



Annual Report: April 2020 to March 2021

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Chairman's Welcome

I am honoured to present the Annual Report as your new Chairman. It is indeed a new era for the Southern IFCA as we thank John Humphreys for his knowledge and guidance over many years at the helm; and Rob Clark in his career move to a national role. I was pleased to be part of the team appointing Ian Jones as our new Chief Officer and am impressed to observe how well all the team are working together to make the Southern IFCA an exemplar amongst its peers.

The professionalism, dedication and enthusiasm from all our team is something we can all be proud of, especially in these difficult and unusual times. I am certain we have the capability to fulfil a more extensive role if, or when, required. It has been fascinating to witness the new drone technology in action and the impressive engagement with all the interested parties in the complex development of new by-laws and guidance is a very real credit to the team.



We have an excellent and very supportive Authority, who bring a wide range of experience, knowledge and expertise to guide and inform best practice, achieving a fine balance between commerce and conservation.

This balance is particularly germane to me as I Chair the Dorset Harbours Committee with its three harbours and represent Dorset on the Local Government Association Coastal Special Interest Group where I am member champion for both the fishing industry and marine conservation; and am a trustee of the Jurassic Coast Trust.

Cllr Mr Mark Roberts
September 2020

Chief Officer's Introduction

It gave me great pleasure in returning to the Authority as its Chief Officer in September 2020 and take up this very challenging position in such uncertain times in terms of Covid-19, EU-Exit and awaiting an outcome to a central Government comprehensive spending review. In addition, we are currently progressing through reviews; a) our management measures; and b) our marine assets to ensure that we are developing regulations that are well evidenced and aligned with the Authority's duties under the Marine and Coastal Access Act, 2009 and that are supported by sufficient resources to carry out those duties, both in the current and likely future landscapes.

I am very pleased and proud with what the team and I have achieved in my first 8 months of service and the support I have received from them, our Members and our stakeholders and I hope this report provides insight, but not limited to, some of the outcomes to our key priorities and deliverables set out in the Annual Plan 2020 to 2021.



I would also like to express my sincere appreciation to the outgoing Chief Officer Rob Clark and thank him for a smooth transition. The IFCA's are fortunate that Rob is now Chief Officer with the Association of IFCA's. I would also like to thank the outgoing Chairman Professor John Humphreys for all his hard work and commitment over the years as a Member with the Authority and wish him well in his new endeavours and a very warm welcome to the incoming Chairman, Councillor Mark Roberts who I look forward to continuing the excellent work that has been achieved by the IFCA, its Members and talented team of officers.

Ian Jones
September 2021

1.0 Introduction

Under Section 178 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act (2009), Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs) are required to produce an Annual Report, which seeks to provide an account of the work delivered during the previous reporting year. This report must be sent to the Secretary of State annually following the end of the financial year in March.

1.1 The IFCA Model

A 'golden thread' demonstrates the connection between IFCA aims and objectives on a national stage (Vision, High Level Objective and Success Criterion) with operational delivery at the local level (Southern IFCA Annual Plans and Team Strategies).

1.1.1 National IFCA Vision

"Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities will lead, champion and manage a sustainable marine environment and inshore fisheries, by successfully securing the right balance between social, environmental and economic benefits to ensure healthy seas, sustainable fisheries and a viable industry."

1.1.2 National IFCA High Level Objectives and Success Criterion

High-Level Objectives (HLOs) and Success Criterion (SC) (Table 1) were developed nationally to support attainment of the IFCA Vision and to reflect the developing programme of work delivered by IFCAs nationally and to demonstrate the IFCAs contribution to the delivery of the UK Marine Policy Statement.

Table 1: High Level Objectives & Success Criterion

	High Level Objective		Success Criterion
HLO1	Achieving a sustainable marine economy	SC1	IFCAs are recognised and heard, whilst working in partnership and engaging with stakeholders
HLO2	Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society	SC2	IFCAs implement a fair, effective and proportionate enforcement regime
HLO3	Living within environmental limits	SC3	IFCAs use evidence based and appropriate measures to manage sustainable exploration of SFR
HLO4	Promoting good governance	SC4	IFCAs have appropriate governance in place and staff are trained and professional
HLO5	Using sound science responsibly	SC5	IFCAs make the best use of evidence to deliver their objectives

1.1.3 Southern IFCA Annual Plan

The Southern IFCA Annual Plans document how the Authority intends to support attainment of HLOs and SC (and ultimately the IFCA vision) when mapping out the work priorities for the year ahead. The Annual Plan 2020-2021 was published on the 1st April 2020.

1.2 The Annual Report 2020-2021

This report seeks to provide an overview of how Southern IFCA have performed in their delivery of Annual Plan priorities for the period April 2020 to March 2021, in the context with the IFCA Vision, via High Level Objectives and Success Criteria. This will be qualified in this Annual Report in Section 2.0, via a demonstration of how Southern IFCA have achieved the delivery of Success Criteria via Performance Indicators, as agreed in the Southern IFCA Annual Plan 2020-2021 ('Annual Plan 20/21').

In addition, Section 3.0 of this report demonstrates how Southern IFCA have achieved their specific delivery priorities, as set in Annual Plan 20/21.

Due to the reactive nature of the work Southern IFCA deliver, in addition to work delivered in line with annual planning, Section 4.0 of this Report provides an overview of other notable areas of work Southern IFCA have undertaken during the 2020-2021 reporting period.

1.1.3 The Covid 19 Pandemic

With the ongoing disruption of the Covid-19 pandemic that has been wreaking havoc on international trade, the UK fishing industry has had to deal with turbulent market conditions. During this reporting period and throughout several lockdowns, Southern IFCA continued to operate under Government guidelines, with closing its public facing office, officers working from home and initially those identified as vulnerable having to self-isolate. Local Covid-19 protocols, risk assessments and procedures were put into place within 72 hours and a small number of officers remained operational. Southern IFCA fed into a national Strategic Response Group where joint MMO/ IFCA national Covid-19 protocols, procedures and guidance were developed that enabled officers to assist industry wherever possible and signpost them to up to date information on support and access to Government assistance. In addition, Southern IFCA contributed to the national intelligence requirement relating to Covid-19 to inform the Government's decision making process. Risk assessments were put in place that set out the Southern IFCA approach to Covid-19 with the focus being on officer and stakeholder safety whilst still maintaining essential operational delivery.

The impact of the restrictions put in place to reduce the effect of the Coronavirus outbreak has caused some delays in the delivery of the 2020/21 Annual Plan in areas such as surveys, operational compliance and the impact of virtual meetings.

Southern IFCA's website and social media pages were kept up to date during any lockdown period and as the situation changed to keep stakeholders informed.

2.0 Achieving Success Criteria via Performance Indicators

2.1 Achieving Success Criterion 1

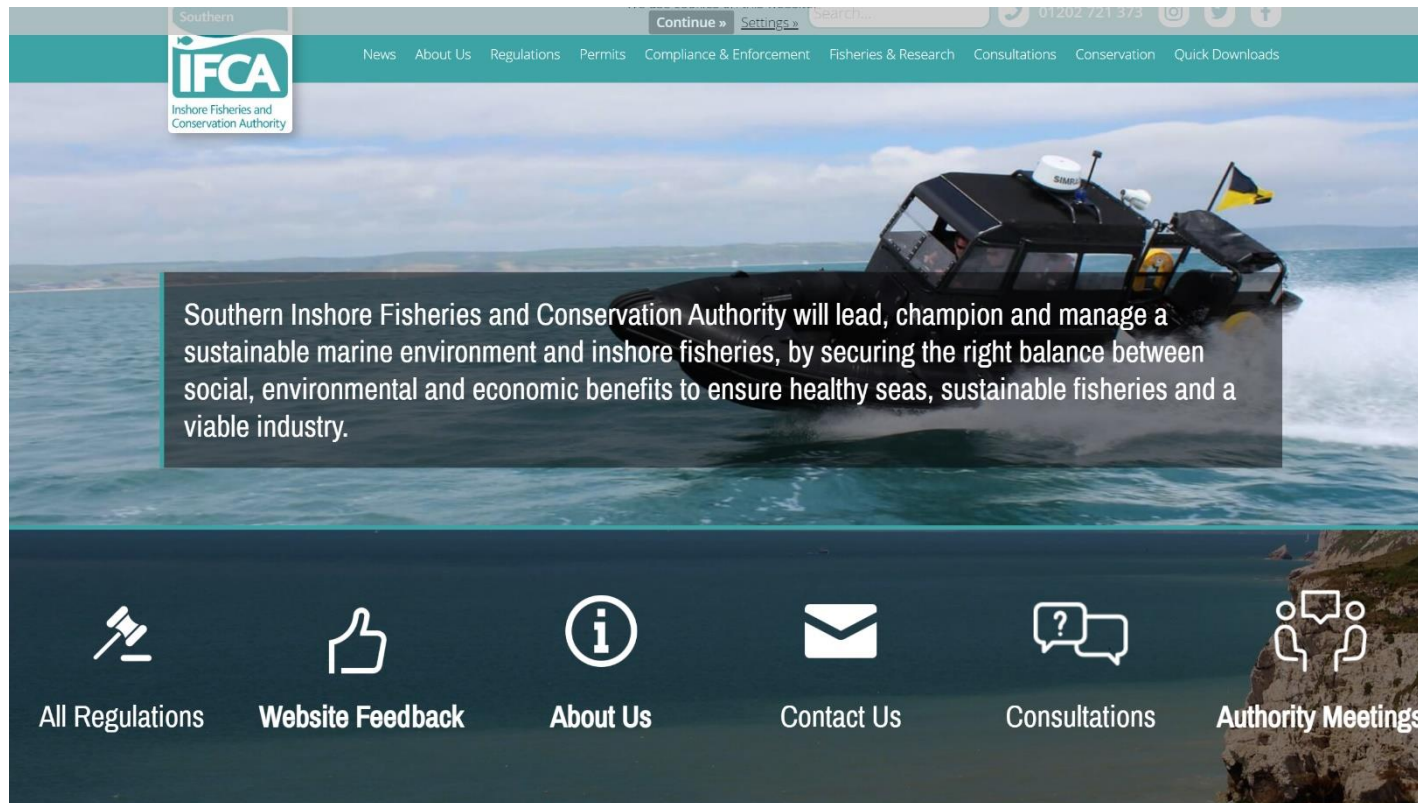
IFCAs are recognised and heard, balancing the economic needs of the fishery whilst working in partnership and engaging with stakeholders		
Definition: IFCAs will be visible, respected and trusted regulators within coastal communities and will maintain and deliver a strategy to communicate their vision and duties effectively. IFCAs will engage with policy makers, industry, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), recreational and commercial users; and other regulators. They will work jointly and collaboratively with partner organisations across boundaries; will participate and contribute to the development and implementation of regional and national marine policy, including the marine planning regime; will take long-term strategic decisions and manage risks effectively. IFCAs may maintain a national body to co-ordinate the activities of authorities that are party to arrangements.		
Outcomes	Performance Indicators	
	Objective	End of Year Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The IFCA will maintain and implement an effective communication strategy. The IFCA will maintain its website, ensuring public access to current fisheries and conservation information for the District, including management requirements and byelaws. Non-reserved IFCA Committee papers will be published. The IFCA will contribute to co-ordinated activity at a national level. The IFCA and its principal partners will have a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities. Memoranda of Understanding with MMO, Natural England, Environment Agency and Cefas will be maintained. Opportunities for greater efficiencies, effective joint working and collaboration will be explored and implemented when feasible. 	SC1A	The IFCA will maintain a database of stakeholder contacts that will have been reviewed and updated by 31 March each year. Achieved in line with GDPR Legislation.
	SC1B	The IFCA will have completed a review of its Communication Strategy and implementation plan by 31 March each year. Achieved Southern IFCA agreed and published a Communication Plan and incorporated objectives established in the Communication plan into the Southern IFCA Website review which was completed by March 2021 – www.southern-ifca.gov.uk .
	SC1C	The IFCA will have reviewed its website by the last working day of each month. Achieved Southern IFCA reviewed and updated the website (www.southern-ifca.gov.uk) and the @SouthernIFCA twitter feed was used in an interactive and engaging way. See Section 2.1.1
	SC1D	The IFCA will have reviewed its website and ensured it meets the objectives of its communication strategy, by 31 March each year.
	SC1E	The IFCA will have reviewed all its Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) by 31 March each year. There will be a clear plan in place to update MoUs where necessary, to an agreed timescale. Achieved All the local MoUs were reviewed internally (to include MMO, Natural England & Environment Agency). No updates were deemed necessary during the 2020-2021 period.
	SC1F	By 31 March each year, the IFCA will have participated appropriately, proportionately and at the right level of delegation, in regional and national fisheries and conservation activity identified in the annual plan. Achieved Southern IFCA actively participated with The Association of IFCAs, the Chief Officers Group, the Technical Advisory Group, & the National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group (NIMEG). The record of meetings of the Association of IFCAs & the Technical Advisory Group were published in Committee Papers.

