

NORTH EASTERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

EXECUTIVE MEETING

Meeting Room 7, County Hall, Cross Street, Beverley, HU17 9BA

Thursday 6 March 2025 09:30am

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Presentation/discussion Mr R Latimer – Whitburn – Sewage Discharging Coastal Waters
3. Declaration of Personal or Prejudicial Interests – Members to declare any interests in items on the Agenda and the nature of such interests
4. To take the notes of the meeting held on 3 September 2024 as a correct record (*pages 1-4*)

Items for Decision

5. NEIFCA Annual Plan 2025/2026 (*pages 5-46*)
6. Budget Report 2024/2025 (*pages 47-50*)
7. Revenue Budget 2025/2026 (*pages 51-58*)

The public are likely to be excluded from the meeting for consideration of the following item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 8 and 9 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

9. Risk Management Strategy & Strategic and Operational Risk Register Reviews (*pages 61-78*)
10. NEIFCA Health & Safety Policy & Safe Working Practices 2025/2026 (*pages 79-80*)

Items for Discussion

11. NEIFCA Byelaws Update (*pages 81-84*)
12. Chief Officer's Operational Update (*pages 85-170*)

Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent by reason of special circumstances which must be specified

NORTH EASTERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

05 SEPTEMBER 2024

Present

Cllr David Chance (Vice Chair)
 Mr Graham Collins
 Andrew Wheeler
 Cllr Tim Norman

Representing

North Yorkshire Council
 MMO appointee
 MMO Appointee
 East Riding of Yorkshire Council

Clerk Darren Stevens, East Riding of Yorkshire Council, Treasurer Stephen Chandler, East Riding of Yorkshire Council and David McCandless, NEIFCA Chief Officer, also attended the meeting.

The meeting took place in County Hall, Beverley, the meeting commenced at 9.30am.

89.	APOLOGIES
	Apologies for absence received from Prof Mike Elliott and Cllr Neil Swannick
90.	DECLARATION OF PERSONAL OR PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS
	Resolved – The Chair asked Members to declare any personal or prejudicial interests with respect to items on the Agenda and the nature of such interests. No such interests were declared.
91.	TO TAKE NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 07 MARCH 2024 AS A CORRECT RECORD
	Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2024 are approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
92.	BUDGET MONITORING 2024/2025
	Treasurer Stephen Chandler advised Members of the budget position at the end of month 3 (June) in 2024/25. At the end of June 2024, the Authority has net expenditure of £295,156 against an expected £362,701 underspending by £67,546. The forecast outturn underspend is £156,431, mainly due to underspends on employees relating to vacancies and additional interest receipts due to the level of reserves set aside for the patrol vessel replacement. Any underspend at the end of the financial year will help towards the build of the new vessel.
	Resolved – The 2024/2025 budget monitoring position is noted.
93.	STRATEGIC AND OPERATION RISK REGISTER - REVIEW
	The Chief Officer, David McCandless presented a report to inform members that in accordance with the Authority's Risk Management Strategy, a six monthly review of the Strategic and Operational Risk Registers had been undertaken and reported for information.

	Key risks identified included staffing and financial relating to the sale of NEG III. The Chief Officer provided updated positions provided in relation to both.
	Resolved – The revised Strategic and Operational Risk Register is noted and should be reviewed in six months' time.
94.	NEIFCA STANDBY AND CALLOUT POLICY
	Chief Officer David McCandless presented a Standby & Call out policy to members which set out a framework for the designation of an 'out of hours' officer point of contact through a rota system alongside terms and conditions and additional remuneration for acting in such a role. Officers would be given the option to opt in or out of such a scheme and those officer's choosing to opt in would be retained on a list which would be rotated around units of one week. Members agreed that the provision would enhance the service to stakeholders.
	Resolved – (a) Members noted the report (b) Members recommended the Standby & Call Out Policy be approved and adopted.
95.	STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS – ANNUAL REVIEW
	Chief Officer David McCandless presented a report to seek members approval to adopt the amendments to the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations In line with the recommendations of the 2024 NEIFCA Internal Audit a review of the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations has been completed by the Treasurer and Clerk in consultation with the Chief Officer and some minor changes have been made which are included in the report.
	Resolved – (a) Members noted the report (b) Members agreed that the revised Standing Orders and Financial Regulations be approved and adopted.
96.	NEIFCA ANNUAL AUDIT 2023/2024
	The Clerk and Chief Officer presented a report to inform Members of the findings of the annual audit. The overall assurance opinion is substantial, maintaining the level achieved in the 2022/2023 audit. A sound system of governance, risk management and control exists, with internal controls operating effectively and being consistently applied to support the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
	Resolved – Members noted the report.
97.	CHIEF OFFICERS OPERATIONAL UPDATE
	Chief Officer David McCandless presented a report to provide members with an operational update covering the period March 2024 to August 2024. The report focused on the development of the new build vessel with a visual update provided for members by Deputy Chief Ian Davies. The new vessel is currently on budget and schedule with delivery expected for April 2025. Discussions held by members on launch strategy of the new vessel with the Chief Officer reporting help with this would be sought from both ERYC and NYC press offices.
	Resolved - Members noted the report.

98.	HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY & SAFE WORKING PRACTICES 2024/2025 - REVIEW
	Chief Officer David McCandless advised members of the completion of the six monthly review of the Authority's Health & Safety provisions. Since the last review reported to the Executive Committee on 7 March 2024 there had been no notable incidents or accidents to report to members. The provision of mandatory stab vests removed in March 2024 had been continuously monitored and risk level had not changed.
	Resolved - Members noted the report.
99.	NEIFCA BYELAWS UPDATE
	Chief Officer Davis McCandless presented a report to members to update them on the progress of the 3 byelaws made recently by the authority. Both the Shellfish Permit Byelaw and the Humber Estuary Byelaw were currently in second stage quality assurance with the MMO. Once this process was complete, they would then pass to the Minister in London for formal sign off. Most likely this would run into the first few months of 2025. The Beam Trawling Byelaw was currently the subject of formal public consultation. To date two responses had been received from hobby fishermen affected by the draft proposals. In response, the Chief Officer advised members that an exception had been added to the draft byelaw which would enable hobby fishermen to continue using a single 2.5m beam trawl without the need for an additional permit. This new byelaw would be 'fast tracked' due to the emergency byelaw expiring in January 2025.
	Resolved - Members noted the report.
100.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS
	No items recorded.
	The meeting closed at 11.20

DRAFT

NORTH EASTERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Report to: Executive Committee
6 March 2025

NEIFCA Annual Plan 2025/2026

Report by the Clerk & Chief Officer.

A. Purpose of Report

1. To review the Annual Plan for the year 2025/2026.
2. To authorise the drafting of an accompanying annual report, summarising the Authority's main activities and outputs during the 2024/2025 year.

B. Recommendation

1. That members endorse the content of the draft Annual Plan framework for 2025/2026 to be prepared for publication and subsequent submission to Defra.
2. That members authorise the drafting of an annual report, summarising the Authority's main activities and outputs during the 2024/2025 year for review by the Authority at the June 2025 meeting.

1. Background

- 1.1 Section 177 of the 2009 Marine and Coastal Access Act places a statutory duty on Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCA's) to make and publish an annual plan which sets out the main objectives and priorities for the year ahead.
- 1.2 A draft framework covering the new 2025/2026 year is attached for members review and to provide any feedback to the Chief Officer by Friday 21 March 2025.
- 1.3 Key areas of work for the year ahead include: Managing the final stages of the build and commission of the new main fisheries vessel; Supporting the confirmation and implementation of the new Shellfish Permit, Humber Estuary Fishing and Beam Trawling byelaw regulations; Expanding the commissioning and further development of the new fisheries permitting database and maintaining and developing the Authority's offshore programmes relating to both marine survey and enforcement and compliance. In terms of the offshore marine survey programme, Marine Protected Area (MPA) monitoring and assessment will form a key component of the planned work.
- 1.4 Alongside organisational and regional priorities the Authority will continue to provide active engagement and support to the delivery of ongoing national work streams including the development and implementation of Fisheries Management Plans and Marine Protected Area (MPA) related work.

Contact Officer

David McCandless, Chief Officer,
Ext. 3690

NORTH EASTERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Report to: Authority Meeting
6 March 2025

BUDGET MONITORING 2024/25

Report by the Treasurer

A. Purpose of Report

To advise Members of the budget position at the end of month 9 (November) in 2024/25.

B. Recommendations

- i. That the budget monitoring position is noted.
- ii. That the £850,000 underspend relating to the sale of the North East Guardian III patrol vessel is transferred to the Renewals Fund as outlined in paragraph 2.3.
- iii. That the £220,000 underspend relating to Defra 'grant in aid' is transferred to the Renewals Fund as outlined in paragraph 2.4.
- iv. That the balance of any remaining underspend at outturn be transferred to the Renewals Fund.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 A detailed budget monitoring exercise is undertaken monthly by the Treasurer in consultation with the Chief Officer. This analyses individual budget lines in terms of the current expenditure and allows for projections to the end of the financial year.
- 1.2 This report provides the overall position and any areas whereby an explanation is required of any notable variance on the Authority's spending to the end of December 2024.
- 1.3 At its meeting on 8 December 2023, the Authority set a levy totalling £1,535,873 for the current financial year, including £102,900 transferred to the Renewals Fund and £10,000 transferred to the Vehicle Replacement Reserve.

2. Revenue Expenditure to 31 December 2024

- 2.1 Appendix A summarises the expenditure and income for the Authority for the nine months to December of the financial year and compares it with the budget. The appendix shows both subjective and objective net expenditure for the period.

- 2.2 At the end of December 2024, the Authority has net expenditure of £725,505 against an expected £1,042,254 underspending by £316,749. The forecast outturn underspend is £1,274,436. The majority of the underspend is as a consequence of the patrol vessel replacement project and one-off receipts from sale of the patrol vessel, planned delays in recruitment to vacant posts in the offshore team and temporarily increased bank interest receipts.
- 2.3 The forecast underspend includes a one-off capital receipt of £850,000 for the sale of the North Eastern Guardian III patrol vessel which was completed in January 2025. It was agreed at the Special Authority Meeting on 30 June 2023 that the capital receipt from the sale of the patrol vessel will be used towards a substantive payment towards the costs of the finance lease agreement with ERYC in year one. The build of the new vessel is progressing well and it is anticipated will be completed in May 2025. It is proposed that the underspend resulting from the capital receipt is transferred to the Renewals Fund at the end of the financial year.
- 2.4 The underspend includes £220,000 additional Defra 'grant in aid' of which £90,000 relates to grants awarded in the 2023/24 financial year and received in 2024/25. The forecast £90,000 underspend was approved to be transferred to the Renewals Fund at the Authority Meeting on 5 December 2024. A further £130,000 has now been awarded for the 2024-25 financial year made up of £50,000 allocated to support the Marine Protected Area and delivery towards 'good environmental status', £50,000 Fisheries Management Plan grant and £30,000 towards Marine Sustainable Development. At the Executive meeting on 7 March 2024 (Minute 81 refers) it was agreed in principle and subsequently endorsed at the Authority meeting on 6 June 2024 (Minute 13 refers), that this 'grant in aid' funding would be used to support the build and commission of a new 6.5m 'boarding' rigid inflatable boat (RIB) a component of the new vessel build project and it is proposed that the underspend from the receipt of the grants is transferred to the Renewals fund at the end of the financial year.
- 2.5 The other main variances in the forecast outturn are:
- Employee underspends of £121,206 – mainly due to underspends from delaying recruiting to vacancies in the offshore team until the position on the patrol vessel replacement and sale of existing vessel is clearer.
 - Patrol vessel running costs – underspend of £16,718 due to overspends on insurance (£8,503) and rent (£9,844) offset by a forecast underspend of £35,600 on vessel fuel. The current vessel insurance provision will be fully reviewed when the new patrol vessel is delivered and pressures on the rental costs addressed in the 2025-26 budget. The underspend on vessel fuel is a one-off saving due to the sale of the patrol vessel.
 - Supplies & services – £76,248 overspend offset by a £58,700 underspend on support services. The variances are mainly due to the Defra funded Lobster Settlement Index project spending more on supplies & services (equipment and external services) and less on support services such as NEIFCA staff time and boat hire, than expected at the start of the project
 - Grants & Contributions - £214,264 underspend due to £220,000 Defra 'grant in aid' offset by in kind contributions towards the Lobster Settlement Index project.

