</sup> [TCC Workplan 2025-2027](#), Article 14(1)(a) information, technical advice and recommendations relating to the implementation of, and compliance with, conservation and management measures – Vessel Monitoring System

- b. Specific issues and suggested solutions from several CCMs throughout 2025 and during TCC21<sup>2</sup>, subsequently endorsed by WCPFC22 and including:
  - i. Significantly greater access to historical reporting (currently up to 30 days)
  - ii. Increased volume of NAF strings per manual upload
  - iii. Improved access to view manually uploaded reports
  - iv. Improved viewing of not reporting events
  - v. Ability to more easily distinguish between automated and manual reporting
  - vi. Remove ambiguity regarding whether the automatic VRST no-receipt message should be considered as the initiation of manual reporting, or whether a separate email notification from the Secretariat should serve as the initiation criterion
  - vii. Ability to notify scheduled events where reporting will stop

#### Outline of key points of the upgrade to the Commission VMS/VRST

- 4. The upgrade to the Commission VMS/VRST is nearing completion and forms part of broader work to improve alignment between the WCPFC and FFA VMS arrangements. Concurrent upgrade projects have therefore been progressed by WCPFC and FFA, with each Secretariat supporting its respective elements through a joint work programme. This reflects the important role of both Secretariats in supporting VMS services for CCMs. Based on 2026 reporting-type counts in the Annual Report on the Commission VMS, approximately 63% of vessels on the WCPFC Record of fishing Vessels reported directly to the Commission VMS, while approximately 37% reported through the FFA VMS.<sup>3</sup>
- 5. The upgrade responds to CCM feedback by improving access to VMS reporting-status information, simplifying manual reporting processes, and providing clearer information on vessels that have stopped reporting.
- 6. The key features of the Commission VMS/VRST upgrade include:
  - a. improved access to vessel reporting-status information, including the ability to view reporting history beyond the current 30-day period;
  - b. clearer information on whether reported positions were received automatically from the vessel's ALC/MTU, or were submitted manually;
  - c. improved access to manual reporting information, including the ability to view manually submitted reports more easily;
  - d. expanded manual reporting options, including continued use of NAF-based bulk uploads and the addition of a single-position manual reporting form;
  - e. improved handling of vessels that have stopped reporting, including better visibility of current and historical not-reporting events;

<sup>2</sup> [TCC21 Outcomes and Summary Report](#), paragraphs 68, 71. As tasked, the Secretariat generally discussed with Japan, upgrades proposed to address the changes adopted at TCC21 (paragraph 71) and endorsed at WCPFC22, at an informal meeting in Tokyo on 12 December 2025. Japan had previously suggested their proposals be prioritised for action with others in the regular VMS update package.

<sup>3</sup> Figures based on data in [WCPFC-TCC22-RP01](#) Annual Report on the Commission VMS

- f. the ability for users to provide explanations or pre-notifications for expected periods when a vessel will stop reporting, including an estimated date for reporting to recommence;
  - g. improved checks to confirm that manual reports submitted through WCPFC systems are included in the Commission VMS data; and
  - h. better use of relevant FFA reporting status information for FFA-activated vessels that are also listed on the WCPFC Record of Fishing Vessels.
7. These changes are intended to make VMS reporting status information clearer and more accessible for CCM users. They also address CCM feedback on the need for longer reporting history, larger and more flexible manual reporting options, clearer distinction between automatic and manual reporting, improved visibility of not-reporting events, and a clearer process for expected or explained interruptions to VMS reporting.
8. The upgrade should also assist CCMs that use both the FFA and Commission VMS arrangements. Greater alignment between the systems is expected to reduce duplication, support more consistent manual reporting processes, and avoid unnecessary follow-up where reporting interruptions have already been explained or pre-notified through FFA systems.

### Implementation Plan

9. [Circular 2026/82](#) announced the release of recent work by the Secretariat to the upgrade of the Commission VMS/VRST. More detailed information on opportunities for CCMs to familiarise themselves with the upgrades and provide feedback will be released before the end of August.

### Key to reviewing the proposed changes to the VMS SSPs and VMS SOPs

10. In both the VMS SSPs and VMS SOPs, changes to the documents appear as track changes.
11. In the existing VMS SOPs, Attachment 1 set out changes to Section 5, paragraphs 4 and 5, which took effect on 1 March 2013 and remain in effect today. In the amended VMS SOPs presented to TCC22, this Attachment is shown as deleted because the relevant text has been moved into Section 5 to replace the now out-of-date paragraphs 4 and 5.

### Recommendation

12. TCC22 is invited:
- a. **discuss** the upgraded Commission VMS/VRST, which has been developed alongside related FFA VMS upgrades as part of the Secretariats' continuous efforts to address CCM feedback and relevant Commission decisions in 2025.
  - b. **recommend** that WCPFC23 adopt the amended Standards, Specifications and Procedures (SSP) for the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) contained in WCPFC-TCC22-2026-31\_suppl01 as endorsed by TCC22; and
  - c. **recommend** that WCPFC23 adopt the amended Commission VMS Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) contained in WCPFC-TCC22-2026-31\_suppl02, as endorsed by TCC22.