2.1.1 Reviewing the Southern IFCA Website

Since November 2020 Southern IFCA Officers have been working hard with Toolkit Web Design to redesign the Southern IFCA website. The previous Southern IFCA website was created over 6 years ago, in which time web design technology has moved on dramatically particularly with the introduction of SMART devices such as mobiles and tablets.

The Southern IFCA website was primarily updated to include two important features: the website is now SSL secure and 'mobile friendly'. This means that the website is secure and easy to use for our target audience such as fishers, who, would likely be accessing it whilst onboard their vessel or along the shore. The website has also been updated to better reflect the wide range of topics which The Authority engages in with its stakeholders through our website and other means such as patrols, telephone and email enquiries. The website is also able to be used for reporting illegal activity and is a one stop shop for guidance information on fisheries legislation.

The Southern IFCA website was launched on 18th March 2021.



2.2 Achieving Success Criterion 2

IFCAs implement a fair, effective and proportionate enforcement regime		
Definition: The IFCA enforcement regime is risk-based, makes appropriate use of intelligence, meets legislative standards and complies with the Regulators Code. It should make effective use of the resources available to regulators; complement and align, if possible, with the regimes in adjacent IFC Districts and management by other organisations including the MMO and Environment Agency. Consistency and fairness is important. Regulatory compliance is promoted. Enforcement action is carried out by trained, professional officers working to clear standards of conduct.		
Outcomes	Performance Indicators	
	Objective	End of Year Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The IFCA will publish its Enforcement Risk Register and Strategy, clearly setting out its approach to achieving regulatory compliance and potential sanctions that may be applied for infringements and/or offences. The IFCA will have developed consistency in regulations (byelaws) with other organisations. The IFCA will manage operational activity (e.g. through a Tasking & Co-ordination Group) and capture, record, evaluate and disseminate intelligence that is compatible with partner organisations. It is engaged in joint working with partner organisations. Warranted Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officers will be trained and accredited to nationally agreed standards. They will maintain professionalism and make appropriate interventions to deliver efficient, effective enforcement activity. 	SC2A	The IFCA will ensure its Enforcement Risk Register and Strategy are published and available on its website from 1 April each year. Achieved The Southern IFCA Risk Register and Strategy was published on the Southern IFCA Website and updated every six months.
	SC2B	The IFCA will demonstrate in its Annual Report how it has worked with other regulators to achieve consistent quality, application and enforcement of management measures. Achieved Southern IFCA continue to maintain an intelligence led, risk-based approach to enforcement and enhanced our intelligence system and report on the progress in the development of shared inspection and enforcement procedures within and between the IFCAs and MMO See Section 3.1.2: Intelligence reporting.
	SC2C	The IFCA will compile records of enforcement activity in a standard format; provide them to the National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group (NIMEG) and publish them on its website. Achieved We continue to publish our enforcement and compliance activity in a national standardised format. We worked closely with the MMO and other relevant partners to coordinate sharing of assets and resources through a joint Tactical Coordination Group (TCG). The TCG, informed by our intelligence systems and risk assessments, coordinated the deployment of our assets with partners. See Section 3.1.3: Enforcement Actions and Outcomes 2020-2021 (to include: Inspections at sea, Vessel patrols, Fishing vessel boarding, Fishing gear inspections, Inspections ashore or in port, Shore patrol, Port visits, Premises inspections, Fish/shellfish landing inspections, other inspections).
	SC2D	The IFCA will adopt the national Code of Conduct for IFCOs, which will be reviewed annually and published on its website by 1 April. Achieved The Code of Conduct was adhered to and reviewed internally, and outcomes fed into the National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group. See Section 3.1.3: Enforcement Actions and Outcomes 2020-2021 (to include: Warnings/advisory letters, Case files generated, Formal written warnings, Formal cautions, FAPs offered, Individual/companies prosecuted).
	SC2E	The Code of Conduct for IFCOs is reflected in work objectives and annual appraisals for all Warranted Officers. Achieved Southern IFCA incorporated The Code of Conduct into the IFCOs 6 monthly appraisals.

	SC2F	Warranted Officers attain accreditation. All undertake Continuing Professional Development (CPD).	Achieved: Several Compliance Officers are enrolled and proceeding through units towards accreditation in the National Marine Enforcement Qualification and a Southern IFCA Senior Officer is being trained as a qualified assessor. All warranted officers undergo CPD training and are cross warranting with the EA.
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2.3 Achieving Success Criterion 3

IFCAs use evidence based and appropriate measures to manage the sustainable exploitation of sea fisheries resources and deliver marine environmental protection within their districts			
Definition: The IFCAs were created as statutory inshore regulators by the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. They are relevant authorities for implementing international environmental commitments including the Birds, Habitats, Water and Marine Strategy Framework Directives and make an important contribution to securing a network of well managed marine protected areas, including European Marine Sites and Marine Conservation Zones. Fisheries Management Plans identify local management measures which should be based on evidence; be timely; subject to appropriate consultation and in step with national initiatives and priorities. An IFCA should balance the social and economic benefits of exploiting sea fisheries resources with the need to protect the environment. It should make a contribution to sustainable development.			
Outcomes		Performance Indicators	
		Objective	End of Year Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The IFCA will identify issues likely to affect sustainable management of the marine environment in the District; undertake risk assessments and gap analysis; review appropriateness of existing measures; evaluate management options and develop and implement proportionate marine management solutions. The IFCA will support implementation of a well-managed network of marine protected areas by: developing a range of criteria-based 	SC3A	The IFCA will record site-specific management considerations for Marine Protected Areas and report progress to the Authority.	Achieved In addition, following on from the designation of Tranche 3 MPAs in 2019, the Authority began a review of spatial MPA management within the District. See Section 3.4.4
	SC3B	The IFCA will publish data analysis and evidence supporting new management measures, on its website.	Achieved New management measures are accompanied by 'Impact Assessment' which demonstrates the use of best available evidence in accordance with guidance. In addition (where relevant) Habitats Regulation Assessment have also been developed and published to accompany the development of new management measures. Full process maps to align with Southern IFCAs Byelaw Process Policy Document, as well as all supporting documentation are published to support the implementation of new byelaws and codes of conduct.

<p>management options; implementing management measures to ensure that inshore fisheries activities comply with the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 and the revised approach to managing commercial fisheries in European Marine Sites; and that local management contributes to delivery of targets for the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, Water Framework Directive and Marine Plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The IFCA will develop Fisheries Management Plans for priority species where appropriate. Shared objectives will be developed with identified partners; actions identified and best practice reflected so that management makes a contribution to sustainable development. 	SC3C	Management information (e.g. sampling and/or survey results) will be collected periodically after new management measures have been implemented, to demonstrate the extent of effectiveness of the intervention.	<i>Postponed</i> due to COVID pandemic. Due to Government restrictions as a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic it was agreed at the meeting of the TAC on the 7 th May 2020 that all survey work would be postponed until further notice and that where possible the Authority would continue to support ongoing evidence requirements. This decision was founded on the following considerations: (1) Social distancing requirements. (2) Prolonged exposure to stakeholders. (3) The number of IFCA staff required. (4) An increased reliance on stakeholders working independently from IFCA staff.
	SC3D	The IFCA will have developed a range of criteria-based management options that are explained to stakeholders through the IFCA website, and reviewed by 31 March each year.	Achieved An overarching Southern IFCA Byelaw Process Document was updated during 2020-2021 to provide stakeholders with an understanding of Byelaw development process and management considerations. In addition, via the 2020-2021 Research and Evidence Strategy (published), management priorities for the year were identified with supporting rationales underpinning the delivery priorities.
	SC3E	New IFCA management measures selected for development and implementation are delivered within agreed timescales.	Achieved In line with the delivery timetables identified in The Research and Evidence Strategy 2020-2021.
	SC3F	The IFCA will include shared agreed objectives and actions from Fisheries Management Plans in its own Annual Plan, which will be published by 31 March each year.	<i>Ongoing</i> <u>Local Fisheries Management Plans:</u> Southern IFCA are collating and reviewing peer-reviewed literature in order to inform best practice in the application of Fisheries Management Plans across the District and using this knowledge to inform and evolve Southern IFCAs existing FMPs, namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wrasse Monitoring and Control Plan • Poole Harbour Several Order Management Plan • Poole Harbour Shellfish Dredging Management Plan • Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw Management Intentions Document
	SC3G	Progress made in relevant Fisheries Management Plan areas, including Maximum Sustainable Yield commitments, will be noted in the IFCA's Annual Report.	<u>National Fisheries Management Plans:</u> The Chief Officer continues to collaborate with the Association of IFCAs and the Chief Officers Group in order to determine a National approach to the application of FMPs under the Fisheries Act 2020.