- Other income - £938,411 overachievement mainly due to £850,000 capital receipt for the sale of the main vessel and £77,629 bank interest due to increases in interest rates and the level of reserves being set aside for the patrol vessel replacement. This will not be a reoccurring underspend as the majority of the reserves will be utilised to fund the new patrol vessel towards beginning of 2025/26 financial year.

Contact Officer

Liz Smith (liz.smith@eastriding.gov.uk)
Principal Accountant, East Riding of Yorkshire Council

David Kirven
Treasurer

NEIFCA Budget Monitoring Report as at December 2024

	<i>Approved Budget</i>	<i>Profiled Budget to Month 9</i>	<i>Actual to Month 9</i>	<i>Variance to Profile</i>	<i>Forecast Outturn</i>	<i>Variance to Forecast</i>
	£	£	£	£	£	£
EXPENDITURE						
Employee Expenses						
Pay,NI and Superannuation	874,200	655,650	553,724	-101,926	753,586	-120,614
Other Employee Costs	21,000	3,652	2,150	-1,502	20,408	-592
Premises	18,030	13,523	19,160	5,638	20,984	2,954
Transport						
Patrol Vessel Running Costs	241,250	198,411	180,305	-18,107	224,532	-16,718
Vehicle Running Costs	37,060	27,795	21,076	-6,719	33,874	-3,186
Travel and Subsistence	16,410	12,308	10,583	-1,724	15,257	-1,153
Supplies and Services	157,560	122,800	200,133	77,332	233,808	76,248
Support Services	179,690	48,119	9,004	-39,116	120,990	-58,700
	1,545,200	1,082,258	996,135	-86,123	1,423,439	-121,761
INCOME						
Grants and Contributions	-23,000	-17,250	-103,302	-86,052	-237,264	-214,264
Other Income	-133,080	-22,754	-167,327	-144,573	-1,071,491	-938,411
	-156,080	-40,004	-270,630	-230,626	-1,308,755	-1,152,675
NET EXPENDITURE	1,389,120	1,042,254	725,505	-316,749	114,684	-1,274,436

	<i>Approved Budget</i>	<i>Profiled Budget to Month 9</i>	<i>Actual to Month 9</i>	<i>Variance</i>	<i>Forecast Outturn</i>	<i>Variance to Forecast</i>
	£	£	£		£	
NET EXPENDITURE						
Central / Headquarters	455,820	228,205	106,958	-121,247	-458,429	-914,249
Land Based Operations	145,140	108,855	108,237	-618	144,120	-1,020
Offshore Operations	625,140	486,329	411,296	-75,032	520,950	-104,190
Environment	146,020	109,515	65,842	-43,673	122,184	-23,836
Grant Aided Projects	0	96,600	20,435	-76,165	-231,142	-231,142
Patrol Vessel Replacement	17,000	12,750	12,737	-13	17,000	0
	1,389,120	1,042,254	725,505	-316,749	114,684	-1,274,436

	<i>Approved Budget</i>	<i>Profiled Budget to Month 9</i>	<i>Actual to Month 9</i>	<i>Variance</i>	<i>Forecast Outturn</i>	<i>Variance to Forecast</i>
	£	£	£		£	
REPRESENTED BY						
Annual levy on Local Authorities	-1,535,870	-1,535,870	-1,535,875	-5	-1,535,870	0
Contribution from Reserves	-55,690	0	0	0	-55,690	0
Contribution to Vehicle Replacement	10,000	0	0	0	10,000	0
Contribution to Renewals Fund	192,440	0	0	0	192,440	0
	-1,389,120	-1,535,870	-1,535,875	-5	-1,389,120	0

NORTH EASTERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Report to: Executive Meeting
6 March 2025

DRAFT BUDGET 2025/26

Report by the Treasurer

A. Purpose of Report

To inform Members of the draft budget for 2025/26.

B. Recommendations

- a) That the draft budget for 2025/26 be approved.
- b) That the level of general reserves is maintained at £228,450 (13%) of the annual levy.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At its meeting on 5 December 2024, the Authority set the levy for the North Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority at £1,712,499 for 2025/26. The Authority resolved that a detailed budget be brought to the Executive for approval.
- 1.2 The Authority's budget has been reviewed in detail by the Chief Officer and the senior leadership team, together with the Treasurer, to identify the level of expenditure necessary to meet operational priorities through to 31 March 2026.

2. Overall Budget

- 2.1 The Authority's budget is spent in the following major areas –
 - **Central Management Budget:** Expenditure relating to the cost of Corporate Management and administrative support.
 - **Operations:** Direct expenditure incurred in the performance of the Authority's objectives, comprising land-based, offshore and environmental activities.
- 2.2 The draft budget resources the main objectives and work priorities for the year ahead in order to deliver the requirements of both the adopted national vision and the Authority's local priorities. It has been produced in line with the Annual Plan and Strategic Risk Register.

The 11.5% levy increase approved at the Authority Meeting on 5 December 2024 has been incorporated into the budget, along with increases to reflect the new annual finance lease with East Riding of Yorkshire Council for the build and commission of a new Fisheries Patrol/Research vessel. The proposed budget also includes provision for a 2025/26 pay award and the increase in Employers National Insurance contributions on employee budgets. The proposal includes a budget for £30,500 Standby Duty payments as approved as the Executive Meeting on 5 September 2024, funded through a combination of supplies & services savings, reallocation of existing overtime budgets and £14,150 income from the new Commercial and Recreational Shellfish permitting scheme. In addition, a review of individual budget lines has been undertaken and a number of minor changes made to ensure they are set at an appropriate level within the existing budget.

- 2.3 The draft budget includes a one year supplementary budget request for additional income for work undertaken by existing NEIFCA employees on the DEFRA Coastal Health and Livelihoods project. It is proposed that this one-off income will be used to temporarily offset the new permanent income budget for the Commercial and Recreational Shellfish permitting scheme while the scheme is established. It is also proposed to extend the Patrol Vessel Replacement Project until September 2025 to allow for the delivery and commission of the new vessel. The details are shown in the table below:

Supplementary Budgets 25-26	£	Funding
Coastal Health & Liveihoods Project	14,170	DEFRA Contribution
Patrol Vessel Replacement Project	8,500	Renewals Fund Reserve
Total	22,670	

- 2.4 The following table summarises the proposed revenue budget for the Authority for 2025/26. Further details are shown in Appendix B.

2.5

Net Expenditure	£
Central Management	452,210
Operations	
Land Based	150,210
Offshore Operations	857,900
Environment	153,450
Funded Projects	-5,670
Net Cost of Service	1,608,100
Funding	
Contribution to Vehicle Replacement Reserve	10,000
Contribution to Renewals Fund	102,900
Transfer to revenue from Renewals Fund	-8,500
Local Authority Levy	1,712,500

3. Risk

- 3.1 The Bank of England's February 2025 Monetary Policy Report describes how that although inflationary pressures are falling CPI is forecast to increase from 2.5% to 3.7% in autumn 2025 due to higher global energy costs before falling back to around the 2% target in 2027. Economic growth in the final quarter of 2024 was weaker than anticipated and growth forecasts have been reduced from 1.5% to 0.75% in 2025. The bank has reduced interest rates by a quarter of a percent to 4.5% in February 2025 and reported that it expects rates to be cut further but there is significant uncertainty about how far and how fast these changes will be implemented.
- 3.2 NEIFCA is continuing to experience effects of higher inflation as a pressure on wages, vessel and vehicle insurance and other supplies. In the Autumn Budget on 30 October 2024 the Chancellor announced that departmental resource and capital budgets beyond 2025/26 will be set by Phase 2 of the Spending Review due to conclude in late spring 2025. It is not yet known how this will impact on the specific grant local authorities receive for Inshore Fisheries and Conservation. Budgets will continue to be closely monitored and opportunities to generate external income will also be explored.
- 3.3 NEIFCA has improved staff retention rates in recent years and it is expected that two permanent offshore posts which have been kept vacant during 2024/25, due to the uncertainty of having access to a patrol vessel during the patrol vessel replacement project, will be recruited to in early 2025-26. The 2024/25 National Joint Council (NJC) Local Government Pay Award was broadly in line with what was anticipated when the 2024/25 budget was set. The 2025/26 proposed budget includes provision for the increase in Employers National Insurance contributions from 13.8% to 15% from 1 April 2025. It is forecast that the pay award will be 2% in 2025/26, 2026/27 and 2027/28.
- 3.4 Maintenance of the patrol vessel is generally cyclical in nature and can usually be planned. However, a catastrophic event, such as engine failure, could potentially leave the Authority exposed to substantial additional expenditure. Whilst most such events would be insured, the Authority would likely be expected to incur the expenditure in the first instance. The commission of the new patrol vessel in early 2025/26 reduces the risk of higher maintenance requirements in the short term.
- 3.5 Reserves are held to manage the above risks. If the risks were realised the short-term financial impact would be able to be met from General Reserve and Patrol Vessel Maintenance Reserve.

4. Reserves

- 4.1 The Authority maintains a general reserve to meet unforeseen events and specific reserves to even out cash flow for individual projects or purchases (Appendix B). The Authority currently holds five specific reserves.

5. General Reserve

- 5.1 The General Reserve enables the Authority to demonstrate its financial standing as a 'going concern', to be in a position to meet unforeseen liabilities. The actual level of reserves is subjective, since any such liability is neither known nor anticipated. Setting the level of general reserves is just one of several related decisions in the formulation of the budget for a particular year. Account is taken of the key risks, stated above, that could impact on the financial assumptions underpinning the budget alongside a consideration of the Authority's financial

management arrangements. A good track record for managing in-year budget pressures and operation of robust financial reporting arrangements is evident.

- 5.2 At 31 March 2025, the balance on the general reserve is forecast to be £228,450, which represents 13% of the annual levy for 2025/2026. It is anticipated that this can be maintained until 31 March 2026. This is considered a reasonable level of balances for the Authority to hold.

