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REVISED SOPs FOR THE COMMISSION VMS BASED ON COMMENTS RECEIVED POST-TCC5

WCPFC6-2009/IP11
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Paper prepared by the Secretariat

Introduction

At the Fifth Regular Session of the Technical and Compliance Committee (TCC5) CCMs considered an annual report on the Commission VMS (WCPFC-TCC5-2009/12 (Rev.1)) that included a set of draft Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the Commission VMS. CCMs were invited to provide written comments regarding these SOPs to the Secretariat by 31 October 2009 with a view to the Secretariat providing draft revised SOPs at WCPFC6.

Comments received by the Secretariat from CCMs post-TCC5

The Secretariat received comments from Chinese Taipei (30 October 2009) and Japan (02 November 2009) on the draft SOPs that have been incorporated into the draft SOPs in "track-change" (**Attachment 1**).

Conclusion

WCPFC6 is invited to:

- consider the set of draft SOPs containing proposed revisions by Chinese Taipei and Japan;
- agree on a revised set of SOPs for the Commission VMS.

Draft Commission VMS Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

1. INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE: Establish guidelines and procedures for the operation of the Commission Vessel Monitoring System (Commission VMS).

PERSONNEL CONCERNED: All WCPFC Secretariat staff

ORIGINATOR: Manager VMS

DISTRIBUTION: MCS personnel

AUTHORISED BY: Compliance Manager

EFFECTIVE DATE: 1 April 2009

2. OVERVIEW

The WCPFC operates a Vessel Monitoring System (Commission VMS) to assist in the management and conservation of highly migratory fish stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean.

The Commission VMS requires the use of Mobile Transceiver Units (MTUs)/Automatic Location Communicators (ALCs) that have been typed-approved by CCMs and meet the minimum standards set out in Annex 1 of CMM 2007-02.

2.1 PURPOSE OF THESE STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

These standard operating procedures (SOPs) have been developed to provide uniform guidance for Commission personnel in the management and operation of the Commission VMS.

2.2 COMMISSION DECISIONS AND GUIDELINES GOVERNING THE COMMISSION VMS

a) WCPFC Information Security Policy – December 2007

b) WCPFC VMS Security Guidelines – January 2009

c) WCPFC Administrative Guidelines and Procedures Manual – September 2009 (draft)

2.3 THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR ADMINISTERING THE COMMISSION VMS AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES

The Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) section of the WCPFC Secretariat is responsible for the management and operation of the Commission VMS. In that capacity the MCS Section:

a) provides oversight and management of all aspects of the Commission VMS;

b) provides oversight of the process to obtain quality technical advice from satellite and internet service providers and contractors;

c) take responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the Commission VMS; and

d) maintains the Commission VMS, monitors its state and provides regular reports on these matters to the Executive Director.

2.4 MCS SECTION RESPONSIBILITIES

The MCS Section:

a) oversees the operations of the Commission VMS including operation of the WCPFC Record of Fishing Vessels;

b) administers the SLA with FFA for the provision of VMS services to the Commission;

c) administers the Secretariat's responsibilities in respect of the SSPs for the Commission's VMS;

d) liaises closely with the VMS Manager at the FFA Secretariat on matters relating to Commission VMS data and its transmission to the WCPFC Secretariat;

e) Manages VMS data in conformity with the Commission's ISP and Rules and Procedures for the Protection of, Access to and Dissemination of Data Compiled by the Commission;

f) oversees the requirements of the Commission VMS and provides advice to the Executive Director on its effective utilization to support core activities at the WCPFC Secretariat;

g) manages the day-to-day operations of the WCPFC Secretariat's satellite network and associated equipment at a level required to support the Commission VMS;

h) manages and contributes to the design and implementation of relevant training programmes relating to Commission VMS systems for the benefit of WCPFC Secretariat staff;

i) collaborates with relevant WCPFC Secretariat staff and the FFA Secretariat to test new aspects of the Commission VMS;

j) monitors the day-to-day operations of the Commission VMS;

k) liaises closely with the ICT Manager at the WCPFC Secretariat on technical matters relating to the operation of the Commission VMS; and

l) acts as a point of contact for all CCM-related Commission VMS inquiries and for dissemination of relevant information such as Commission VMS Guidelines and related material.

2.5   AVAILABILITY OF COMMISSION VMS SERVICES

Commission VMS Services (as listed above) are available to all CCMs.

2.6   COMMISSION VMS SERVICES AVAILABLE FROM THE WCPFC SECRETARIAT

The WCPFC Secretariat provides the following technical assistance to CCMs:

a) technical assistance on the Commission VMS.

b) technical guidance on development and enhancement of the Commission VMS.