2.4 Achieving Success Criterion 4

IFCAs have appropriate governance in place and staff are trained and professional			
Definition: IFCAs are statutory authorities and sit within the local government family. Authority members may be either general members or local councillors. They comply with Codes of Conduct and the Standing Orders that apply to meetings of local government committees. General members are appointed on merit, through open competition and for a term. They are subject to an annual performance appraisal. An IFCA is funded by levy, charged to its member councils. Funding originates in local taxation. An IFCA is accountable for its use of public resources and should ensure that a proper auditing regime provides confidence in its commitment and spend of public money. It should make effective use of its resources, including staff and assets. An IFCA has a statutory obligation to prepare and publish Annual Plans and Annual Reports.			
Outcomes		Performance Indicators	
		Objective	End of Year Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The IFCA will demonstrate its long-term strategic approach to sustainable marine management by having appropriate plan-making, review, update and amendment procedures in place. The IFCA will record its performance against corporate outcomes and indicators as soon as practically possible following the end of the financial year. Staff performance management systems will be in place that link to the IFCA success criteria. There will be an induction procedure for new joiners. Staff training and development needs will be identified. Performance will be managed and, where necessary, improvement procedures will be followed. 	SC4A	The IFCA will publish a Plan on its website by 31 March, setting out the main objectives and priorities for the next financial year. A copy will be sent to the Secretary of State.	Achieved Southern IFCA published an Annual Plan in accordance with agreed priorities. This plan aligns with the Southern IFCA Five-Year Legislative Forecast (2019-2024).
	SC4B	After the end of each financial year, the IFCA will publish a Report on its website describing its activities, performance and a summary of audited financial information in that year, by 30 November. A copy will be sent to the Secretary of State.	Achieved A summary of audited financial information is integrated into this report. See Section 2.4.1
	SC4C	IFCA staff will have annual performance management plans in place. Annual appraisals for all staff will have been completed by 31 March each year.	Achieved As a direct result of the COVID pandemic there was a considered delay in the setting of Appraisal Plans for all staff, with a extension of the previous year's Appraisal Plans by 4 months – the revised timelines ensured that Appraisal Plans were set for all staff by 1 st August 2020 (delayed from 1 st April 2020), a Mid-Year review (December 2020) and an End of Year review (by 31st March). Appraisal objectives were linked to the organisation's Annual Plan. Training opportunities were identified through this process.
	SC4D	An efficient secretariat of IFCA staff support IFCA Authority meetings which are held quarterly and are quorate. Meeting documentation will meet Standing Orders.	Achieved Virtual meetings were held throughout the reporting period in line with Government's emergency Covid legislation enabling Members to make decisions online.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The IFCA Committee will be supported by an organised, efficient and effective secretariat. New members will receive an induction pack and briefing from the Authority. There will be a rolling twelve-month schedule of quarterly Authority meetings. Notices of meetings and documentation will be made available in line with Standing Orders. • IFCA Committee meetings will be held in public unless material is either confidential, or exempt within the meaning of the Local Government Act 1972. 	SC4E	The IFCA will have demonstrated, in its Annual Report, how marine, land and water management mechanisms in the Inshore Fisheries & Conservation District have worked responsively and effectively together.	<p>Achieved</p> <p>In addition, we continue to engage with partnerships in integrated catchment management and in the establishment of management systems in transitional and coastal waters.</p>
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2.4.1 Finance and Accounts 2020-2021

2.4.1.1 Accounting Summary 2020-2021

The main source of funding of the Southern IFCA is through a levy of 789,409 on constituent local Authorities in accordance with The Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Order 2010. Of this, Defra currently reimburses the local authorities £329,425 through 'New Burdens Funding' which is paid through the Department for Communities and Local Government's (DCLG) Local Services Support Grant.

INCOME & EXPENDITURE	ACTUAL		BUDGET
	Yr to 31Mar21		Yr to 31Mar21
INCOME	£		£
Bank interest receivable	822		400
Levies	789,409		789,409
Court costs awarded	2,620		2,000
Poole dredge permits	27,050		27,000
Rents - Poole leases	29,713		28,360
Solent shellfish permits	0		2,150
Transfers from Marine Act reserve	12,906		13,500
Other income	44,509		16,783
TOTAL INCOME	907,029		879,602

EXPENDITURE			
Administration	765,692		753,005
Marine Assets	21,533		37,000
Vehicles & Travel	20,874		34,916
Depreciation	40,515		59,717
Appropriations	0		0
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	848,614		884,638
EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPEND	58,415		(5,036)

2.4.1.2 Explanation of major differences between budget and actual for the year to 31 March 2021

Other income

After the budget was set, in October 2019, it was decided to extend a project that was due to have finished on 31 March 2021. This required the ongoing employment of an officer. Their salary, included in administration costs, was matched by the ongoing employment of an officer. Their salary included ongoing costs, was match by a transfer from reserves which has been shown under “other income”.

Administration costs

The salary of the employee retained as explained above, was the major cause of the higher than budgeted administration costs.

Marine Assets costs

Marine assets comprise of the authority’s patrol vessels. During the year one major effect of the pandemic was a reduction in the time spent on sea patrols with a corresponding reduction in costs.

Vehicles and travel costs

The decision to reduce the number of vehicles belonging to the authority together with the restrictions imposed by the pandemic were the principal reasons behind the reduction in actual costs compared to budget.

Depreciation costs

When the budget was set it was expected that a major new patrol vessel due to be built as a joint venture with Southampton University that would be commissioned during the 2020/21 year. For various reasons this vessel was cancelled and therefore the planned depreciation did not happen.

BALANCE SHEET	31 Mar 2021
Fixed Assets	
Office and Equipment	514,047
Marine Assets	58,894
Vehicles	50,784
	623,725
Current Assets	
Sundry Debtors	2,903
Cash at Bank and In Hand	1,359,700
	1,362,603
Sundry Creditors	(387,897)
Net assets	1,598,431
Represented by	
Capital Finance Account	623,725
Patrol Vessel Renewal Reserve	420,370
Marine Act Reserve	0
Research Reserve	26,721
General Reserve	527,615
Total Financing	1,598,431

2.4.1.3 Accounting Summary

The Audit Commission Act 1998 (section 2 and Schedule 2) required joint committees to prepare accounts and undergo an audit separate from their constituent bodies. From 1 April 2015, implementation of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 meant that joint committees are no longer required to have their accounts separately prepared and audited. Southern IFCA has however elected, in the interest of public assurance and accountability, to maintain an external examination of the accounts and for the reporting period Francis Clark LLP have undertaken an Independent limited assurance report on Southern IFCA Accounts.

2.4.1.4 Patrol vessels

The following vessels were owned by Southern IFCA on the 31st March 2021. During this reporting period, a Marine Asset Review has been commenced and a two phased approach approved by the Authority. Please refer to Section 3.1.4 for further details of the review.

FPV Vessel details	HP	MCA Work Boat Code	Length	Crew	Commissioned	Replacement cost
Stella Barbara	240	Cat. 3 (20 nm offshore)	8m	2-3	2015	130,000
Endeavour	115	Cat. 3 (20 nm offshore)	6m	2-3	2012	68,000
Protector	280	Cat. 3 (20 nm offshore)	8m	2-3	2013	90,000

2.4.2 Members Attendance at Authority Meetings 2020-2021

Member	% Attendance at Authority Meeting (4)	% Attendance at Technical Advisory Committee (4)
Cllr Mr M White	50%	N/A
Cllr Mrs A McEvoy BSc (Hons)	100%	N/A
Cllr Mr M Roberts	100%	N/A
Cllr Mr R Hughes	100%	N/A
Cllr Mr J Hobart/S Hastings	50%*	N/A
Cllr Mr R Rocca	25%	N/A
Cllr Mr M Miles	75%	N/A
Cllr Mr J Savage	75%	N/A
Cllr Mr M Winnington	100%	N/A
Ms R Irish	100%	50%
Dr K Sims/Mr P Rudd	50%*	100%
Dr R Morgan	100%	100%
Mr N Horsman/Mr N Fisher	75%*	25%*
Mr G Wordsworth	75%	50%
Ms L MacCallum	100%	75%
Prof J Humphreys	100%	100%
Dr A C Jensen	100%	100%
Mr S Kershaw/Mr L Stantiford	50%*	50%*
Mr T Legg	75%	100%
Dr S Cripps	100%	100%
Mr R Stride	100%	100%

N/A = not applicable i.e. the member is not required to attend these meetings

* = change to appointee partway through year

2.5 Achieving Success Criterion 5

Success Criterion 5: IFCA's make the best use of evidence to deliver their objectives			
Definition: IFCA's are statutory regulators for their Inshore Fisheries and Conservation District. Decision-making should be based on evidence. All IFCA's are supported by officers who pool their expertise and share best practice as a Technical Advisory Group (TAG). A programme of research activity and monitoring is planned, developed and updated in consultation with partners. The programme informs management decisions and supports justification for additional research and evidence gathering.			
Outcomes		Performance Indicators	
		Objective	End of Year Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A strategic research plan that contributes to greater understanding of the marine environment and delivery of cost-effective management of sea fisheries resources. Standard Operating Procedures describe how data is captured and shared with principal partners A list of research databases held by the IFCA and the frequency of their review Non-confidential meta-data collected through the IFCA research programme should be recorded in a database available to the marine research community. 	SC5A	The IFCA will demonstrate progress that has been made towards identifying its evidence needs by publishing a research plan each year.	Achieved The Research and Evidence Strategy 2020-2021 was published on the Southern IFCA Website.
	SC5B	The IFCA will publish a research report annually that demonstrates how evidence has supported decision making.	Achieved The Research and Evidence Strategy Report 2019-2020 is integrated into this Annual Report.
	SC5C	The IFCA's contribution to TAG and progress that has made towards national evidence needs programme will be recorded in the IFCA's Annual Report.	Achieved Southern IFCA actively participate and assist in the IFCA TAG and IFCO FMP Officers attended a TAG conference in 2020 in order to bring together national researchers.