6. Specific Reserves

- 6.1 In 2011/12 the Authority created an earmarked reserve to manage the risk associated with patrol vessel maintenance. Due to its nature, certain maintenance is cyclical rather than annual and other maintenance may be of an exceptional and urgent nature. The need for the reserve was demonstrated when it was utilised in 2022/23 to part fund the cost of the mechanical engine failure of the patrol vessel. The 2024/25 budget approved the transfer of £38,689 of the forecast 2023/24 outturn underspend into the reserve to fund the remaining critical operational compliance works on the Protector III Cabin RIB. The work is now complete and the funding will be utilised in 2024/25 financial year and the Patrol Vessel Maintenance reserve balance at 31 March 2026 is anticipated to be £50,000.
- 6.2 It is proposed to transfer the balance on the External Projects reserve of £8,898 to the Renewals Fund at the end of the 2024/25 financial year.
- 6.3 The Vehicle Replacement Reserve enables the fleet programme to be effectively managed and the annual set aside of £10,000 is proposed to be maintained at the same level. It is anticipated that £30,000 will be utilised in 2025/26 from the reserve. Currently the Authority owns one small multi-purpose van, one large transporter van, two 4x4 'pick up' vehicles, one all-terrain two seater 'gator' and leases a further 4x4 'pick up' and a pool car. Owning vehicles has proven much more cost effective in terms of flexibility of managing mileage and additional 'end of term costs' which are applied with each lease agreement.
- 6.4 The Special Authority Meeting on 30 June 2023 approved the decision for East Riding of Yorkshire Council Cabinet to award the contract for the build and commission of a new 24.5m Fisheries Patrol/Research vessel along with a proposed finance lease agreement with ERYC. Under the terms of the finance lease agreement NEIFCA will make a substantive payment towards the costs in year one utilising funds set aside in the Renewals Fund, capital receipts from the sale of the North-East Guardian III and £562,000 Defra capital grant funding. It was agreed that the remaining cost will be funded by ERYC borrowing from the Public Works Loans Board and the costs will be met by the finance leasing arrangement between ERYC and NEIFCA, funded by an increase to the levy which has been phased in over 2024/25 and 2025/26 financial years. The vessel build is almost complete and it is anticipated that the new vessel will be commissioned in May 2025.
- 6.5 It is proposed, in the December 2024 budget monitoring report, that any residual underspend from 2024/25 financial year is transferred to the Renewals Fund. The 2024/25 December forecast underspend includes £220,000 additional Defra 'grant in aid' which as agreed at the Executive Meeting on 7 March 2024 (Minute 81 refers) can be used to support the build and commission of a new 6.5m 'boarding' rigid inflatable boat (RIB), a component of the new vessel build project. The underspend also includes a one-off capital receipt of £850,000 for the sale of the current patrol vessel, the North East Guardian III.
- 6.6 There are two planned transfers to the Renewals Fund in 2024/25, £89,540 set aside from the phasing in of the levy increase over 2024/25 and 2025/26 financial years, and £102,900 set

aside annually for vessel replacement. The 2025/26 draft budget also proposes that the authority continues to set aside £102,900 each year into the Renewals Fund to plan for the replacement of the soon to be commissioned patrol vessel at the end of its useful life in 2045. The amount set aside will be reviewed when the current vessel replacement is complete.

- 6.7 A supplementary budget of £17,000 funded by the Renewals Fund was approved in March 2024 for the associated revenue costs of the patrol vessel replacement project and it is proposed that this is extended by a further £8,500 into 2025/26 to cover continuing costs of the project. The balance on the reserve at 31 March 2025 is forecast to be £3,184,756 falling to £472,900 at 31 March 2026 after one-off initial finance lease payment to East Riding of Yorkshire Council in early 2025/26. The £472,000 residual balance comprises £370,000 set aside for the purchase of a 6.5m 'boarding' RIB and £102,900 to fund vessel replacement costs in the longer term.

Contact Officer

Liz Smith (liz.smith@eastriding.gov.uk)
Principal Accountant, East Riding of Yorkshire Council

David Kirven

Treasurer

NORTH EASTERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Appendix A

2025/26 DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET

	Central Management £	Land Based Operations £	Offshore Operations £	Environment £	Funded Projects £	2025/26 Draft Budget £	2024/25 Budget £
EXPENDITURE							
Employee Expenses							
Pay, NI and Superannuation	205,940	153,310	409,360	149,350	8,500	926,460	874,200
Other Employee Costs	21,000	-	-	-	-	21,000	21,000
Premises	11,500	-	56,450	-	-	67,950	18,030
Transport						-	-
Patrol Vessel Running Costs	-	-	382,540	-	-	382,540	241,250
Vehicle Running Costs	31,350	-	-	-	-	31,350	37,060
Travel and Subsistence	11,250	230	940	1,100	-	13,520	16,410
Supplies and Services	69,620	2,670	20,720	3,000	-	96,010	157,560
Support Services	120,410	-	-	-	-	120,410	179,690
	471,070	156,210	870,010	153,450	8,500	1,659,240	1,545,200
INCOME							
Grants and Contributions	- 2,000	-	-	-	- 14,170	- 16,170	- 23,000
Other Income	- 16,860	- 6,000	- 12,110	-	-	- 34,970	- 133,080
	- 18,860	- 6,000	- 12,110	-	- 14,170	- 51,140	- 156,080
NET EXPENDITURE	452,210	150,210	857,900	153,450	- 5,670	1,608,100	1,389,120
REPRESENTED BY							
Annual levy on Local Authorities						-1,712,500	-1,535,870
Contribution to Vehicle Replacement Reserve						10,000	10,000
Contribution to Renewals Fund						102,900	192,440
Contribution from Renewals Fund						-8,500	-17,000
Contribution from Patrol Vessel Maintenance Reserve						0	-38,690
						-1,608,100	-1,389,120

Reserves

The Authority maintains specific reserves to even out cash flow for individual projects or purchases, and a general reserve to meet unforeseen events.

The actual opening balances at 1 April 2025 will be known once the 2024/25 accounts for NEIFCA have been completed. The following tables include the overspend projected in the latest budget monitoring position for 2024/25.

NORTH EASTERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY		
RESERVES		
General Reserve	2024/25	2025/26
	£	£
Balance brought forward	228,450	228,450
Transfer from Revenue	0	0
Transfer to Revenue	0	0
Balance carried forward	<u>228,450</u>	<u>228,450</u>
Patrol Vessel Maintenance	2024/25	2025/26
	£	£
Balance brought forward	88,689	50,000
Transfer from Revenue	0	0
Transfer to Revenue	-38,689	0
Balance carried forward	<u>50,000</u>	<u>50,000</u>
External Projects	2024/25	2025/26
	£	£
Balance brought forward	8,898	8,898
Transfer from Revenue	0	0
Transfer to Revenue	0	0
Balance carried forward	<u>8,898</u>	<u>8,898</u>
Vehicle Replacement Reserve	2024/25	2025/26
	£	£
Balance brought forward	32,782	42,782
Transfer from Revenue	10,000	10,000
Transfer to Revenue	0	-30,000
Balance carried forward	<u>42,782</u>	<u>22,782</u>
Renewals Fund	2024/25	2025/26
	£	£
Balance brought forward	1,725,982	3,175,858
Transfer from Revenue	1,466,876	102,900
Transfer to Revenue	-17,000	-2,805,858
Balance carried forward	<u>3,175,858</u>	<u>472,900</u>
TOTAL USEABLE RESERVES	<u><u>3,505,988</u></u>	<u><u>783,030</u></u>

NORTH EASTERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Report to: Executive Committee
6 March 2025

Risk Management Strategy & Strategic & Operational Risk Register Review

Report of the Clerk.

A. Purpose of Report

To present a revised Risk Management Strategy for adoption and inform members of the Executive Committee that in accordance with the Strategy, a review of the Strategic and Operational Risk Registers has also been undertaken and is reported for approval.

B. Recommendation

That the revised Risk Management Strategy be adopted and the revised Strategic and Operational Risk Register be approved.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Risk Management Strategy and associated Strategic and Operational Risk Registers were first approved by the shadow Authority at its quarterly meeting held on 25 January 2011 (Minute 17 refers).
- 1.2 The Authority agreed that the Risk Management Strategy be reviewed on an annual basis and that the Strategic and Operational Risk Registers be reviewed as a minimum every six months and reported to the Authority (Minute 17 refers). In accordance with these recommendations the Operational Risk Registers were reviewed and updated on 5 September 2024 (Minute item 93 refers).

2. Strategic & Operational Risk Register Reviews

- 2.1 The Strategic and Operational Risk Registers have been reviewed to consider any potential changes which have occurred over the last six months and affected the key risks identified within the Registers. The risks have been reviewed and the changes are highlighted in bold within the attached registers. An updated position for each of the key indicators is also included in the Register. The next review of the Strategic Risk Register is scheduled for September 2025. The identified risks have also been ranked in order of significance and colour coded (highest residual risk score red to lowest green).
- 2.2 A number of the risks identified during the last review in September 2024 have now reduced, particularly those relating to the sale of North Eastern Guardian III, which was formally completed on 17 February 2025, the expected delivery of the new vessel, recruitment and funding.
- 2.3 The revised Risk Management Strategy is attached as Appendix 1, the revised Strategic Risk Register is attached as Appendix 2, the Operational Risk Register as Appendix 3 and the Environmental Risk matrix, a sub register of the Operational Risk Register, as Appendix 4 for members information. All changes since the last review are highlighted in bold text.

Contact Officer

Darren Stevens, Clerk of the Authority
Ext 3000

Background Papers

Revised Risk Management Strategy
Strategic Risk Register
Operational Risk Register

Risk Management Strategy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 North Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (NEIFCA) recognises its responsibility to manage risk in order to successfully achieve the Authority's objectives, maximise opportunity and minimise threats. This is also reflected in national guidance advice to Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities.
- 1.2 Risk cannot always be eliminated and this strategy provides a structured approach to enable the Authority to identify, manage and monitor the most significant risks it faces. From an operational perspective it also provides a framework for applying a more 'risk based' approach to its activities.
- 1.3 The aim of this strategy is to manage risk and to successfully integrate risk management into existing business and management processes. Risk management is a key part of the Authority's corporate governance arrangements and also provides assurance to meet the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003.

2. Objectives

- 2.1 The objectives of the risk management strategy are to –
 - Embed risk management in the culture of NEIFCA including the Authority's decision making, strategic planning, policy, project and service delivery arrangements.
 - Manage risk in accordance with best practice, ensuring key strategic and operational risks are identified, monitored and controlled.
 - Raise awareness of the need for risk management both within the Authority and with key partners and suppliers of goods and services.
 - Enable the Authority to anticipate and respond to change.
 - Prevent injury, damage and loss, thus reducing the cost of risk.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 All Members and employees should have regard to risk when carrying out their duties. Risk management is part of all decisions at both manager and Member level and all Authority processes. The key roles within the risk management process are -

NEIFCA	To oversee the effective management of risk by Authority officers
Clerk	To champion risk management and ensure it is embedded throughout the Authority. To develop the Authority's risk management policy and strategy To report to Members on risk management
Chief Officer & Senior Management Team	To ensure the Authority manages risk effectively through the development and implementation of the strategy. To identify, manage and monitor the strategic risks faced by the Authority.

IFC Officers	To manage risk effectively in their particular areas of service delivery.
Clerk and Treasurer	To support the Authority and its services in the effective development, implementation and review of the risk management strategy

3.2 Responsibilities and reporting requirements are set out in more detail in Annex A.

4. Risk Definitions

4.1 Risk is the chance of something happening that will have an impact on objectives.

4.2 Risks can be divided into two main categories –

Strategic risks – that need to be taken account of in judgements about the Authority's medium to long term goals.

Operational risks – day to day risks in the delivery of a service.

4.3 Examples of strategic and operational risks are listed at Annex B. The two are interlinked with the potential for operational risks to become a strategic risk for the Authority.

5. Risk Management Process

5.1 There are four key stages to the risk management process, which will be recorded and monitored through the use of risk registers –

- **Identification**

The Authority will identify both strategic and operational risks that can affect achievement of its strategic and service objectives.