3.   VMS SOFTWARE APPLICATIONS

3.1   SMARTTRACK TRACKEXPLORER

SmartTrack TrackExplorer is a powerful and flexible tool for utilizing satellite information to monitor the activity of fishing fleets.   Each vessel is fitted with an MTU/ALC so that its position and movement can be tracked on a computer screen against a background map.

A TrackExplorer window provides a comprehensive range of tools for working with the map and the fishing vessels.   It can be used to generate current and historical position data for vessels of interest, and view animations of past tracks.

3.2 MANUAL REPORTING

Vessels typically report their positions automatically.   The Commission VMS also has a facility to enter sightings or manual positions that can then be compared with the automatically received locations from MTUs/ALCs.

Vessel positions gathered by observers, surveillance aircraft or other vessels can be entered into the "sightings" system for analysis.

3.3 ALERTS

Alerts are generated in relation to significant vessel activities or events.   Almost any activity on the system can be configured to trigger an alert.

The Commission VMS includes an automated alert to report when vessels enter or exit the high seas of the WCPFC Convention Area.

Alerts are sent to relevant officers by e-mail or SMS.

Alerts generated by the system include:
   a) Area.Entry.International Waters (HS);
   b) Area.Exit.International Waters (HS);
   c) Overdue.04:00;
   d) Position.Power Off; and
   e) Position.Power On.

4. OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

4.1 Secretariat Office Procedures

Refer to Section 9 "Office Procedures" of the draft WCPFC Administrative Guidelines and Procedures Manual appended at **Annex A**.

4.2 VMS CLIENT USER ACCESS

The Manager VMS, after consultation with the Compliance Manager, can provide user access to the Commission VMS to an individual user.

The Commission VMS is configured so that each user has a unique login ID and password which can be changed at the discretion of the user.   The system forces a change of password at intervals not exceeding 40 days. A password must consist of at least eight alpha-numeric characters and must be different from previous passwords and ID.   Each user is responsible for their respective ID and password. If a user believes access has been gained through illegal use of his/her password or the user has forgotten his/her password, the Manager VMS must be notified immediately.

For further information, please refer to the WCPFC Security Guidelines located on the Secretariat's network drive.

4.3 VESSEL TRACKING AGREEMENT FORM

For each fishing vessel that is required to report to the Commission VMS the flag CCM will submit all necessary data indicated in the Vessel Tracking Agreement Form (VTAF).   A copy of the VTAF is appended at **Annex B**.

The following procedures are to be followed when a VTAF is received by the Commission from a CCM.

1. Acknowledge receipt of the VTAF by e-mail to the CCM official who sent it.

2. Check that the VTAF is completed correctly.   An incomplete VTAF should be referred back to the CCM official who sent it.

3. Check that the MTU/ALC described in the VTAF is type approved by the CCM.   If not, advise the CCM official accordingly.

4. If the MTU is type approved by the CCM then check against the FFA Vessel Register to determine if the vessel is listed.   If it is listed then no further action required.   The vessel will be monitored when it enters the high seas of the WCPFC Convention Area.

5. If the vessel is not listed on the FFA Vessel Register then its MTU/ALC must be activated to report directly to the Commission VMS.

4.4   VESSEL ACTIVATION

Vessel Activation costs USD$200 per vessel. On receipt of a completed VTAF the vessel should be checked against the FFA Vessel Register available on the FFA Secretariat website at **www.ffa.int/node/42**

4.5   VESSEL ACTIVATION PROCEDURE

Submit to the FFA Secretariat for vessel activation on the Commission VMS the following information:
   a) VRID – Vessel Register ID;
   b) Vessel Name – in English;
   c) Country Registration Number;
   d) IRCS – International Radio Call Sign;
   e) Vessel Type (e.g. longline);
   f) Flag – full name, not flag code;
   g) Vessel length (in metres);
   h) GRT – Gross Registered Tonnage of the vessel;
   i) MTU/ALC Manufacturer (e.g. Thrane & Thrane);
   j) MTU/ALC Model (e.g. TT-3022D);
   k) MTU/ALC software version (if provided);
   l) MTU/ALC communication ID (e.g. IMN: 450 360 120);
   m) MTU/ALC Serial number.

The FFA Secretariat will update the vessel table in the VMS database and activate the vessel on the system.

The FFA Secretariat will then advise if activation is successful or not.