3.0 Achieving Annual Plan Delivery Priorities 2020-2021

The Authority committed to the delivery of the following major areas of work during the 2020-2021 reporting year, as identified in the Annual Plan 20-21 and the Strategic Research and Evidence Plan 2020-2021. Further details on delivery are presented in this section.

Priorities for Delivery 2020-2021		Year End Status	Further Information
Intelligence Led, Risk Based Enforcement	Following the withdrawal of the UK from the EU, to work with partner agencies to support the transition of fisheries management as the UK develops systems of governance as an independent coastal state. To provide an annual report of actions undertaken in supporting national compliance priorities following EU Exit .	Achieved	Section 3.1
	To contribute to the update of nationally defined Fixed Administrative Penalty codes .	Ongoing	Progressing through NIMEG
	To contribute to the National Inshore Vessel Monitoring System Project.	Ongoing	Progressing through collaboration with MMO and Defra
	To work with the MMO to produce Compliance Directions and guidance on berried lobsters .	Achieved	Input through NIMEG
	Review marine operations delivery via a Marine Asset Review .	Ongoing	Section 3.1.4
	Southern IFCA will play an active role in delivery of AIFCA National Training Project and report accordingly.	Achieved: The CO provided technical support for a recruitment drive for a National Lead Training Officer. Southern IFCA continue to provide support for national training and provide IFCOs as trainers and assessors.	
Research & Monitoring	To undertake stock assessments and surveys to contribute to IFCA's understanding of the marine environment and fisheries resources within.	Postponed due to COVID pandemic. Due to Government restrictions as a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic it was agreed at the meeting of the TAC on the 7 th May 2020 that all survey work would be postponed until further notice and that where possible the Authority would continue to support ongoing evidence requirements. This decision was founded on the following considerations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social distancing requirements. • Prolonged exposure to stakeholders. • The number of IFCA staff required. • An increased reliance on stakeholders working independently from IFCA staff 	

	To identify biological characteristics of key fish and shellfish species within the District in order to provide primary evidence to support the planned MCRS Review .	Achieved	Section 3.2.1
Developing Fisheries Management Interventions	Complete the first phase of the Inshore Netting Review .	<i>Ongoing</i>	Section 3.3.1
	Complete the Inshore Potting Review and make management recommendations.	<i>Ongoing</i> with delays due to COVID-19 pandemic.	Section 3.3.2
	Implement the Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw following confirmation by DEFRA.	Achieved: Following ratification of the Permit Byelaw by the Secretary of State in October 2020, the SDPB is to be implemented in November 2021. The SDPB will regulate the harvesting of bivalves in the Solent though the annual issue of permits.	
Reviewing Fisheries Management Interventions	To undertake The Poole Harbour Several Order (2020 Revision) .	Achieved	Section 3.4.1
	To develop a Lease Bed Expansion Programme for Poole Harbour.	<i>Postponed</i> due to COVID pandemic	Section 3.4.2
	To review the management of the cleaner fish fishery and make amendments where necessary.	Achieved	Section 3.4.3
	To develop a management plan for T3 MCZs where there is a high risk to sites.	Achieved	Section 3.4.4
	To undertake a literature review of best practice Fisheries Management Plans in order to provide a blueprint framework for FMPs and review all existing Southern IFCA FMPs .	<p><i>Ongoing</i> Southern IFCA are collating and reviewing peer-reviewed literature in order to inform best practice in the application of Fisheries Management Plans across the District and using this knowledge to inform and evolve Southern IFCAs existing FMPs, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wrasse Monitoring and Control Plan • Poole Harbour Several Order Management Plan • Poole Harbour Shellfish Dredging Management Plan • Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw Management Intentions Document <p>This workstream is due to continue into the next reporting year. It is anticipated that lessons learnt will help to inform the national application of FMPs under the requirement of the Fisheries Act 2020.</p>	

Community Engagement	Promote the role of IFCA's in managing aquaculture via relevant forums and the IFCA website.	Achieved Attendance at Dorset Mariculture Strategy Governance Group (set up Sept 2020) and network communication maintained with Southwest Aquaculture Network (SWAN). Contribution via collaboration to Dorset Mariculture Strategy 2020.
	Host an annual internship programme through an annual and competitive process.	Postponed due to COVID pandemic.
Working in Partnership	Solent European Marine Site Single Scheme Management Plan and The Poole Aquatic Management Plan to be produced in collaboration with Plan Owners.	Achieved – virtual attendance (100%) at forums and contribution to annual review of plans.
	Attendance at community events .	Postponed due to COVID pandemic.
	Engagement and attendance at Community Groups to include the South Coast Fisherman's Council, the Recreational Anglers Strategic Group and the South Coast Marine Environment Group. Minutes reported back to IFCA.	Achieved – virtual attendance (100%) at forums and meetings.
	To provide IFCA representation on the Dorset Coast Forum and Solent Forum .	Achieved – virtual attendance (100%) at forums and meetings.
	Work with national and local partners to develop research strategies in order to inform any future management of black bream (T3 MCZs).	Postponed Survey work carried out by partner agencies postponed due to COVID pandemic. Southern IFCA to maintain continued support and ongoing evidence requirements where possible.
	To report and monitor Endangered, Threatened and Protected (ETP) species interactions within the Poole Clam and Cockle fishery.	Postponed due to COVID pandemic – Project start date delayed until March 2022.
	To respond to relevant marine licence applications and report to Members.	Achieved –rolling agenda item received at Authority Meeting re: actions taken, and comments made.
	We will work with Environmental Health Officers from the Local Authorities to assist in undertaking biological monitoring.	Achieved: Southern IFCA continue to assist EHO with shellfish sampling in Poole Harbour and provide dispensations where necessary.
National IFCA Profile	Implement findings of Association of IFCA (AIFCA) Independent Review and support AIFCA in strengthening its role.	Achieved: The CO and Chairman are both Members of the AIFCA and have provided support in a review of its functions and priorities that are published on the AIFCA website.
	Attend Chief Officer Group and work with AIFCA in developing a national network of Chief Officer Subject Area Leads.	Achieved: The AIFCA attends COG meetings and have commenced bi-monthly meetings with Defra.
Membership	To conduct a 'light touch' system of performance monitoring for general Members and provide training on their roles and responsibilities. To consult Members on role and function of Authority and report findings to Authority.	Achieved: Southern IFCA conducts performance appraisals for its General Members in conjunction with MMO guidance and has developed an induction package for new Members.

3.1 Delivering intelligence-led, risk-based enforcement

3.1.1 EU Exit and Working in Partnership

We have continued to work closely with our partners in the MMO through our agreed '6-point plan', to deliver closer working. We provided our vessel availability for 'day one readiness' and undertook joint patrols through national co-ordination trials. We have implemented and agreed with the MMO a memorandum of agreement for the provision of services in respect of marine conservation, wildlife, marine licensing and fisheries at sea. We engaged with the NMIC (National Maritime Information Centre) regarding the UK Maritime Response to EU Exit, we have contributed and advised cross-government working groups in relation to matters surrounding EU Exit and the UK fishing industry, this included but was not exclusive to the export and import of shellfish.

In addition to our intelligence led patrols, during the period between the 31st December 2020 and the 31st March 2021 officers conducted six MMO EU Exit taskings on FPV Protector, officers were directed to carry out surveillance within 0-12 nautical miles of the coast and reported back through the MMO Operations Team that assisted national efforts in noncompliance with foreign vessels in UK Territorial Waters.



3.1.2 Intelligence Reporting

The enforcement regime is risk based and makes appropriate use of intelligence that maintains our intelligence led, risk-based approach to enforcement for this financial year. We have a fully implemented shared 'intelligence' system with the MMO. This has been of particular importance to the national intelligence requirements post EU Exit where Southern IFCA have provided information for national decision making. In addition, analysis of intelligence guides and steers our operational priorities through a Southern IFCA Tactical Coordination Group (TCG) with local partners and regional TCG that ensures our resources are placed in the right areas at the right time.

A total of 395 Intelligence Reports (IRs) submitted by Southern IFCA during the period from April 2020 to March 2021 (both months inclusive) – 296 in 2020 and 99 in 2021. This is an increase of 28% in the number of IRs submitted for the period of 2019 to 2020 (309 IRs) that can partly be attributed directly to a national intelligence requirement for EU Exit and Covid-19.

The following sections provide a breakdown of the IRs submitted by Southern IFCA throughout the 2020/2021 period, broken down by Month, Location and Category.

3.1.2.1 Monthly reports

On average there were 33 IRs submitted by Southern IFCA per month. The greatest number occurring in June 2020, in which 51 IRs were created, the month with fewest IRs was December 2020, during which there were 20 IRs submitted (Figure 1).