- **Assessment**

Risks will be assessed for impact and likelihood using a scoring matrix. Both the gross risk (before controls) and the net risk (following the implementation of controls) will be assessed.

- **Control**

Mitigating controls will be identified for all medium and high scoring risks and action plans developed where controls need to be improved. Consideration must be given to the anticipated benefits in relation to the estimated costs in deciding whether it is cost effective to introduce the proposed controls/initiatives. Risks and controls will be allocated to a risk owner for monitoring and review.

- **Monitoring and Review**

Strategic and operational risk will be reviewed and reported at least every 6 months by the risk owners.

5.2 Strategic Risk Process

Identification and assessment of strategic risks will form part of the corporate business planning process. A full review of the strategic risk register will be undertaken every six months by the Clerk, Chief & Deputy Chief Officers and the Authority to ensure all risks associated with the delivery of strategic objectives have been identified and assessed.

Risks will be allocated a risk owner and will be reviewed every six months together with any outstanding actions required. This review will be reported to the Authority.

The Clerk and Chief Officer will be responsible for identifying any new risks and providing the link with any changes in operational risk that need to be reflected in the strategic risk register.

5.3 Operational Risk Process

The identification, assessment and control of operational risks will form part of the service planning process.

The Chief & Deputy Chief Officers will be responsible for reviewing registers and controls on a six monthly basis through management teams and updating registers accordingly.

The Authority will gain an understanding of key operational risks through the performance monitoring process and will monitor that the operational risk register is updated.

5.4 Risk Analysis & Risk Evaluation Process

5.4.1 Risk are measured in two ways:

- The likelihood of the risk event occurring
- The impact on the Authority should the risk event occur

The likelihood of the risk event occurring will be given a score from 1 to 5 using the following criteria:

Likelihood	Score	Description	Criteria
Almost certain	5	The event is expected to occur in most circumstances	Probability of occurring in the next year >90%
Likely	4	The event will probably occur in most circumstances	Probability of occurring in the next year 60 to 90%
Possible	3	The event will occur at some time	Probability of occurring in the next year 30 to 60%
Unlikely	2	The event is not expected to occur	Probability of occurring in the next year 10 to 30%
Remote	1	The event may only occur in exceptional circumstances	Probability of occurring in the next year <10%

5.4.2 The potential impact of an event on the Authority will also be given a score of 1 to 4 as follows:

- 1 Insignificant – Minimal disruption, no long-term consequences to service delivery or marine conservation and management. No stakeholder concern. Minor negative publicity
- 2 Minor – Short-term consequences to both service delivery and or marine conservation and management. Potential for stakeholder concern. Some adverse publicity in local media.
- 3 Moderate – Medium long term consequences to both service delivery and or marine conservation and management, impact absorbed with significant intervention. Extensive stakeholder concern. Extended adverse publicity in both local and national media.
- 4 Major – Significant long-term consequences, formal intervention from central government departments or Executive Agencies, significant stakeholder concern and pro-longed loss of confidence. Sustained adverse publicity both locally and nationally.

The gross risk score = likelihood x potential impact

The residual risk score includes the application of appropriate control actions

The application of appropriate control actions may not necessarily reduce the gross risk score

The table below provides a visual ‘heat chart’ of the relationship between the levels of potential impact and likelihood of certain risk occurring and provides a general guide to the overall risk assessment process.

LIKELIHOOD		IMPACT			
		Insignificant 1	Minor 2	Moderate 3	Major 4
	Almost Certain 5	Green 5	Green 10	Amber 15	Red 20
	Likely 4	Green 4	Green 8	Amber 12	Red 16
	Possible 3	Green 3	Green 6	Amber 9	Red 12
	Unlikely 2	Green 2	Green 4	Green 6	Amber 8
	Remote 1	Green 1	Green 2	Green 3	Amber 4

5.5 Project and Procurement Risk Process

Projects will be managed using appropriate methodology. Project managers will identify and assess the risks associated with the project and mitigating controls and document these in a risk register. The register will be maintained and updated throughout the life of the project and be reported to the Chief Officer on a regular basis.

The risks associated with a particular procurement will be considered and documented.

6. Corporate Business Processes

6.1 Risk management will continue to be embedded in all the Authority's key business processes including –

- Long term financial planning and annual budget setting processes.
- Authority Performance planning processes.
- Policy and decision making processes.
- Strategic planning processes.
- Operational delivery

7. Training and Communication

7.1 Risk management training will be provided to officers identified in Annex A.

7.2 The Clerk and Treasurer will provide support and advice on risk management throughout the Authority.

8. Measuring Effectiveness

8.1 The effectiveness of this process will be reported through the Statement of Internal Control.

9. Monitoring and Reporting

9.1 Assurance on the effectiveness of controls over key strategic and operational risks will also be provided by the Audit Section.

9.2 The strategy and action plan will be reviewed annually.

10. Links to other policies and strategies

10.1 Insurable retained risk will be managed by the Treasurer in accordance with the risk financing strategy.

NORTH EASTERN INSHORE AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY - STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

Risk No	Strategic Objective	Category of Risk	Risk	Gross Risk Score	Control Action	Residual Risk Score	Further Action Required	Update	Risk Owner
NEIFCA 1	An Authority which attracts and keeps the best staff.	Customer/ Staff	<p>Specialist staff and skills shortages. Sickness absence.</p> <p>Triggers include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Inability to recruit and retain staff. (ii) Inadequate succession planning. (iii) The Authority has a small but dedicated workforce. (iv) Private sector competition (v) Impacts of a global pandemic or other external event (vi) More mobile workforce within the sector. 	6 (2x3)	Recruitment, retention policies, training and development, surveys of existing staff, analysis at exits interviews and managing sickness absence.	6 (2x3)	Recruitment processes expedited to fill vacancies when planned.	NEIFCA is currently carrying two full time vacancies within offshore team. Recruitment process closed on 28/02/2025. Appointments expected to be made prior to the delivery of the new vessel.	Chief Officer & Deputy Chief Officer & Operational Support Manager.
NEIFCA 2	A reputation for smart and prudent stewardship.	Financial Reputation	<p>Failure to manage the Authority's assets, caused by:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of funding • Service failures/poor maintenance • Poor risk assessments and controls <p>Age and deterioration of vessels & vehicles</p>	6 (2x3)	<p>Asset Management Plans - including audit and survey result to target investment and maintenance at high priority areas.</p> <p>Patrol Vessel renewal fund and replacement project ongoing.</p> <p>Maintenance programme.</p> <p>Risk assessments.</p> <p>Inspections and surveys.</p> <p>Insurance.</p>	4 (2x2)	<p>Review and define inspection survey programme.</p> <p>Ensure compliance with the programme. Review adequacy of sums insured and compliance with insurance policy conditions.</p> <p>Strengthen asset management and control.</p>	<p>NEG III sale completed 17/02/2025.</p> <p>Delivery of new vessel expected April 2025.</p> <p>Agreed revenue funding in place for 2025/2026.</p> <p>Receipt of Defra IFCA capital delivery funding.</p>	Chief Officer & Deputy Chief Officer & Operational Support Manager

Risk No	Strategic Objective	Category of Risk	Risk	Gross Risk Score	Control Action	Residual Risk Score	Further Action Required	Update	Risk Owner
NEIFCA 3	A reputation for smart and prudent stewardship. Statutory responsibilities.	Reputation Legal	Failure to meet statutory responsibilities set out by legislation. Main causes of risk are:- (i) Poor leadership/ judgement by managers. (ii) Inadequate monitoring review. (iii) Lack of professional staff. (iv) Legal challenge. (v) Lack of trained, experienced staff. (vi) Impacts of a global pandemic or other similar external factors. (vii) Mechanical breakdown in key assets	6 (2x3)	Series of performance targets set and measured to meet the requirements. Reported on quarterly basis to the Authority. Understanding and adherence to all governing legislation. Dynamic risk assessments and supporting safe working practices implemented when required.	4 (2x2)	Reviewed on a quarterly basis by reporting to the Authority.	See previous updates	Chief Officer
NEIFCA 4	A reputation for smart and prudent stewardship. Strategic objectives	Reputation	Failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives.	6 (2x3)	Annual Plan produced each year. Performance measured against number of targets. Exceptions reported to Authority. Constitution, Standing Orders Schemes of Delegation. The Authority has put in place structures and processes to govern decision making.	4 (2x2)	Reviewed on a quarterly basis by the Authority.		Chief Officer & NEIFCA Senior Management Team

Risk No	Strategic Objective	Category of Risk	Risk	Gross Risk Score	Control Action	Residual Risk Score	Further Action Required	Update	Risk Owner
NEIFCA 5	A reputation for smart and prudent stewardship.	Financial/ Economic	<p>Cuts to service, balance budget. Triggers include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in Government funding • Budget over spends, insufficient reserves. • Precept set too low. • Lack of compliance with financial regulations • Increased pressure on resources from other agencies • Unforeseen mechanical failure • Increasing inflation & costs 	6 (2x3)	Three year financial plan in place based on prudent projections and sensitivity analysis. Budget process flexible enough to deal with changes in funding e.g. savings plans. Lobbying with other Authority's to get better deals. Government assumptions used in the planning exercise. Formal considerations of reserves. Monthly revenue and capital budget monitoring. Demonstrating the ability to manage in-year budget pressures. Early closure of accounts. Attraction of EU and other grants for project works.	4 (2x2)	Ensure sound business cases are made to Authority funders for continued financial support.		Clerk/ Treasurer/ Chief IFC Officer
NEIFCA 6	A reputation for smart and prudent stewardship	Reputation/ legal	<p>Failure to deliver revised fisheries management policies within Marine Protected Area Sites which fall within the Authority's jurisdiction.</p> <p>Procedural delays in the formal making of regulations.</p>	6 (2x3)	Full engagement with Defra, MMO, national working groups and local management groups.	4 (2x2)	Regular updates and progress reports to Science Advisory Group, Executive and full Committee.		Chief, Deputy Chief Officers. Senior Environmental & Scientific Officer Environmental & Scientific Officers.