If activation was not successful then advise CCM of the unsuccessful activation attempt *<<JP comments>>with explanation about on which step of the activation procedure the failure occurred. (e.g. "The Secretariat sent DNID to the vessel, but ACQ was not sent back)*

Request the CCM official to check the vessel's MTU/ALC and rectify any anomalies with the MTU/ALC.

On receipt of the advice by the CCM that the MTU/ALC is ready for a second attempt of activation, ~~activate the vessel on the system again.~~ *<<JP comments>>The Secretariat, in consultation with the CCM, sets the time schedule for activation.*

If the MTU/ALC activation fails on the second attempt, notify the CCM and place the vessel on manual reporting at four (4) hourly intervals until the MTU/ALC can be activated to report automatically to the Commission VMS.

4.6   VESSEL DEACTIVATION PROCEDURE

Deactivation of a vessel costs USD$50.

Submit to the FFA Secretariat for vessel deactivation on the Commission VMS the following information:
   a) VRID – Vessel Register ID;

b) Vessel Name – in English;
c) Country Registration Number;
d) IRCS – International Radio Call Sign;
e) Vessel Type (e.g. longline);
f) Flag – full name, not flag code;
g) Vessel length (in metres);
h) GRT – Gross Registered Tonnage of the vessel;
i) MTU/ALC Manufacturer (e.g. Thrane & Thrane);
j) MTU/ALC Model (e.g. TT-3022D);
k) MTU/ALC software version (if provided);
l) MTU/ALC communication ID (e.g. IMN: 450 360 120);
m) MTU/ALC Serial number.

The FFA Secretariat will delete the vessel from the VMS database and deactivate the vessel on the system.

The FFA Secretariat will then advise whether or not the deactivation is successful.

If the deactivation was not successful then request the MCSP to deactivate the vessel from its system.

4.7 REPORTS

VMS Operations Officers are required to produce weekly and monthly reports of vessel activities on the Commission VMS.

A weekly report includes information on:
- count of daily position reports by vessel;
- number of vessels reporting versus non-reporting;
- number of vessels reporting directly to the Commission VMS and vessels reporting via FFA VMS;
- Vessel status – Normal, Shut down, Manual reporting etc.

A monthly report includes:
- number of vessel activations during the month;
- number of vessels reporting directly to the Commission VMS and vessels reporting via FFA VMS;
- number of vessels reporting versus non-reporting;
- number of days a vessel spends in the high seas by month;
- estimated cost of reports by month.

The Compliance Manager may request additional ad-hoc reports to be provided.

These reports are to be produced in MS Excel and MS Word in accordance with the Administrative Guidelines and Procedures Manual.

4.8 MANUAL REPORTS

In the event of non-reception of two consecutive, programmed high seas VMS positions, and where the Secretariat has exhausted all reasonable steps to re-establish normal automatic reception of VMS positions the Secretariat shall inform the vessel's flag State CCM and the vessel Master.

From the time of transmission of this communication to the CCM, the vessel Master shall be required to take immediate steps to re-establish automatic reporting and in any event within 30 days or at its first port of call if less than 30 days.

During this period the vessel shall be required to report its position manually to the Secretariat every 4 8 << requested by Chinese Taipei >> hours. The manual report will consist of the following:

- Vessel Name
- IRCS
- UTC Date (dd-mm-yy)
- UTC Time 24 hour format (hh:mm:ss)
- Latitude (in degrees Minutes, Seconds N or S)
- Longitude (in degrees Minutes, Seconds E or W)
- ~~Course~~ requested by Chinese Taipei
- ~~Speed (in Knots)~~ requested by Chinese Taipei
- ~~Activity at the time of report. (e.g. Fishing, in port etc.)~~ requested by Chinese Taipei

In cases where automatic reporting has not been re-established within 30 days the CCM shall order the vessel to cease fishing, stow all fishing gear and return to port.

The vessel may recommence fishing on the high seas only when the MTU/ALC has been confirmed as operational by the WCPFC Secretariat following the flag State CCM informing the Secretariat that the vessel's automatic reporting complies with the regulations established in the Commission VMS Standards, Specifications and Procedures (SSPs).

4.9   COMMISSION VMS HELPDESK SUPPORT

Commission VMS Helpdesk Support is provided by the FFA Secretariat 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Helpdesk support can be obtained by contacting:

Phone: +677 24969

E-mail: vms@ffa.int

Officers requesting Helpdesk support must record the nature of the request in the Incident Report Log located on **S:\MCS\VMS\Helpdesk Support**.

CMMs requesting Commission VMS assistance must log calls on the WCPFC Helpdesk located on the WCPFC website.