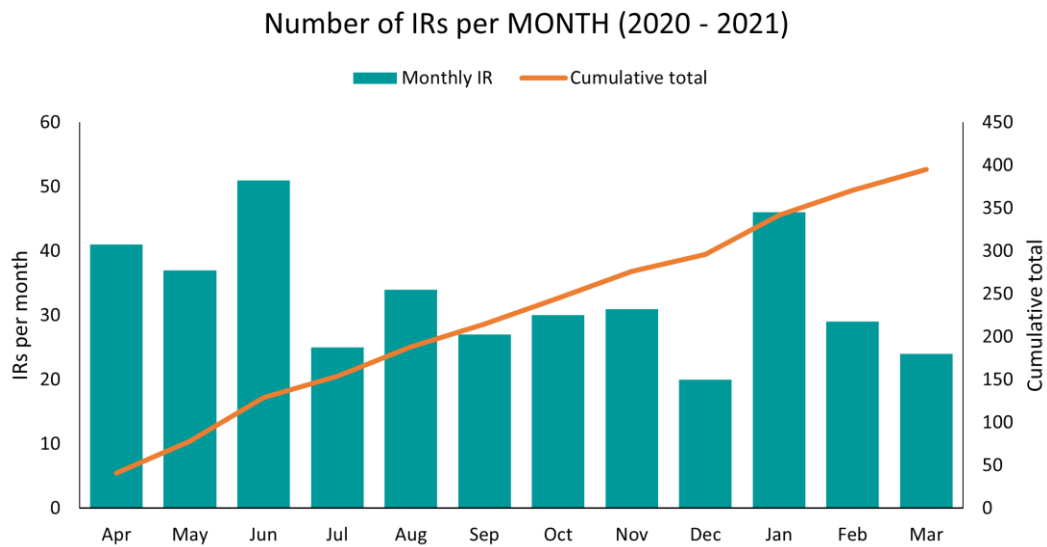


Figure 1: Bar chart showing number of Intelligence Reports submitted per month by Southern IFCA from April 2020 to March 2021 (left axis), with cumulative total shown by line (right axis).

3.1.2.2 Location reports

The Southern IFCA district is split into 5 Zones which roughly run from 1 in the West to 5 in the East (Zone 5 being the Isle of Wight). The Zone with the greatest number of IRs during the reporting period was Zone 2 for which there was 176 IRs, the least IRs were submitted for Zone 5, for which there were 13 IRs (Figure 2) Southern IFCA also received and submitted IRs relating to the District as a whole or related to other locations Nationally, these are captured under 'Zone 0' (Figure 2).

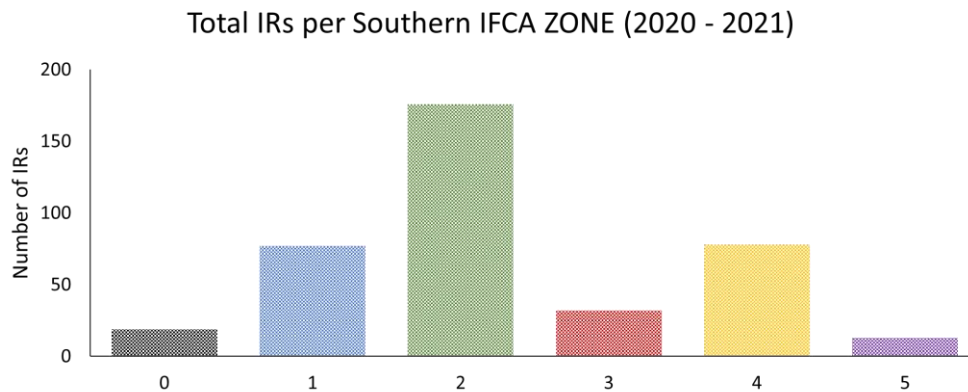
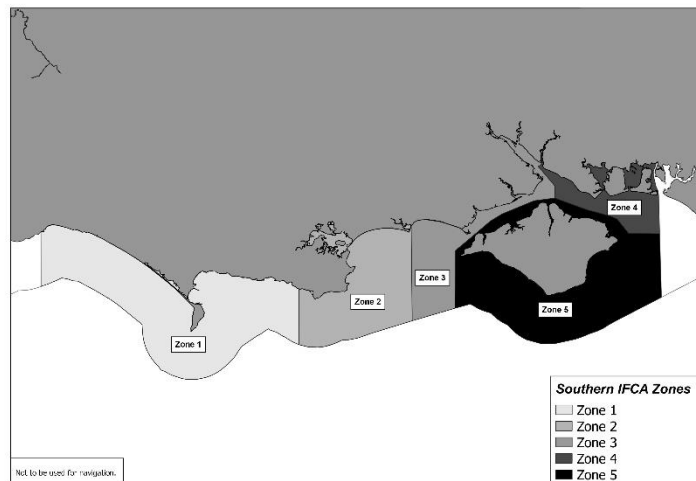


Figure 2: Bar chart showing number of Intelligence Reports submitted per Zone by Southern IFCA from April 2020 to March 2021.

Each Zone detailed in Figure 2 contains various locations for which IRs relate to specifically. These locations have been broadly grouped by geographic location. The greatest number of IRs were assigned to Poole, where there were 166 IRs during the period (Figure 3). Where an IR could not be assigned to a specific location these were broadly grouped within a Zone (e.g. Solent)

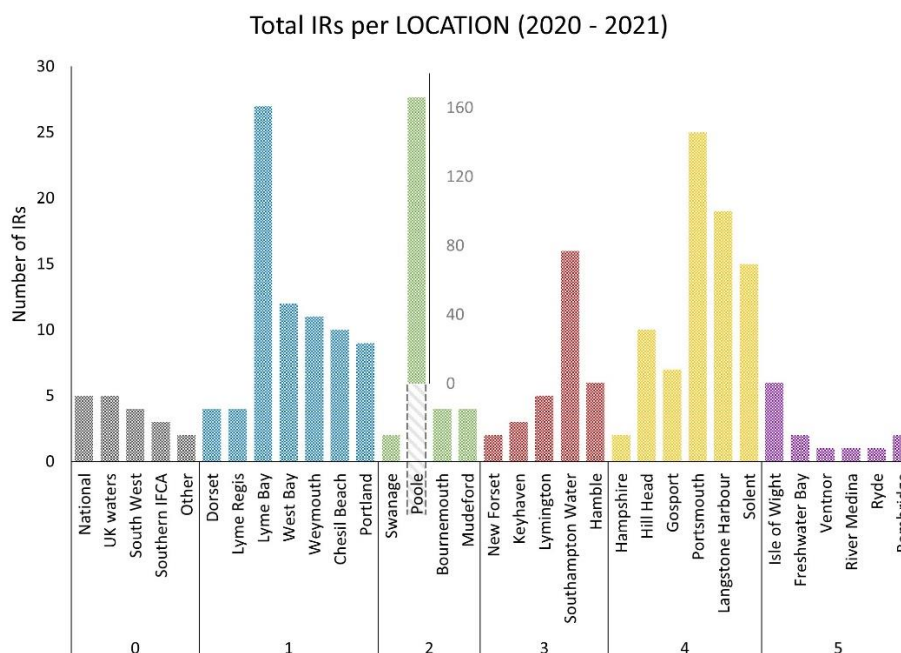


Figure 1: Bar chart showing number of Intelligence Reports submitted for each Location, sectioned into their respective Zone (different coloured bars), by Southern IFCA from April 2020 to March 2021. Data for 'Poole' is plotted on own discreet scale

3.1.2.3 Category reports

There were 27 categories reported against in IRs from April 2020 to March 2021. The category with the most IRs was 'COVID 19', for which there was 51 reports (Figure 4). During the reporting period the categories 'COVID 19' and 'EU EXIT' continued to be used to capture information on these issues and facilitate national reporting, which assessed the possible impact the situation was having on the fishing sector – there were 51 and 28 IRs submitted under these categories, respectively (Figure 4).

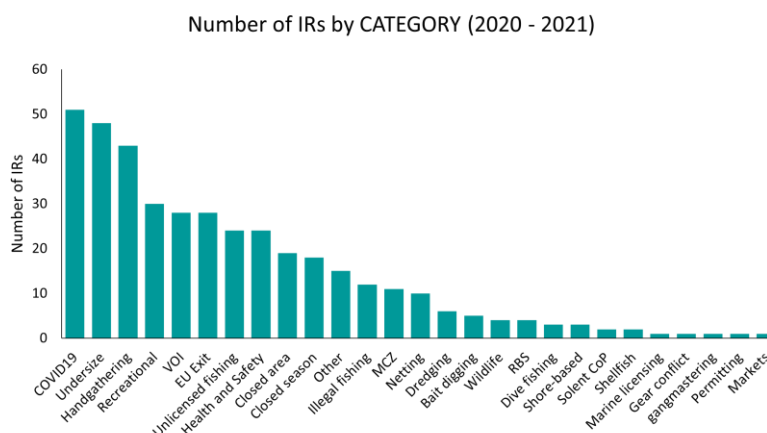


Figure 4: Bar chart showing number of Intelligence Reports submitted per Category by Southern IFCA from April 2020 to March 2021.

3.1.3 Enforcement Actions and Outcomes

The following enforcement performance indicators have been developed and agreed through the IFCA Chief Officers Group: enforcement activity data is compiled in a standard format and provided to the National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group (NIMEG). This standardisation allows IFCA annual reports to demonstrate annual enforcement figures in a comparable format. Significant variations from 2019/20 to 2020/21 can be attributed to lockdown periods and change in priorities due to Covid19, this is reflected in an increase in port and shore patrols where officers were providing assistance with communicating Government grants, export health certificates and collating information to assist with for the national decision making.

Category	Metric	Details	2019/20	2020/21
Inspections of sea	Vessel patrols	Any patrol vessel or survey (mother /daughter boat combination as one patrol)	88	83
	Fishing vessel boarding	Any fishing vessel (including unregistered / unlicensed) inspected at sea, where boarding was in pursuit of any relevant duty	223	21
	Fishing gear inspections	Store pots, tiers / strings etc. of fishing gear found deployed in sea, where inspection was in pursuit of any relevant duty. Do not count gear inspected onboard a vessel	46	0
Inspections ashore or in port	Shore patrol	Excursion/visit of any length to any part of the coast for an inspection observation of fishing related activity	129	160
	Port visits	Individual port/cove/beach visits within the shoreline	322	362
	Premises inspections	Markets, merchants refrigerated units, retailers, food producers/outlets etc	54	4
	Fish/shellfish landing inspections	Observations of fish/shellfish as landed ashore from a vessel. Does not include inspections of fish in market or in storage unless landing observed	292	153
	Other inspections	Vessel gear/fish checks in port/ashore, diver and shore angler catches, vehicle contents, shellfish on lay areas etc.	38	28
Investigation outcomes	Verbal Warnings/advisory letters	Warnings, re-briefs or letters to minor breaches of legislation (no further action taken). Where both were issued to one person/company, count as one action	46	20
	Case files generated	For a serious breach of legislation which was thought would or did lead to a formal warning letter or the application of legal sanctions	29	10
	Formal written warnings	For a serious breach of legislation where evidence was gathered was sufficient to take legal proceedings, but where a letter was instead deemed the most appropriate action	12	6
	Formal cautions	All cautions relevant to any one case	0	0
	FAPs offered	All FAPs relevant to any one case	3	0
	Individual/companies prosecuted	All persons and companies relevant to any one case	3	3

3.1.4 Marine Asset Review

A two phased approach was approved by the Authority in December 2020 regarding a review of its current Marine Assets that sets out to align these assets to the delivery of the Authority's duties. In Phase One of the Marine Asset review the Authority aims to replace FPV Endeavour and maintain FPV Protector and FPV Stella Barbara. In addition to reviewing the Marine Assets and to complement the IFCAs operational capability in both compliance and research, Phase One of the review included the procurement of a drone. Phase One is due to complete in September 2021. Phase Two of the Marine Asset Review is due to commence in 2022 and complete in 2023 with this phase aiming to look at procurement of an appropriate vessel with capabilities aligned to the IFCAs roles and responsibilities moving forward, it will consider the IFCAs enforcement and scientific functions and the any amendments made to the IFCA jurisdiction.