Risk No	Strategic Objective	Category of Risk	Risk	Gross Risk Score	Control Action	Residual Risk Score	Further Action Required	Update	Risk Owner
NEIFCA 7	A reputation for smart and prudent stewardship.	Organisational Reputation	<p>Loss or damage to reputation through poor press and public relations e.g response to shellfish mortalities</p> <p>Poor management and or use of website & social media outlets.</p>	6 (2x3)	Good internal communications, PR, reports to Authority, Press releases approved by the Chief Officer and Clerk/Chairman where necessary. Members and key managers to have received media training. Members receive detailed briefings on sensitive issues and confidentiality requirements supported by Standards Committee and procedures. Back up arrangements through the national Association and partner IFCA's.	4 (2x2)	<p>Reviewed on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>Daily management of Website & social media feeds in terms of content and comment.</p>		Chief Officer & Operational Support Manager
NEIFCA 8	A reputation for smart and prudent stewardship.	Disaster Planning	Major incident, i.e. patrol vessel collides with another vessel or runs aground. Total loss of primary asset.	8 (2x4)	The appropriate qualifications/licences/tickets are held by the crew. Train staff with skills in marine environment. Adequate Insurance.	4 (1x4)	Continue to keep up to date with training and appropriate qualifications	New class of vessel to be delivered in April 2025 will require a period of commissioning and familiarisation.	Chief Officer & Deputy Chief Officer
NEIFCA 9	A reputation for smart and prudent stewardship.	Reputation/ Legal	Officers acting beyond their statutory remit through inexperience. Legal challenge. Potential incident. Adverse publicity.	4 (2x2)	Full training in role. Qualifications. Performance monitoring, target setting, recruitment procedures. Annual appraisal system.	4 (2x2)	As roles develop, change, continuous training and development. EDP process to be utilised for this.	Training strengthened through induction, national IFCA training courses.	Chief Officer

APPENDIX 3

NORTH EASTERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY - OPERATIONAL RISK REGISTER

Risk Number	Process	Risk Identification	Risk Analysis	Risk Control	Residual Risk	Monitoring		
	Risk Category	Risk	1-8 = Low 8-10 = Medium 10-20 = High	Control Action	1-8 = Low 8-10 = Medium 10-20 = High	By Whom	Review Frequency	Triggers for Action
1	Staffing	Lack of staffing resources to deliver service and that staff have adequate skills training to achieve performance requirements. Increasing pressures from UK government to support national fisheries policy development & implementation without additional resource could have a negative impact on the delivery of IFCA statutory duties and responsibilities. Unable to fill vacancies with suitable applicants. Increased natural turnover of staff within a more mobile work sector.	6 (2x3)	Communication networks. Staff flexibility. Monitoring of workloads. Workforce Development. Vacancy Management. Recruitment processes expedited to fill vacancies. Maintenance of active dialogue with all key partner agencies. AIFCA, NIMEG & TAG. NEIFCA is currently carrying two full time vacancies within offshore team. Recruitment process closed on 28/02/2025. Appointments expected to be made prior to the delivery of the new vessel.	6 (3x2)	Clerk and Chief IFC Officer.	Quarterly.	Reports to Authority. Team meetings/ EDRs. Sickness Review Meetings. Vacancy/sickness. Performance monitoring results. Proactive training programmes.
2	Professional, contractual, legal reputation.	Failure to effectively support projects, poor contract documentation, failure to meet contract deadlines, failure to meet legal requirements and procurement legislation Provider fails to deliver the contract.	6 (2x3)	Use of internal/external experts/consultants. Robust specifications. Risk Assessments. Strong contract management. Financial, technical and legal vetting of all providers. Procurement policy followed. Monitoring and reporting processes. Meet statutory requirements. New vessel build project expected to complete by May 2025 currently managed by the Deputy Chief Officer	6 (2x3)	Chairman, Clerk and Chief Officer & associated project leads.	Monthly.	Procurement processes. Legislative changes. Contract variations. Timetable slippage.

Risk Number	Process	Risk Identification	Risk Analysis	Risk Control	Residual Risk	Monitoring		
	Risk Category	Risk	1-8 = Low 8-10 = Medium 10-20 = High	Control Action	1-8 = Low 8-10 = Medium 10-20 = High	By Whom	Review Frequency	Triggers for Action
3	Customer Service/ reputation	<p>Failure to provide agreed service.</p> <p>Failure to establish and achieve performance targets therefore having a detrimental impact on the delivery of service to the customer and achievement of performance objectives.</p> <p>Serious mechanical failure and breakdown onboard the main vessel asset.</p> <p>NEG III sold 17/02/2025. New vessel expected to fully enter service during May 2025 for the commencement of the NEIFCA offshore survey programme.</p>	6 (3x2)	<p>Performance Indicators.</p> <p>Inspections audit.</p> <p>Workload monitoring.</p> <p>Policy and procedure compliance.</p> <p>Staff training.</p> <p>Communication with customers.</p> <p>Short period of contingency planning, expected to be covered by other assets including Protector III and Bravo 1 RIBs.</p>	4 (2x2)	Clerk and Chief Officer.	Quarterly	<p>Annual reports.</p> <p>Performance monitoring reports.</p> <p>Feedback from staff and customers.</p>
4	Financial and contractual.	Unexpected budget demands and variances and failure to achieve agreed budget	4 (2x2)	<p>Monitoring systems.</p> <p>Systems to capture spend.</p> <p>Regular budget holder meetings.</p> <p>Internal Audit.</p> <p>Regular reviews of the appropriate level of reserves.</p> <p>Maintenance of insurance provisions.</p>	4 (2x2)	Treasurer, Clerk and Chief Officer.	Monthly.	Budget financial reporting.
5	Financial reputation, technical.	<p>Volatility of global oil/fuel markets and national tax changes.</p> <p>Markets remain unstable due to global conflict and new American administration.</p>	6 (2x3)	Regular monitoring of fuel spends included within quarterly reports to Authority. Additional provision made within annual precept.	4 (2x2)	Chairman, Clerk, Treasurer, Chief Officer and Deputy Chief	Monthly.	Budget financial review & reporting

Risk Number	Process	Risk Identification	Risk Analysis	Risk Control	Residual Risk	Monitoring		
	Risk Category	Risk	1-8 = Low 8-10 = Medium 10-20 = High	Control Action	1-8 = Low 8-10 = Medium 10-20 = High	By Whom	Review Frequency	Triggers for Action
6	Legal/ reputation.	Legal challenge resulting from failure to undertake statutory responsibilities in terms of enforcement, poorly drafted Authority bye-laws or national legislation.	4 (2x2)	Performance monitoring in terms of enforcement targets. Drafting of bye-laws in consultation with Legal Services. Proper consultation processes followed in accordance with statutory requirements. Involvement of NEIFCA Legal team, MMO, DEFRA in final approval of bye-laws. Strengthening enforcement practices and techniques.	4 (2x2)	Clerk, Legal Advisor and Chief Officer.	Monthly and quarterly reports to Authority.	Performance monitoring reports. Legal challenges.
7	Financial and reputational	Breaches of General Data Protection & Freedom of Information Regulations could lead to fines and reputational impacts.	6 (3x2)	Key staffed trained and familiar with new GDP regulations. Data Protection Officer role agreed, creation of a register of data processing activities, utilisation of impact assessments when required, creation of public and internal privacy statements and active management of all data processing activities. Advice from ICO. SLA agreed with ERYC information governance and feedback team to provide expert support, advice and training.	4 (2x2)	DPO Clerk Chief Officer Support Officer	Monthly	Formal complaint or report to ICO

Risk Number	Process	Risk Identification	Risk Analysis	Risk Control	Residual Risk	Monitoring		
	Risk Category	Risk	1-8 = Low 8-10 = Medium 10-20 = High	Control Action	1-8 = Low 8-10 = Medium 10-20 = High	By Whom	Review Frequency	Triggers for Action
8	Financial reputation.	Failure to deliver projects through lack of resources or investment. Loss of funding and grants resulting in inability to proceed with projects. Change in legislation resulting in inability to generate funds. Reputation for inability to utilise grants awarded.	6 (2x3)	Budget setting and monitoring process. Procurement policy followed. Appropriate resources available to undertake the project. Skills and knowledge of staff. With regard to supporting national projects ensure maintenance of dialogue and a proactive approach. Business Cases considered with full whole life costs of projects made. Proactive communications when required.	4 (2x2)	Clerk and Chief Officer.	Monthly	Performance monitoring reports. Budget reports. Legislative changes. Government funding initiatives. Authority decisions. Contract variation slippage.

OPERATIONAL RISK REGISTER – ENVIRONMENTAL RISK MATRIX

Risk Number	Process	Risk Identification	Risk Analysis	Risk Control	Residual Risk	Monitoring		
	Risk Category	Risk	1-8 = Low 8-10 = Medium 10-20 = High	Control Action	1-8 = Low 8-10 = Medium 10-20 = High	By Whom	Review Frequency	Triggers for Action
1	Environmental	<p>Impacts on fish and shellfish stocks through over-exploitation</p> <p>Pressures on stocks, particularly crustacea remain high although work is continuing on revised management measures. Currently catch statistics indicate a general declining trend in crab landings.</p> <p>Impacts in intertidal areas rising due to influxes of shore gatherers.</p>	9 (3x3)	<p>Detailed monitoring of stock health. Development of dedicated management plans and strategies. Tailored management provisions. Sound enforcement. Fisheries accreditation schemes. National coordination.</p> <p>Maintaining a high level of communication and active joint working with key partner agencies. New shellfish permit & Humber fishing byelaws now submitted to MMO for phase 4 formal QA. Beam Trawling byelaw with Defra awaiting confirmation. If confirmed, will increase ability to more effectively manage the impacts of exploitation.</p>	6 (2x3)	Chief & Deputy Chief Officers and Environmental & Scientific Officers	Quarterly & monthly	Non achievement of stock indicators. Declining catches and fleets. Complaints and comments.
2	Environmental	<p>Impacts on fish and shellfish stocks through pollution incidents or environmental factors such as extreme events, novel pathogens or climate change.</p>	6 (2x3)	<p>Regular monitoring, reporting and working in partnership with key agencies such as Defra, EA, CEFAS, MMO. Potential use of emergency byelaw making powers.</p>	6 (2x3)	Chief & Deputy Chief Officer and Environmental & Scientific Manager	Monthly	Observed mortality on shore and at sea, evidence of pollution events reports of unusually low catch rates from the industry.

Risk Number	Process	Risk Identification	Risk Analysis	Risk Control	Residual Risk	Monitoring		
	Risk Category	Risk	1-8 = Low 8-10 = Medium 10-20 = High	Control Action	1-8 = Low 8-10 = Medium 10-20 = High	By Whom	Review Frequency	Triggers for Action
3	Environmental	Habitat damage caused by invasive fishing methods. Damage to protected features of European Marine Sites or Marine Conservation Zones Risks from the activities of nomadic scallop dredgers surrounding the NEIFCA area. Habitat damage caused to sensitive intertidal areas due to influxes of shore gatherers.	6 (2x3)	Ongoing monitoring of activities. Active participation in associated schemes of management. Introduction of emergency and long-term Byelaw regulations and codes of conduct governing activities. Enforcement of existing regulations. Timely use of emergency byelaw making procedures when necessary. Working closely with the MMO and Defra to ensure adequate protection remains in place.	6 (2x3)	Chief Officer, Deputy Chief Officer Environmental & Scientific Officers	Quarterly to Authority and associated working groups	Significant increases in related activity. Evidence of damage and impact. Complaints
4	Environmental	Impacts on fish and shellfish stocks through non-compliance with regulations. Prohibition on landing egg bearing lobsters. Impacts in intertidal areas rising due to influxes of shore gatherers.	9 (3x3)	Targeted approach to enforcement at ports and areas of known high non-compliance at peak season. Focus on ports of high volume landings out of season. Strengthening enforcement procedures and techniques. Maintaining a high level of communication and active joint working with key partner agencies.	6 (2x3)	Chief, Deputy Chief and IFC Officers	Monthly	Intelligence reports. Surveillance. Routine observations and complaints
5	Environmental	Impacts on other marine species such as sea birds, cetaceans and other organisms associated with fishing activities	4 (2x2)	Monitoring through fishing permit and catch and effort schemes. One off studies and assessments. Timely use of emergency byelaw making procedures when required.	4 (2x2)	Chief Officer, Deputy Chief Officer Environmental & Scientific Officers	Quarterly to Authority and associated working groups	Negative feedback from catch reporting schemes and or studies. Complaints

NORTH EASTERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Report to: Executive Committee
6 March 2025

Health & Safety Policy & Safe Working Practices 2025/2026 - Review

Report by the Chief Officer.

A. Purpose of Report

To inform members of the completion of the Annual review of the Authority's Health & Safety provisions.

