



**SEVENTH REGULAR SESSION**  
Honolulu, Hawaii, USA  
6-10 December 2010

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**EU Proposal on Operation of Commission VMS, including Audit TOR and Cost Savings**

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**WCPFC7-2010-DP/29**  
**9 December 2010**

## **EU Proposal on Operation of Commission VMS, including Audit TOR and Cost Savings**

### **1. Background**

- a. The Commission VMS is currently relying on the FFA services, as provided for in the signed SLA. This is an interim arrangement until WCPFC develops its own technical capacity. However, after two years of implementation, and based on the official Commission VMS reports, several problems have arisen, both technical and financial.
- b. One of the solutions to enhance the VMS capacity of the Commission VMS and ensure effective MCS of fishing activity while reducing the operational costs is by establishing a stand alone WCPFC system, as foreseen in CMM 2007-02, to receive the VMS data and catches electronically in the WCPFC Secretariat.

### **2. WCPFC FMC.**

- a. Capacity to receive directly the VMS data from vessels should be created within the Secretariat of the Commission;
- b. Substantial technical training should be provided to the Secretariat's staff to reduce dependency on the contractors.
- c. The list of ALC/MTU units currently accepted by the Commission should be revised by modifying the SSPs and SOPs, so that units are able to:
  - i. store a minimum of 45 days of data collected hourly, containing: DATE/TIME/COURSE/SPEED/LAT/LON;
  - ii. have the capacity of pooling (two ways communication system).

### **3. Reducing VMS air-time costs**

- a. Reduce the frequency of POS reporting by ALCs on board of PS and LL to once every 6 h (or even longer intervals if appropriate); however,
- b. the POS reports sent will contain all the data indicated in the previous sub-para 2 (c) (i), collected every hour between the two periods of reporting. To better illustrate, every 6-hourly report, would contain 6 POS messages. In this way the accuracy is preserved, and actually for LL this accuracy will be increased, and the quality of MCS will be improved.

### **4. VMS Audit. Aspects to be considered/clarified for the audit.**

As requested by the Small Working Group on VMS, the EU submits the following items for inclusion in the TOR of the audit of the Commission VMS:

- a. Auditors contracted shall be unbiased, independent from both organisations (WCPFC and FFA) and from any VMS data provider. The selected auditors should not be perceived to have any ties or any interests of any kind that could interfere with the purpose of the audit;
- b. The auditors should have full access to all data from all VMS data providers to the WCPFC (SATCOMS, ARGOS and FFA);
- c. All scenarios should be analyzed: 1. transmissions costs received through FFA breakdown by channel; 2. using the current system based on the FFA facilities; 3. using a WCPFC stand alone system; 4. using alternative service providers; 6. maintaining all current SLAs;
- d. Clearly identify the number of vessels per channel, that have to report through FFA system;

- e. Compare the costs of reporting of those channels when reporting via FFA system with the costs for same services provided by the representatives of the different channels;
- f. Isolate, with accuracy, the POS reports from HS to calculate exactly air-time costs used by the fleet in the Convention area covered by the Commission's VMS (2900 vessels reporting on HS seems to be a higher number).
- g. Evaluate the technical necessity of reporting VMS POS once outside the Convention area;
- h. Evaluate the legal conflicts of receiving VMS data from vessels outside the Convention area as the VTAF only provides legal access when vessel is in the Convention area;
- i. Evaluate financial consequences for ship-owners for all the scenarios considered during the audit;

**5. Suggested approach for ensuring long-term independence of the Commission VMS**

- a. The period of validity of any SLA should be two years, automatically renewable monthly;
- b. A termination clause should be included in all future SLAs, allowing the WCPFC to terminate an SLA with 6 months notice;
- c. The list of ALC/MTU accepted to report to WCPFC should be revised, with the requirements listed in para 2 above as a minimum standard;
- d. SLA agreements should foresee full access to data collected in the framework of the Commission VMS for audit purposes every two years. An annual analysis of that data for compliance purposes shall be undertaken by TCC and presented to the Commission;
- e. The expiration date of SLA agreements should follow the timetable of the Annual Meetings of the Commission so that decisions by the Commission can be implemented as soon as they come into effect.