3.2 Research and Monitoring

3.2.1 Evidence Review: MCRS

Setting the scene

The majority of commercial species caught within the Southern IFCA District are subject to a Minimum Conservation Reference Size (MCRS) previously known as Minimum Landing Size or Minimum Legal Size. This measure prevents individuals below a set size from being removed from the fishery. The application of MCRS is an effective tool for the sustainable management of fisheries and enables the sustainable development of fisheries within the District.

Southern IFCA has committed under the Southern IFCA Five-Year Legislative Forecast to begin to review MCRS for key species in the District during the years 2021-2023.

Work achieved during 2020-2021

During 2020 Southern IFCA have been undertaking an extensive literature review based upon size of sexual maturity for commercial and recreational species in the District. The size at which 50% of a population reach maturity is known as the L_{50} . This measure is often used to help establish appropriate MCRS as it ensures individuals can reproduce at least once before capture.

In addition, the best available evidence on reproductive biology, life history and social and economic value of each species has been compiled to help inform our understandings.

Where the literature review has identified gaps in our understanding of maturity for specific species, primary research has been undertaken, this includes:

- Grey mullet working with Plymouth University to investigate the size of maturity for thin-lipped (*Liza ramada*), golden-grey (*Liza aurata*) and thick-lipped grey mullet (*Chelon labrosus*) in the Southern IFCA District.
- Gilthead bream (*Sparus aurata*) We have begun a pilot study to collect data on the size of maturity for gilthead bream in the District.

3.3 Developing Fisheries Management Interventions

3.3.1 Inshore Netting Review

Setting the Scene

This review began in 2017 in response to the outcomes of the Southern IFCA Review of Management Measures (2015). Southern IFCA have committed to delivering this work under both annual plan priorities (2018/2019 and 2019/2020) as well as the Southern IFCA Five-Year Legislative Forecast (2019-2023). This workstream also complements the wider work within DEFRA, with regard to a proposed review of Bass Nursey Areas.

Following Authority consideration, Members identified their objectives to review and, if necessary, develop netting regulations to:

- i. Support the use of estuaries and harbours by bass and other fish populations as nursery and refuge areas.
- ii. Provide protection to migratory fish species as they transit through and reside within our estuaries and harbours.
- iii. Balance the social and economic benefits and different needs of users in exploiting the fishery
- iv. To further the conservation objectives for Designated Sites.

A Netting Review Working Group (WG) has been active since 2017. This WG has undertaken a phased approach to the review, focussing on (1) potential areas of Salmonid interactions within estuaries and harbours; (2) nursery species; (3) socio-economic impacts and (4) by-catch. Underpinned by the best available evidence, an 8-week 'call for information' concluded in December 2018. During this 'call for information' a series of public drop and user group focussed meetings were held across the District. Following receipt of 269 written and verbal responses a Summary of Responses document was prepared in January 2018. The WG analysed additional evidence received and, during Autumn/winter 2019, drafted management proposals. These management proposals were subject to additional pre-consultation in early 2020.

Work achieved during 2020-2021

Between June and December 2020 remote Working Groups (due to COVID-19) met on 8 separate occasions to discuss the draft management measures in the context of the HRA and SSSI Assessments. In February 2021 the TAC considered the proposed management interventions in the context of the informal advice received from NE and the draft Impact Assessment for the fisheries. Following the TAC in February, it was determined to undertake a re-evaluation of work to date in order to ensure alignment with Southern IFCA's Policy Objectives and legislative requirements.

3.3.2 Inshore Potting Review

Setting the scene

This review began in 2018 in response to the outcomes of the Southern IFCA Review of Management Measures (2015) which identified Static Fishing Gear Management as one of five focus areas for the Authority following public consultation. Southern IFCA have committed to delivering this work under both annual plan priorities (2018/2019 and 2019/2020) as well as the Southern IFCA Five-Year Legislative Forecast (2019-2023).

This review focusses on the sustainability of whelk, crab, lobster as well as cuttlefish in order to support coastal communities and the future sustainability of inshore pot fishing. These fisheries are widely distributed across the District and support valuable inshore fisheries and communities. Currently there are no local management initiatives focused on these fisheries.

In April 2018 Southern IFCA hosted a 'Call for Information' as the first stage in the review of inshore pot fisheries. The objectives of the Call for Information were to:

1. engage with the local community to further Southern IFCA's understanding of the District's pot fisheries.
2. seek views from the community on existing management measures within the District's pot fisheries.
3. seek views from the community on suggested approaches to support the sustainable harvesting of shellfish stocks which could support and further enhance the District's pot fisheries.

In response to the 'Call for Information' the majority of stakeholders felt that there was a need to review the existing management measures in both the recreational and commercial shellfish fisheries. A Summary of Responses to the 'Call for information' was prepared in December 2018.

In July 2019, Members of the Southern IFCA Authority attended a WG in order to consider the responses to the 'Call for Information' alongside other scientific and economic evidence. Following this Working Group, a recommendation was made to the TAC in August 2019, where it was agreed that draft management measures (to include both voluntary and statutory) were to be further developed in the following areas:

1. Recreational pot fisheries
2. Commercial whelk fisheries
3. Commercial Cuttlefish fisheries

In line with the recommendations made at the TAC in August 2019 a further three WGs were held between October 2019 and February 2020. During these, Members considered Evidence Packages specific to the pot fisheries in order to build a picture of the fishery under review. This information included quantitative information based on current effort data, literature reviews providing details of species ecology, details of local fishing practice (social and economic) as well as information on gear types and methods. In addition, up to date and historic stock assessments were also analysed in order to map the fishery over time.

Work achieved during 2020-2021

Following the WG in February 2020, it was the intention of the Authority to proceed to public consultation following approval at the meeting of the Authority in March 2020. In direct response to the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting was cancelled. Following a COVID-19 workstream review, it was agreed at the meeting of the TAC on the 7th May 2020 that the planned public consultation with the community was to be temporarily put on hold due to (1) a need to prioritise other areas of work which could be achieved via remote delivery and (2) with consideration of the challenges presented in delivery of public consultation under the Government guidelines (specifically the ability of the Authority to deliver work from a remote location, as well as complying with social distancing measures).

COVID-19 contingency planning remained under constant review during 2020. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and with consideration of how the Authority have historically engaged with industry and all interested parties during public consultations, Southern IFCA considered a refined approach to engagement, designed specifically to enable the Inshore Potting Review public consultation to proceed, as agreed at the November 2020 TAC. The period of public consultation concluded on the 15th January 2021 with a total of 110 responses received. A Summary of Responses document was presented to the TAC in February 2021. In March 2021 the Authority committed to the Potting Review entering Stage 3 of the Byelaw Making Process

3.4 Reviewing Fisheries Management Interventions

3.4.1 Poole Harbour Several Order (2020 revision)

Setting the scene

Southern IFCA manage aquaculture activity within a defined area of Poole Harbour under the Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015 ('the Order'). This is the largest Several Order in the UK. In accordance with Section (1) of the Sea Fisheries (Shellfish) Act 1967, the Order confers on Southern IFCA the right of a several fishery for the cultivation of shellfish of any kind for a period of twenty years from the 1st July 2015.

Under Section (3) of the Order, the Authority must manage the aquaculture in Poole Harbour in line with the Management Plan entitled Poole Harbour Several Order 2015 Management Plan ('Management Plan').

Under Section (4) of the Order, the Authority are required to undertake an annual review of the Management Plan. If, during this review any significant changes are made to the Management Plan, then the Authority must notify, in writing any interested parties of any proposed changes at least four weeks before the date of its annual publication (1st July). The Authority must, prior to publication of the updated Management Plan, take account of any representations it receives in writing from any interested party on the proposed changes.

The management of aquaculture within Poole Harbour must have specific regard to Southern IFCA's responsibilities:

- as defined in sections (153), (154) and (166) of the MaCAA;
- In addition, Southern IFCA is a Relevant Authority in the management of EMS designated under the Habitats Directive and has a statutory responsibility to ensure that fishing activity does not damage, disturb or have an adverse effect on the wildlife or habitats for which an EMS has been designated. This includes the governance of the conservation interests of the Poole Harbour SPA;
- Under sections (28G) and (28I) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981, IFCA's are required to have consideration of any SSSI with marine components giving protection to species and habitats of national importance when carrying out its duties. This includes the governance of the conservation interests of the Poole Harbour SSSI.
- The Management Plan also has regard to the Poole Harbour Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention.

Work achieved during 2020-2021

The original Poole Harbour Several Order 2015 Management Plan was updated in order to incorporate the following review drivers:

- a) The expiration of the first tranche of lease bed allocation on the 30th June 2020.
- b) A reallocation of lease beds grounds (where relevant) under the second tranche of lease bed allocation, in order to reflect the changes in conservation designations in Poole Harbour, specifically with regard to the expansion of the Poole Harbour SSSI in 2018 and the extension of the Poole Harbour SPA in 2017. This was completed by the 1st July 2020.
- c) A review and update of the conditions under the terms of lease allocation in line with advice received from NE regarding the farming of Pacific oysters in Poole Harbour.
- d) A review and update of the conditions under the terms of lease allocation in line with advice received from the Poole Harbour Commissioners (PHC) with regard to the leasing of grounds within a designated area for personal watercraft.