B. Recommendation

That Members note the report.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and other associated legislation impose duties on all of us, both of a general and specific nature to ensure as far as is reasonable and practicable, health and safety at work. North Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority wishes, through the preparation and issue of this policy to convey the importance that it places on all measures that promote the health and safety of its employees
- 1.2 This policy and its provisions are reviewed continuously throughout the year both at senior management level and at regular staffing Health and Safety meetings. If appropriate, changes to safe working practice guidelines are made and risk assessments reviewed, including where necessary, the provision of additional safety equipment for officers. Such changes are reported to the Executive Committee on a six monthly basis.
- 1.3 Since the last review in September 2024 I am pleased to advise that there have been no notable incidents or accidents to report whilst staff have been working. As part of this six-monthly review the Authority's overarching Health and Safety Policy, standing Safe Operational Working Practices and supporting risk assessments have all been reviewed and updated with no notable changes to report to members (See 10a, 10b, 10c).
- 1.4 The updated safe working practice documents and revised risk assessments are shared with all operational staff and subject to continuous review by both the senior operational management team and as part of the general staffing health and safety meetings. The entire health & safety regime is underpinned by regular health and safety training and 'refresher' courses undertaken by all operational staff.
- 1.5 Officers are currently planning for the anticipated delivery of the new vessel at the end of April 2025 which will require a further review and update of all associated risk assessments and safe working practices.

Contact Officer

David McCandless
Chief Officer
Tel: 07771936501



HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

2025/2026

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Part 4 HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING

The North Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (NEIFCA) recognises its responsibilities for making appropriate provisions and sufficient funds for the health and safety of its employees. It is therefore the policy of the Authority to conduct its operations in such a manner as to secure health and safety for its employees and to protect members of the public who may be affected.

It is the responsibility of the Authority, through its employees to provide and maintain measures which will ensure that every employee can carry out their duties in a safe environment without risk to health. Equally it is the duty of each employee to co-operate with the management in regard to health and safety matters. The Authority expects each employee to take reasonable care for their own safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions, to prevent accidents and avoid hazards to health.

This Safety Policy and accompanying organisational arrangements, will contribute to the Authority's overall ability to fulfil their duties and responsibilities, by reducing injuries and ill health at work, both to employees and to any other persons who may be affected by their employees acts or omissions. These measures will protect the environment and reduce unnecessary losses and liabilities.

To achieve this, the Authority will;

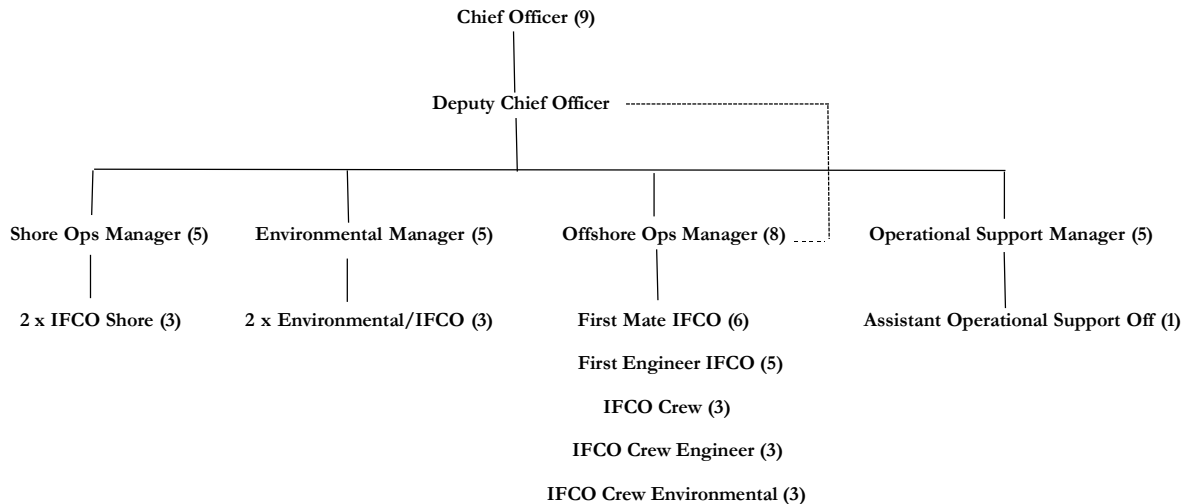
- i) Set and maintain high standards for Health and Safety by controlling workplace hazards by assessing risks and establishing risk control measures which are suitable and sufficient;
- ii) Ensure that all employees are informed of these standards, by providing adequate and appropriate facilities for communication and consultation;
- iii) Ensure that employees understand their responsibilities at whatever level they operate and discharge them with care;
- iv) Provide adequate levels of training and instruction to ensure that employees are competent to carry out their duties;

A copy of this Statement of Policy will be issued to all employees. It will be reviewed and modified as necessary and will be supplemented in appropriate cases by further statements relating to the work of individual employees or groups of employees.

Signature_____Date___31 March 2025_____

Clerk of the Authority

2.1: STRUCTURE OF ORGANISATION



2.2 Clerk of the Authority

The Clerk bears responsibility for the overall arrangements, and for ensuring that the operations of the Authority are executed at all times in such a manner as to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety at work of all employees and all persons likely to be affected by its operations.

In particular the Clerk will:-

- Advise the Authority on safety, health and welfare matters including the Safety Policy.
- Agree and authorise the implementation of the Safety Policy.
- Monitor progress of the Health and Safety Policy, initiate any changes necessary, and issue an annual report to the Authority.
- Ensure all employees understand and fulfil their responsibilities for safety, health and welfare.

2.3 Chief Officer:-

- Ensure that Risk Assessments are carried out for all operations undertaken by employees and ensure employees are informed of the findings of the Risk Assessments.
- Ensure that methods and systems of work are safe, and that the necessary procedures, rules and regulations designed to achieve this are formulated, and applied.
- Ensure all employees are aware of and fulfil their safety responsibilities and arrange for the relevant training.
- Provide adequate equipment, tools and protective clothing and equipment to enable work to be carried out safely.

- (e) Ensure that all equipment, tools, facilities etc, are maintained in a safe condition, and remain suitable for the function for which they were intended, arrange for inspections to monitor and record this.
- (f) Act as **Responsible Officer** to receive check and verify accident reports, and ensure remedial action is taken.
- (g) Ensure that all necessary health and safety checks and inspections are completed as scheduled.
- (h) Set a personal example.

2.4 Deputy Chief Officer

- (a) Support the CO in ensuring that all personnel know their responsibilities under the Policy and that they are equipped and trained to carry out their duties.
- (b) Implement within his or her designated area of work, the Health and Safety Policy & Safe Working practices protocol.
- (c) Support the CO in ensuring that safety receives full consideration in: -
 - Current working programmes.
 - Planning of new operations and or duties.
 - In introducing new plant or equipment.
- (d) Act as **Responsible Officers** to receive accident reports and implement appropriate remedial action.
- (e) Support the CO in ensuring that all investigations and reporting procedures are carried out.

2.5 All Employees

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, and other associated legislation including, The Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessel (Health and Safety at Work) regulation 1997, place responsibilities on employer and employee alike. In this connection NEIFCA reminds its employees of their duties under Section 7 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to take reasonable care for their own safety and that of others, and to co-operate with the Authority so as to enable it to carry out its own responsibilities successfully.

Furthermore the following requirements are expected of every employee: -

- (a) Carry out assigned tasks and duties in a safe manner in accordance with the instructions, methods and procedures contained in the Safety Policy.
- (b) If aware of any unsafe practice, operation, or condition, or if in any doubt about the safety of any situation consult with a senior officer.
- (c) Obtain and use the correct tools, equipment, or materials, for all tasks and duties, and not use any that are in an unsafe condition.
- (d) Use all guards, safety devices, safety equipment, and personal protective clothing or equipment provided.
- (e) Take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions.
- (f) Co-operate with the employer or any other person so far as is necessary to enable any statutory duty or requirement to be performed or complied with.

- (g) Not to intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of safety, health or welfare, or do anything likely to endanger themselves or others.
- (h) Report all accidents and near misses.
- (i) To set an example.

Part 3

ARRANGEMENTS FOR SAFETY

3.1 Distribution of Health and Safety Information

- (a) Copies of the Authority's Health and Safety Policy will be issued to all employees on appointment, annually on review and if amended. Electronic copies are also available upon request at any time and hard copies will be kept at the Bridlington & Whitby Offices and Patrol Vessel(s).
- (b) A copy of the Councils Corporate Resources Directorate Health and Safety Policy will be made available to all employees whose place of work is based in ERYC accommodation. Within the Bridlington Office a specific area has been dedicated to displaying Health and Safety Information. It is the responsibility of the Chief Officer to ensure these are updated.
- (c) It is the responsibility of the Chief Officer to ensure that employees receive all necessary Health and Safety information regarding the maintenance of a safe and healthy working environment and work processes. This should include the whereabouts of risk assessments, assessments required under the COSHH regulations, manual handling assessments and any other information that may be necessary for them to undertake their work activities safely.

3.2 Inspections

- (a) It is the responsibility of the Chief Officer to ensure that inspections of all procedures and equipment, which contribute to the Health and Safety and Welfare of employees, are inspected and reviewed at regular intervals. This interval shall be no more than 3 months.
- (b) The Deputy CO supports the CO in ensuring that inspections of all procedures and equipment, which contribute to the Health and Safety and Welfare of employees, engaged in both offshore and land-based activities are reviewed at regular intervals.

3.3 Statutory Inspections

- (a) Electrical Inspections shall be carried out on an annual basis, with regard to all portable electrical equipment contained within ERYC accommodation, in accordance with the ERYC Policy and The Electricity at Work Act 1989.
- (b) Inspections of office accommodation provided by ERYC shall be conducted according to the ERYC Health and Safety Policy.

3.4 Routine Examinations/Maintenance of Equipment

- a) The Chief Officer is responsible for ensuring that delegated managers fulfil their obligations to routinely examine and maintain work equipment within their designated area of responsibility.

- b) The Offshore Operations Manager (OOM) is responsible for overall maintenance of the Patrol Vessel and RIB, including any other vessels owned and operated by the Authority and all associated equipment. The Mate and Engineers shall assist the OOM as required to ensure that maintenance schedules as specified by manufacturers and supplied with equipment /machinery, are followed at all times. In addition to the manufacturer's recommendations Daily, Weekly, and Monthly checks and inspections shall be undertaken which shall include all systems, machinery and equipment on both the Patrol Vessel and RIB and all associated equipment. These inspections shall include all items, which are detailed on the pre-printed checklists supplied for the recording of this information. In respect to any land-based vessels it is the responsibility of all staff using any vessel to ensure that all routine mandatory inspections and checks are adhered to.
- c) It is the responsibility of all staff who have been issued work equipment/PPE to ensure they are maintained in a safe working condition and that basic maintenance schedules are followed correctly.

3.5 Safe Systems and Methods of Work

- (a) The Chief Officer and Line Managers are in the best position to ensure that procedures are in place for all working practices and systems. It is the responsibility of all Managers to ensure that Health and Safety rules are observed. The reviewing, and where appropriate, amending of work practices and risk assessments will be undertaken where a need for improvement is identified ensuring that the health and safety of all employees and any others who may be affected by the work activity are maintained.
- (b) Such procedures must be brought to the attention of employees and it is best practice to ensure that employees provide written acknowledgement to say that they have been informed and agree to them. The Chief Officer shall keep these records.

A detailed list of all safe working practices and procedures for work activities are contained within the 'NEIFCA Safe Working Practices Booklet'.