3.4.2 Poole Harbour Expansion Programme

Setting the scene

Southern IFCA manage aquaculture activity within a defined area of Poole Harbour under the Poole Harbour Fishery Order 2015 ('the Order'). This is the largest Several Order in the UK. In accordance with Section (1) of the Sea Fisheries (Shellfish) Act 1967, the Order confers on Southern IFCA the right of a several fishery for the cultivation of shellfish of any kind for a period of twenty years from the 1st July 2015.

Under the terms of the Lease of Right of Several Fishery of Shellfish Laying in Poole Harbour, the Tranche 1 leases, which began in July 2015 terminated on the 30th June 2020. Following the roll out of the 2020 Lease Bed Reallocation Programme, the second round of leases began on the 1st July 2020 and are due to expire on the 30th June 2025.

Allocation of Tranche 2 Leases in 2020 considered the changes in Marine Nature Conservation designations, specifically the expansion of the Poole Harbour SSSI in 2018, which extended to include any subtidal estuarial waters and lower shore intertidal mudflats, which support important subtidal benthic habitats. Under the 2020 Lease Bed Reallocation Programme, seven of the Tranche 1 lease beds required either full closure and reallocation or part closure and reallocation as a result of interactions with the subtidal benthic habitats.

Following the successful rollout of the Poole Harbour Tranche 2 Lease Bed Reallocation Programme in July 2020 and in line with the Authority's Five-Year Legislative Forecast, during 2020-2021 it was the intention for Southern IFCA to explore opportunities for expansion. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, at the meeting of the TAC in May 2020, it was agreed that the Poole Harbour Expansion Programme would be postponed, with the intention to reinstate following the lifting of Government Restrictions with consideration to work prioritisation.

3.4.3 Wrasse Monitoring and Control

Setting the scene

The development of handline and fish trap fisheries for wrasse within a portion of the Studland to Portland Special Area of Conservation (SAC) led to the Authority undertaking Habitat Regulations Assessments for the activities in 2017. As a part of the mitigation, to ensure the fishery does not significantly affect the SAC, both Wrasse Fishery Guidance and a Monitoring and Control Plan were implemented alongside these assessments.

The Monitoring and Control Plan describes 'Triggers for Assessment'. If trigger points are reached, then a review of the fishery is to be activated in line with the Monitoring and Control Plan.

Wrasse Fishery Guidance introduced precautionary management measures, by way of a code of conduct. The code includes spatial management and seasonal restrictions (to minimise fishing impacts during the spawning season). Minimum and maximum sizes are applied to ensure an appropriate size range and sex ratio of fish remain in the wild and effort limitations. Additionally, the Code requires the submission of catch and buyer data.

Work achieved during 2020-2021

During 2020 the Authority consulted on transposing the non-statutory MCRSs for four wrasse species (ballan wrasse: 18cm, rock cook wrasse: 12cm, goldsinny wrasse: 12cm and corkwing wrasse: 14cm) into legislation. These statutory provisions are currently pending statutory approval under the Southern IFCA MCRS Byelaw which was made by the Authority in September 2020.

3.4.4 T3 MCZs and MPA Spatial Management Review

- To incorporate:
- 1) Newly designated T3 MCZs: Yarmouth to Cowes, Bembridge, Southbourne Rough, Studland Bay, Purbeck Coast, South of Portland, were designated within the Southern District.
 - 2) Additional features added to existing MCZs: Poole Rocks and Chesil Beach & Stennis Ledges.
 - 3) Review of existing spatial management under 2016 BTFG and IHG Byelaws: EMS reef features (including Lyme Bay, Studland to Portland and South Wight SACs), EMS seagrass features (including Poole Harbour and Solent-based SPAs and SACs), Chesil Beach and Stennis Ledges MCZ (additional features designated under T3), The Needles MCZ (additional seagrass data), Poole Harbour SSSI (*Sabella pavonina*).

Setting the scene

The Authority has duties to manage fisheries within Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) and must seek to ensure that, in relation to fishing activity, the conservation objectives of any MCZ in the District are furthered. A third tranche of MCZs were designated on the 31st May 2019. Of these, six new sites were designated within the Southern District and additional features were added to two existing MCZs.

Southern IFCA undertake a staged approach when assessing the potential impact of fishing activities within MCZs:

- Stage 1: the initial screening of fishing activities within the MCZ to determine whether an activity occurs or is anticipated to occur. A risk matrix system is used to support this approach.

- Stage 2: activities which are not screened out are subject to a Part A Assessment. This assessment seeks to identify pressures capable of significantly affecting designated features and their related processes.
- Stage 3: fishing activities and their associated pressures are then subject to more detailed Part B Assessments. These assessments are undertaken on a gear type basis and seek to determine whether there is a significant risk of the activity hindering the conservation objectives of the MCZ

Given the number of designated features within the third tranche of MCZs, the Authority, in 2019 committed to adopt a risk-based, phased approach to the management of these sites, with assessments broken down into the following five broad categories:

- Priority 1: Bottom towed fishing gears (BTFG);
- Priority 2: Intertidal hand gathering (IHG);
- Priority 3: Static fishing gear:
- Priority 4: Nets/Lines:
- Priority 5: Diving.

Priority 1: BTFG

All MCZ assessments (Stages 1-3 as above) for BTFG activity against features within the newly designated Tranche 3 MCZs were undertaken between November 2019 and February 2020. Following the TAC in February 2020, the Authority recommended that these assessments were sent to NE for formal comment. The findings of these assessments indicated that bottom towed fishing gear activities were not compatible with the Conservation Objectives for certain features of these sites and that additional management, most likely in the form of spatial closure, was required.

Work achieved during 2020-2021

It was agreed by the TAC on the 7th May 2020 that the findings from these MCZ Assessments would be considered by a Working Group (WG) as part of a Bottom Towed Fishing Gear Spatial Management Review. Formal comments were received from Natural England in August 2020. The WG would also consider the findings of SSSI assessments for Poole Harbour as well as assessments updating the evidence base for EMS and MCZ features on the back of evidence gathering undertaken by partner organisations since designation.

In addition, a **scheduled review of the existing BTFG Byelaw 2016** has been incorporated into this area of work in order to assess the existing management measures in place under the 2016 Byelaw against the most recent and best available evidence. Since 2016, additional spatial and feature evidence has become available to the Authority. In some cases, this evidence can provide additional confidence in the existing geographical boundaries of the BTFG Byelaw which seek to protect MPA features and in others, realignment of boundaries may be necessary to either protect the MPA features within, or realign boundaries based upon a higher resolution of data regarding the feature location. Sensitive marine features that receive protection outside of the MPA network such as *Sabella pavonina* (Poole Harbour SSSI) or seagrass, would also be considered to be at potential risk to damage from BTFG activities and will therefore be considered for protection under this review. Southern IFCA have committed to delivering this work under the Southern IFCA Five-Year Legislative Forecast (2021-2023).

Priority 2: IHG

All MCZ assessments (Stages 1-3 as above) of IHG activities against features within the newly designated Tranche 3 MCZs were undertaken between Dec 2019 and April 2020.

Work achieved during 2020-2021

The assessments were presented to the TAC in May 2020 prior to being sent to NE for formal comment. Formal comments were received in January 2021, confirming that NE agrees with the conclusion of the Assessments.

In addition, a scheduled review of the existing Southern IFCA Byelaw Review: 'Prohibition of Gathering (Sea Fisheries Resources) in Seagrass Byelaw (2016) has been incorporated into this area of work in order to assess the existing management measures in place under the 2016 Byelaw in the context of the most recent and best available evidence. The Southern IFCA 'Prohibition of Gathering (Sea Fisheries Resources) in Seagrass Beds' Byelaw was made in June 2013 and received Secretary of State confirmation on 20th December 2013. The byelaw was created to protect areas of European Marine Site seagrass features within the Southern IFCA District from damage caused through intertidal gathering activities. This byelaw underwent its first review in November 2016. Southern IFCA have committed to delivering this work under the Southern IFCA Five-Year Legislative Forecast (2021-2023).

Priority 3: Static fishing gear

Work achieved during 2020-2021

MCZ Assessments (Stages 1-3 above) for static fishing gear activity against features within the newly designated Tranche 3 MCZs began in April 2020. Formal advice from NE on the Part A Assessments were received in January 2021.

Priorities 4 & 5: Nets, Lines & Diving

Work achieved during 2020-2021

MCZ Assessments for Nets, Lines and Diving against features within newly designated T3 sites began in August 2020.

4.0 Other notable areas of work: April 2020-March 2021

4.1 Minimum Conservation Reference Size Byelaw

Setting the Scene

The application of Minimum Conservation Reference Sizes (MCRS) is an effective tool for the sustainable management of fisheries and enables the sustainable development of fisheries within the district.

Regulation (EU) 2019/1241, which came into force on 20th June 2019 specified that MCRS apply only in relation to commercial fishing and removes the existing prohibition on the transshipping, landing, transporting, storing, selling and displaying or offering for sale undersize marine organisms.

As such, for those species not listed in Southern IFCA minimum size byelaws, there is no effective enforcement regime in respect of undersized fish and shellfish for recreational fishers and no enforcement in respect of trans-shipment, landing, transporting, storing, displaying and offering for sale of undersized fish and shellfish.

The proposed MCRS byelaw will amalgamate MCRS measures which currently exist under a range of legislation and apply these to all fishery participants in the Southern IFCA district. In addition, the byelaw will introduce increases to the MCRS for grey mullet species and crawfish to support the sustainable management of these fisheries, and a new statutory MCRS will be applied to wrasse species in line with measures previously applied through wrasse fishery guidance in the district.

Work achieved during 2019-2020

The byelaw was considered at a meeting of the Full Authority in September 2020 and submitted to DEFRA for confirmation on the 24th September 2020.

4.2 Solent Scallop Code of Conduct

Setting the Scene

Over recent years a small-scale winter scallop (*Pecten maximus*) fishery emerged in the Solent. This has typically spanned from Osborne Bay on the Northeast of the Isle of Wight to No Man's Land Fort further East near Seaview.

More recently this fishery has expanded over both a longer duration and geographical extent. During 2020 this fishery lasted approximately four months, targeted by six vessels at any one time from a larger pool of local boats. This fishery has provided an alternative focus for fishers who may have typically harvested native oysters or clams during the winter period, who have in more recent years been restricted due to temporary closures of shellfish beds and/or poor water quality impacting shellfish classifications in some areas.

Work achieved during 2019-2020

A number of fishers in the Solent asked for Southern IFCA to consider management intervention in this emerging fishery to ensure its future sustainability. In response to this, Southern IFCA undertook an engagement and evidence gathering exercise in late 2020. This 'Call for Information' aimed to address any evidence gaps and gather any information relating to the fisheries in question.

In January 2021, an Authority Working Group (WG) considered the Summary of Responses to the Call for Information. Members also considered further information on interactions with MPAs, MMO landings and other relevant legislation.

Members of the WG unanimously agreed that the Solent Scallop fishery represented an important inshore fishery, of particular value to small towed gear vessels from the Solent. Having discussed various management options, Members tasked Officers with exploring:

- A closed season between 1st April and 31st October: with the aim of protecting the sustainability of the fishery through removing fishing effort whilst scallops are spawning and spat are settling.
- A limit on the number of dredges used by fishing vessels to 2, in order to limit impact to the habitats and mitigate the risk of larger nomadic scallop vessels entering the fishery.

The WG considered how future measures could be incorporated into permit conditions following the implementation of the Solent Dredge Permit Byelaw, which is due to come into force on the 1st November 2021. Members with links to the fishing industry indicated that the local fishing community was keen to move quickly on this and encouraged officers to consider interim options, including voluntary measures, for the summer of 2021.

It was determined at the meeting of the Authority in March 2021, that the Code of Conduct would be formalised and implemented from the 1st April 2021.

4.3 Organisational Structure, Line management and Administration

Setting the Scene

Southern IFCA's workstreams can be divided into three common themes, research and evidence, compliance and enforcement and administration. Organisational structures need to demonstrate clear line management and the roles and responsibilities within those workstreams.

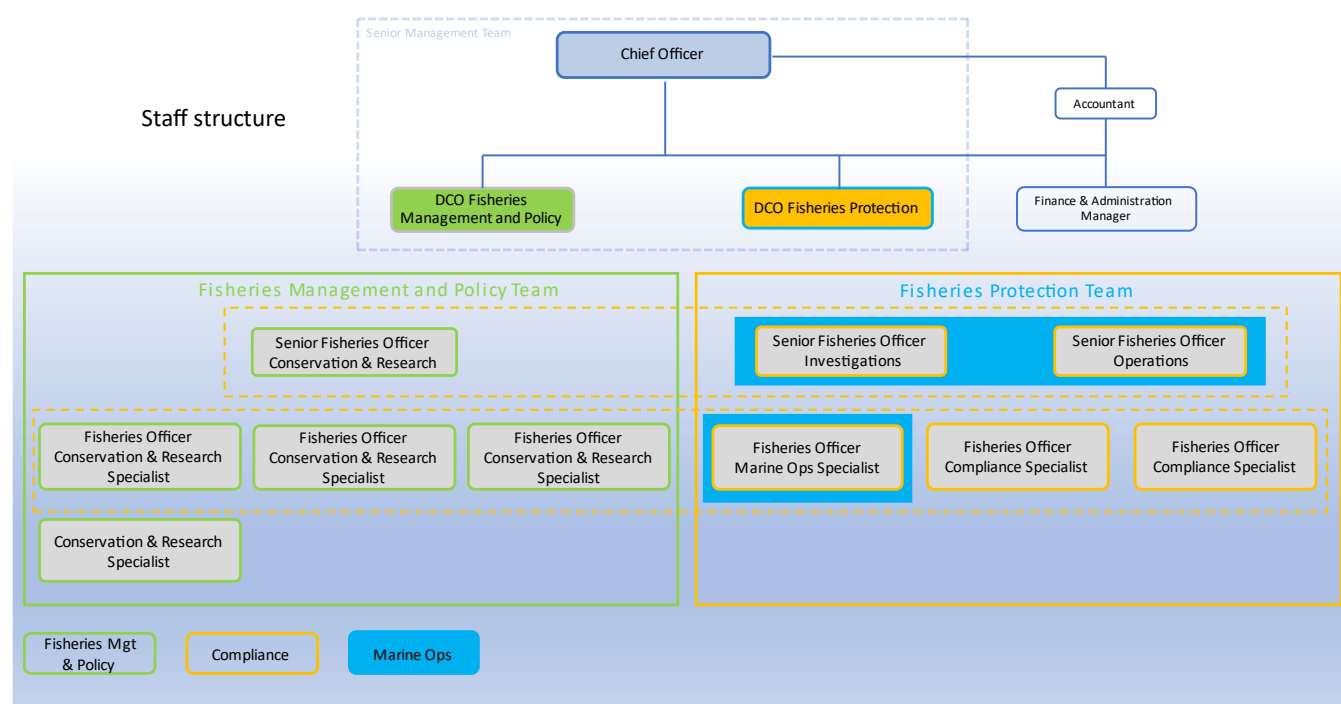
Work achieved during 2019-2020

To reflect and ensure that officers are motivated, valued and developed the CO, in consultation with all staff developed changes to the organisational structure with clear line of management that reflect the work being carried in the actual workstream and job roles. The following changes were made to the previous structure in this reporting period.

1. **Fisheries Management & Policy Team** – previously Evidence Team
2. **Fisheries Protection Team** (Compliance and Marine Operations) – previously Compliance and Operations Team
3. **Conservation & Research Specialist** – Previously Evidence Specialist
4. **Compliance and Marine Operation Specialist** remain the same

In addition, quarterly priorities are now individually assigned to selected officers for key deliverables by the next Authority meeting that enable accurate resource planning between workstreams and meetings. All our priorities have been subject to Covid 19 restrictions and have been reviewed and timelines adjusted accordingly. The following diagram represents the current organisational structure.

Organisational diagram



4.4 Recreational Sea Angling

Setting the Scene

At the Southern IFCA we believe that education and engagement are crucial to achieving good overall compliance with the regulations. The dissemination of educational information is particularly important amongst Recreational Sea Anglers; many of whom do not belong to a representative association. The international decline in the numbers of seabass has necessitated management at a European level.

Work achieved during 2020-2021

During the reporting period we have widely distributed our Minimum Conservation Reference Size and EU Bass Regulations leaflets. The Southern IFCA have supported the national regulators responsible for implementing the management introduced to rebuild these stocks.

Our records show that over 254 recreational fishers were engaged with across 11 key Recreational Key Angling Sites within the Southern IFCA District over the reporting period, these figures refer to face to face interactions with recreational anglers, during which educational information was provided verbally and/or in leaflet form. Engagements occurred during both sea and land patrols. In addition, numerous information packages were distributed both electronically and in person to fishing tackle shops, harbour authorities and marinas.

Southern IFCA has built up a level of trust within the angling community. The Southern IFCA has hosted a number of Recreational Sea Angling Group meetings over the period, this group provides a forum to discuss fisheries management topics relevant to the local sea angling sector, allows more effective communication between the sea angling sector and the bodies responsible for management, assists in the development of local sea angling strategies, provides a platform for the sector to comment and input into proposed local fisheries management and promotes sea angling to the local community.

4.5 Procurement of a Drone to Enhance Operational Capability

Setting the Scene

A drone is defined by the Civil Aviation Authority as an Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) or Small Unmanned Aircraft (SUA). They are typically miniature aircraft controlled from the ground by a pilot and can have various camera attachments with recording capabilities.

The use of drones has been widely used across law enforcement agencies throughout the country for the detection of crimes and collating evidence for offences. They can be used in dynamic environments and deployed as a fast response to monitor, record and evidence illegal activity that may not always be seen as well as being used for routine observations and checks. Drones can also be used for research and science work, i.e. mapping of protected areas and monitoring fishing activity.

Work achieved during 2019-2020

As part of the marine asset review the Authority has procured a drone to enhance their operational activity. Officers have been trained as remote pilots with additional officers acting as observers and camera operators. This is underpinned by an operations manual that ensure the Authority utilises drones in accordance with regulations.



4.6 Southern IFCA Remotely Operated Vehicle

Setting the Scene

Southern IFCA have responsibility to undertake stock assessments and surveys to contribute to IFCA's understanding of the marine environment and fisheries resources within. This year Southern IFCA has been seeking to create partnerships to improve its capability within its research and compliance function.

Work achieved during 2020-2021

Southern IFCA submitted an application for a Remotely Operated Underwater Vehicle (ROV) through a grant-funded program set out by the Wildlife Conservation Society in partnership with Sofar Ocean Technologies. This scheme provided eligible organisations working in education, research and conservation, including fisheries research and enforcement, with a Sofar Ocean Trident ROV. Southern IFCA will use the Sofar Ocean Trident ROV for several purposes, including observing and researching marine habitats such as seagrass beds, and monitoring gear and fishing activity underwater to check compliance with fisheries legislation.



4.7 National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group

Setting the Scene

The National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group (NIMEG) does not have any statutory functions, the main purpose of the group is to bring together expertise in the field of regulation and enforcement within inshore fisheries and marine conservation in order to develop and support joint working and consistency; identify and share best practice; and to promote professionalism and competence. The main membership is made up of officers who hold a decision-making mandate with operational responsibility for regulation and enforcement from the following organisations: Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCA) Environment Agency (EA) Marine Management Organisation (MMO) Centre for Environment, Fisheries & Aquaculture Science (CEFAS). The group also has an Associate Membership which comprises of other relevant organisations which may be invited to join the group where it is considered to be appropriate, this includes the following organisations: Defra, Channel Islands State Fisheries Departments (Guernsey & Jersey) Isle of Man Fisheries Department Marine and Fisheries Division, Welsh Government Natural England.

Work achieved during 2020-2021

The Senior Officer (Operations) at Southern IFCA has successfully chaired NIMEG influencing change at a national level navigating the group through the significant challenges of 2020-2021 including delivery and response to EU Exit & the Covid-19 pandemic. Improvements in policy and practices in relation to the intelligence led risk-based approach to enforcement and partnership working has also been achieved.



Further Copies

This document is available in electronic form from
www.Southern-ifca.gov.uk

Alternatively, a hard copy can be viewed here:

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