3.6 Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

- (a) In satisfying its responsibilities to provide and maintain a safe and healthy working environment the NEIFCA will seek to identify potential hazards. The CO and line managers will carry out Risk Assessments of known hazards and activities and discuss them with relevant employees before work commences. Copies of Risk Assessments will be supplied to each employee upon appointment.
- (b) Legislation requires the NEIFCA to carry out assessments on all tasks, operations and work practices and environmental factors where there is a risk to the Health and Safety of employees and members of the public. In this exercise particular attention should be paid to young persons, women of childbearing age, new and expectant mothers and work related stress.
- (c) The NEIFCA will also analyse reports of incidents and take remedial action to ensure that similar occurrences are avoided in the future. Risk Assessments will be reviewed after any accident or incident and revised as necessary.

A detailed list of all Risk Assessments are maintained.

3.7 Manual Handling Regulations

The Chief Officer will ensure that managers carry out risk assessments on all employees who undertake manual handling and that appropriate action is taken to address any identified hazards. All staff will be trained in manual handling procedures.

Where the general assessment of risk indicates the possibility of risk to employees from the manual handling of loads the NEIFCA will follow the present regulations to ensure:

- 1) Avoid hazardous manual handling operations so far as is reasonably practicable by re-designing the task or mechanising the process.
- 2) Assessing any hazardous manual handling operations that cannot be avoided
- 3) Reduce the risk – making improvements to the task, load and working environment
- 4) Ensure that the introduction of control measures to reduce the risk does not present any new risks.

3.8 Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

Prior to any substance being purchased and supplied for use the NEIFCA will ensure that an adequate assessment is made of the risks to health connected with the use of that substance. Such steps are necessary to safeguard the health of employees and others that may be affected. Copies of COSHH assessments will be kept readily available at work locations.

Where there is no assessment in place on a substance, such measures should be taken to ensure the isolation of that substance before any intended use. All substances will be assessed using the material safety data sheet supplied with the specific substance.

The Offshore Operations Manager will be the nominated COSHH officer for the use of all substances pertaining to the operation of NEG III and any other vessel owned and operated by the Authority. As such he will be responsible for ensuring that all substances used on board such vessels are subject to a COSHH assessment before use and that all control measures put in place are adhered to at all times.

3.9 Violence, Challenging Behavior and Working Alone in Safety.

The Chief Officer will ensure that managers carry out risk assessments for all employees who may be subject to violent and challenging behaviour, and those who are required to work alone, and that appropriate action is taken to address any identified hazards.

Further information and operating procedures are contained within the 'NEIFCA Safe Working Practices Booklet'.

3.10 First Aid at Work Regulations

- (a) It is NEIFCA policy in accordance with the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations and current maritime regulations to provide suitable persons as adequate and appropriate for rendering first aid.
- (b) As a minimum all staff must undertake a basic One Day First Aid Course. In addition to this all seagoing staff will be trained in Emergency First Aid at Work (STCW Approved).

- (c) All shore based staff shall have access to First Aid kits and the patrol vessels will carry a First Aid kit in line with current maritime legislation requirements.
- (d) The ERYC Corporate Resources Directorate Health and Safety Policy provides adequate provision for NEIFCA personnel located in ERYC accommodation.

3.11 Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences (RIDDOR)

In order for the NEIFCA to discharge its statutory duties of keeping the Health and Safety Executive informed of accidents and dangerous occurrences, the Chief Officer will ensure that adequate records are maintained in accordance with the NEIFCA Policy on accident and incident reporting.

Further information on the NEIFCA Accident Reporting Procedure is contained within the 'NEIFCA Safe Working Practices Booklet'.

3.12 Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations

The main requirement of the PPE at Work Regulations is that personal protective equipment is to be supplied by the employer and used by the employee wherever there are risks to health and safety that cannot be adequately controlled in other ways.

The Chief Officer will ensure that risk assessments are carried out on all activities and that appropriate PPE is issued. The Chief Officer will also ensure that such equipment is properly assessed to its suitability, is maintained and stored properly and sufficient training is given to employees on its correct use.

Employees must ensure that PPE issued to them is maintained and kept in good working order. The manufacturers maintenance schedule should be followed as instructed and training/instruction will be given for this. For more intricate repairs, items will be returned to specialists.

If any employee feels that their personal provision of appropriate PPE is lacking they must bring that to the attention of their immediate line manager.

3.13 Display Screen Equipment Regulations

The Chief Officer will ensure that risk assessments are carried out with all employees who use display screen equipment, and that appropriate action is taken to address any identified hazards.

Further information on DSE assessments is contained within the 'NEIFCA Safe Working Practices Booklet'.

3.14 Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations

The manufacturer and supplier bear the responsibility to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the article is so designed and constructed as to be safe and without risk to health when properly used. They must provide instructions to the purchaser as to the way in which the article may be used safely.

The Chief Officer will ensure that all machinery, plant, tools and equipment are used according to the manufacturer's recommendations and in line with any other statutory requirements/guidelines. It is the responsibility of line managers to address any shortcomings in that area.

3.15 Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations

The Chief Officer will ensure that all equipment falling within the scope of these regulations is purchased, used and maintained in accordance with the schedules detailed within these regulations.

3.16 The Working at Height Regulations

The Chief Officer will ensure that all work activities falling within the scope of these regulations is properly assessed and appropriate measures taken to ensure the risk and threat to any employee is adequately controlled.

3.17 Driving at Work

NEIFCA has a responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of employees while at work. There is also a requirement that others are not put at risk by your work-related driving activities. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 state that the NEIFCA has a responsibility to carry out an assessment of the risks from driving to the health and safety of employees, while they are at work and to other people who may be affected by their activities. To this end, the Chief Officer will ensure that adequate assessments are made on all aspects of work related driving activities.

A detailed list of all safe working practices and procedures for use of Authority and Officers vehicles are contained within the 'NEIFCA Safe Working practices Booklet'.

3.18 Patrol Vessels Emergency Procedures

- a) All employees are to undertake training in sea survival, fire fighting and first aid.
- b) All the locations of fire extinguishers and other safety equipment on board the vessels are to be noted and each officer and visitor will be inducted as to the safety systems and equipment on board NEG III and any other vessel owned and operated by the Authority. Staff must have access to instructions for use of equipment such as pyrotechnics and regular safety drills must be carried out.

3.19 Health and Safety Monitoring

- (a) In recognition of its own Safety Policy, the NEIFCA shall institute a system designed to facilitate employer/employee consultation to take place regarding all aspects of Health and Safety at work. To this end the NEIFCA has formulated a structure for dealing with matters relating to Health and Safety.
- (b) Staff team meetings will be held, as a minimum, every three months.
- (c) There will be a Health and Safety meeting held after each staff meeting. Any member of the team may forward items for the agenda. All employees will be regarded as being members of this Health and safety group. In addition, Health and Safety provisions will be reviewed at

regular senior management team meetings held throughout the year. The senior management team comprises of the Chief Officer, Offshore Operations Manager, First Mate, First Engineer, Land based Operations Manager, Environmental and Scientific Manager and Operational Support Manager.

- (d) The Chief Officer will ensure that an accurate written record of all proceedings are kept.

Part 4 Health and Safety Training

- (a) All employees shall be instructed as to possible hazards in their areas of work and shall receive necessary training to enable them to carry out their duties safely and efficiently.
- (b) It is essential that all officers responsible for health and safety issues discharge their duties to the best of their ability. With this in mind, a training programme has been set up and it is essential that line managers through the Employee appraisal process identify and ensure that all relevant officers receive adequate training.
- (c) All general health and safety training shall be booked through the Authority's Operational Support Manager who shall arrange such training with the central training unit (ERYC) or through external providers and keep a central record of all training.
- (d) It shall be the responsibility of line managers to ensure that health and safety induction training is undertaken on the new starters first day.
- (e) Employees shall be provided with adequate and appropriate health and safety training and instruction on being exposed to new or increased risks because of:-
 - Being transferred or given a change in responsibilities
 - The introduction of new equipment or change to equipment already in use
 - The introduction of new technology
 - The introduction of new practices, or a new system of work, or changes to an existing system

Contact Officer:
Chief Officer
Tel: 07771936501



North Eastern Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority

Operational Risk Assessments 2025

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Help		Risk Assessment		
TASK OR WORK OPERATION		Task Description		
Assessor D McCandless		Shellfish surveying of cockle beds in estuarine area, which is subject to fast tidal influences and potentially unsettled weather conditions.		
Assessment Date 19/02/2025				
Re-assessment Date 31/01/2026				
Assessment No. RA1		Adjacent people and jobs that might be affected by this work		
Employees at Risk All staff involved in surveying		None identified		
Hazards		Initial Risk	Controls	
		HP L R	Residual Risk	
		HP L R	HP L R	
1	Access and egress to car park with vehicle	3 1 3	Follow Safe System of Work Driving at Work (SSB1.10) & (SSB1.16)	2 1 2
2	Access and egress to shellfish beds - disorientation from weather conditions, stranded in mud or sand	5 3 15	Implement lone working procedure for all surveys (See SSB4), Follow Safe System of Work for surveys (SSB1.11)	5 2 10
3	Stranded by tides	5 3 15	Follow Safe System of Work for Surveys (SSB1.11)	5 2 10
4	Stuck in mud/sand	5 3 15	Follow Safe System of Work for Surveys (SSB1.11)	5 2 10
5	Disorientation by Fog/Precipitation	3 3 9	Follow Safe System of Work for Surveys (SSB1.11)	3 2 6
6	Slip/Fall resulting in stranding	4 2 8	Follow Safe System of Work for Surveys (SSB1.11)	3 1 3
7	Minor cut from collection of samples	3 2 6	Follow Safe System of Work for Surveys (SSB1.11)	2 2 4

Help		Risk Assessment		
TASK OR WORK OPERATION		Task Description		
Inspection of Catches Landed at the quayside, harbour or at sea		Inspection by officers of catches landed by vessels either on the quayside/beach area, in the harbour requiring access via pontoons/ladders, or at sea through boarding operations.		
Assessor D McCandless				
Assessment Date 19/02/2025				
Re-Assessment Date 31/01/2026				
Assessment No. RA2		Adjacent people and jobs that might be affected by this work		
Employees at Risk All		Fishermen/Merchants		
Hazards		Initial Risk	Controls	
		HP L R	Residual Risk	
		HP L R	HP L R	
1	QUAYSIDE: Lifting Injuries from fish boxes, movement of gear	3 2 6	Follow Safe System of Work for Lifting and Handling (SSB7)	2 2 4
2	QUAYSIDE: Crushing/Cutting injuries from shellfish	2 2 4	Follow Safe System of Work Handling Catch/Fishing Gear (SSB1.2)	2 1 2
3	QUAYSIDE: Bacterial/Viral Contamination (Weils Disease)	4 1 4	Follow Safe System of Work Handling Catch/Fishing Gear (SSB1.2)	3 1 3
4	QUAYSIDE: Collision with vehicles operating in area such as forklifts	4 3 12	Follow Safe System of Work for Quayside Working (SSB1.1)	4 2 8
5	QUAYSIDE: Injury from derricks/cranes unloading/loading catch	3 2 6	Follow Safe System of Work for Quayside Working (SSB1.1)	3 1 3
6	QUAYSIDE: Slip/Trip/Fall	3 2 6	Follow Safe System of Work for Quayside Working (SSB1.1)	3 1 3
7	QUAYSIDE: Fall into water from quayside	4 2 8	Follow Safe System of Work for Quayside Working (SSB1.1)	4 1 4
8	QUAYSIDE: Access/Egress to vessel in harbour/quayside	3 3 9	Follow Safe System of Work for Boarding/Disembarking Vessels in Harbour (SSB1.3)	3 2 6
9	QUAYSIDE: On board vessel, working deck machinery	3 2 6	Follow Safe System of Work for Working on Board Vessels at Sea (SSB1.9)	3 1 3
10	QUAYSIDE: On board vessel, inspecting fish hold, hatch covers	3 2 6	Follow Safe System of Work for Working on Board Vessels at Sea (SSB1.9)	3 1 3
9	AT SEA: Access/Egress to vessel at sea	4 3 12	Follow Safe System of Work for Boarding/Disembarking Vessels at Sea (SSB1.4)	3 2 6
10	AT SEA: Fire on board vessel	5 1 5	Follow Safe System of Work for Working on Board Vessels at Sea (SSB1.9)	3 1 3
11	AT SEA: Working deck machinery on fishing vessel	3 3 9	Follow Safe System of Work for Working on Board Vessels at Sea (SSB1.9)	3 2 6
12	AT SEA: Hauling/shooting operation on board fishing vessel	3 2 6	Follow Safe System of Work for Working on Board Vessels at Sea (SSB1.9)	3 1 3
13	AT SEA: Slip/Trip/Fall	3 3 9	Follow Safe System of Work for Working on Board Vessels at Sea (SSB1.9)	3 2 6
14	AT SEA: Lifting Injuries from fish boxes, movement of gear	3 2 6	Follow Safe System of Work for Lifting and Handling (SSB7)	2 2 4
15	AT SEA:Crushing/Cutting injuries from shellfish	2 2 4	Follow Safe System of Work Handling Catch/Fishing Gear (SSB1.2)	2 1 2
16	QUAYSIDE OR AT SEA: Threatening Behaviour/Violence and/or Intimidation	3 3 9	Follow Safe System of Work for Inspection of Person/s (SSB1.15) and also 'Working Alone in Safety' (SSB4)	3 2 6

Help				Risk Assessment			
TASK OR WORK OPERATION				Task Description Inspection by officers of premises used in the sale/processing/storage of fish products e.g shellfish holding facilities, restaurants, shops.			
Assessor D McCandless		Assessment Date 19/02/2025		Adjacent people and jobs that might be affected by this work Fishermen/Premises			
Assessment No. RA3		Re-Assessment Date 31/01/2026					
Employees at Risk All							
Hazards		Initial Risk		Controls		Residual Risk	
		HP	L R			HP	L R
1	Access and egress to premises with vehicle	3	2 6	Follow Safe System of Work 'Driving at Work' (SSB1.10)		2	1 2
2	Access and egress to premises	3	2 6	Follow Safe System of Work for Inspection of Premises (SSB1.14)		2	2 4
3	Crushing/Cutting from Shellfish	2	2 4	Follow Safe System of Work for Inspection of Premises (SSB1.14)		2	1 2
4	Cold Rooms/ Locked In/Exposure	3	2 6	Follow Safe System of Work for Inspection of Premises (SSB1.14)		3	1 3
5	Slip/Trip/Fall	3	2 6	Follow Safe System of Work for Inspection of Premises (SSB1.14)		3	1 3
6	Injury from working machinery/forklifts	3	2 6	Follow Safe System of Work for Inspection of Premises (SSB1.14)		3	1 3
7	Lifting Injuries	3	2 6	Follow Safe System of Work for Lifting and Handling (SSB1.7)		2	2 4
8	Contamination of Food Products	3	2 6	Follow Safe System of Work for Inspection of Premises (SSB1.14)		3	1 3
9	Fire/Emergency Procedures	3	1 3	Follow Safe System of Work for Inspection of Premises (SSB1.14)		2	1 2
10	Threatening Behaviour/Violence and/or Intimidation	3	3 9	Follow Safe System of Work for Inspection of Person/s (SSB1.15) and also 'Working Alone in Safety' (SSB4)		3	2 6

Help				Risk Assessment			
TASK OR WORK OPERATION				Task Description Inspection by officers of person/s in any location.			
Assessor D McCandless		Assessment Date 29/02/2025		Adjacent people and jobs that might be affected by this work Fishermen/private individuals			
Assessment No. RA4		Re-Assessment Date 31/01/2026					
Employees at Risk All							
Hazards		Initial Risk		Controls		Residual Risk	
		HP	L R			HP	L R
1	Violence towards Officer	3	3 9	Follow Safe System of Work for Inspection of Person/s (SSB1.15) and also 'Working Alone in Safety' (SSB4)		3	2 6
2	Intimidation and/or threats	2	4 8	Follow Safe System of Work for Inspection of Person/s (SSB1.15) and also 'Working Alone in Safety' (SSB4)		2	3 6

Help		Risk Assessment	
TASK OR WORK OPERATION		Task Description Inspection by officers of vehicles used for transporting fish/shellfish etc.	
Assessor D McCandless	Assessment Date 19/02/2025 Re-Assessment Date 31/01/2026	Adjacent people and jobs that might be affected by this work Fishermen/Private individuals	
Assessment No. RA5	Employees at Risk All		
Hazards		Initial Risk	Controls
		HP L R	Residual Risk
		HP L R	HP L R
1	location of inspection -other traffic	3 2 6	Follow Safe System of Work for Inspection of Vehicles (SSB1.16) 3 1 3
2	Locked into vehicle/moving away	3 1 3	Follow Safe System of Work for Inspection of Vehicles (SSB1.16) 2 1 2
3	Crush injury to feet from moving vehicle	3 1 3	Follow Safe System of Work for Inspection of Vehicles (SSB1.16) 2 1 2
4	Hit by vehicle moving away at speed	4 2 8	Follow Safe System of Work for Inspection of Vehicles (SSB1.16) 3 1 3
5	Following a vehicle in officers car - traffic accident	3 2 6	Follow Safe System of Work for Inspection of Vehicles (SSB1.16) & Driving At Work (SSB1.10) 3 1 3
6	Locked in a refrigeration vehicle	3 1 3	Follow Safe System of Work for Inspection of Vehicles (SSB1.16) 2 1 2
7	Access to vehicle at height i.e. vivier lorry and falling	3 2 6	Follow Safe System of Work for Inspection of Vehicles (SSB1.16) 3 1 3
8	Hit by vehicle in officers car.	3 2 6	Follow Safe System of Work for Inspection of Vehicles (SSB1.16) & Driving at Work (SSB1.10) 2 1 2
9	Violence towards Officer	3 3 9	Follow Safe System of Work for Inspection of Person/s (SSB1.15) and also 'Working Alone in Safety' (SSB4) 3 2 6
10	Intimidation and/or threats	2 4 8	Follow Safe System of Work for Inspection of Person/s (SSB1.15) and also 'Working Alone in Safety' (SSB4) 2 3 6

Help		Risk Assessment	
TASK OR WORK OPERATION		Task Description Officers are expected in many work situations to be working alone. Where this is the case this assessment aims to identify those places or situations officers might be in where working alone could be hazardous	
Assessor D McCandless	Assessment Date 19/02/2025 Re-Assessment Date 31/01/2026	Adjacent people and jobs that might be affected by this work None identified	
Assessment No. RA6	Employees at Risk All		
Hazards		Initial Risk	Controls
		HP L R	Residual Risk
		HP L R	HP L R
1	Inspection of person unknown	3 2 6	Follow Safe System of Work for Inspection of Person/s (SSB1.15) and also 'Working Alone in Safety' (SSB4) 2 2 4
2	Working outside normal office hours	2 2 4	Follow procedure for 'Working Alone in Safety' (SSB4) 2 1 2
3	Working in a remote location	3 2 6	Follow procedure for 'Working Alone in Safety' (SSB4) 2 2 4
4	Inspection of person known with potential for conflict	3 3 9	Follow Safe System of Work for Inspection of Person/s (SSB1.15) and also 'Working Alone in Safety' (SSB4) 3 1 3
5	Violence towards Officer	3 3 9	Follow Safe System of Work for Inspection of Person/s (SSB1.15) and also 'Working Alone in Safety' (SSB4) 3 2 6
6	Intimidation and/or threats	2 4 8	Follow Safe System of Work for Inspection of Person/s (SSB1.15) and also 'Working Alone in Safety' (SSB4) 2 3 6

Help				Risk Assessment			
TASK OR WORK OPERATION				Task Description			
Assessor D McCandless				Project Officers are expected to undertake routine discard surveys collating biological sampling data. These surveys are conducted on-board fishing vessels at sea.			
Assessment No. RA7				Assessment Date 19/02/2025 Re-Assessment Date 31/01/2026			
Employees at Risk Project Officers				Adjacent people and jobs that might be affected by this work Fishermen			
Hazards		Initial Risk		Controls		Residual Risk	
		HP	L R			HP	L R
1	QUAYSIDE: Access/Egress to vessel in harbour/quayside	3	3 9	Follow Safe System of Work for Boarding/Disembarking Vessels in Harbour (SSB1.3)	3	2 6	
2	AT SEA: Fire on board vessel	5	1 5	Follow Safe System of Work for Working on Board Vessels at Sea (SSB1.9) Follow Safe System of Work for Discard Surveys (SSB1.13)	3	1 3	
3	AT SEA: Working deck machinery on fishing vessel	3	3 9	Follow Safe System of Work for Working on Board Vessels at Sea (SSB1.9) Follow Safe System of Work for Discard Surveys (SSB1.13)	3	2 6	
4	AT SEA: Hauling/shooting operation on board fishing vessel	5	2 10	Follow Safe System of Work for Working on Board Vessels at Sea (SSB1.9) Follow Safe System of Work for Discard Surveys (SSB1.13)	5	1 5	
5	AT SEA: Slip/Trip/Fall	3	3 9	Follow Safe System of Work for Working on Board Vessels at Sea (SSB1.9) Follow Safe System of Work for Discard Surveys (SSB1.13)	3	2 6	
6	AT SEA: Lifting Injuries from fish boxes, movement of gear	3	2 6	Follow Safe System of Work for Lifting and Handling (SSB7)	2	2 4	
7	AT SEA:Crushing/Cutting injuries from shellfish	2	3 6	Follow Safe System of Work Handling Catch/Fishing Gear (SSB1.2)	2	2 4	
8	AT SEA: Falling overboard	5	2 10	Follow Safe System of Work for Discard Surveys (SSB1.13)	5	1 5	
9	Capsize of Vessel	5	2 10	Follow Safe System of Work for Discard Surveys (SSB1.13)	5	1 5	
10	Ingress of Water on vessel	5	2 10	Follow Safe System of Work for Discard Surveys (SSB1.13)	5	1 5	
	Collision	5	1 5	Follow Safe System of Work for Discard Surveys (SSB1.13)	4	1 4	

Help				Risk Assessment			
TASK OR WORK OPERATION				Task Description			
Launching of RIB with vehicle and trailer				On occasions RIB is required to be launched from specific locations using a vehicle/trailer.			
Assessor D McCandless				Assessment Date 19/02/2025 Re-Assessment Date 31/01/2026			
Assessment No. RA8				Adjacent people and jobs that might be affected by this work Fishermen/members of public			
Employees at Risk ALL							
Hazards		Initial Risk		Controls		Residual Risk	
		HP	L R			HP	L R
1	Transportation - Vehicle defective Road Traffic Accident (RTA).	5	2 10	Follow Safe System of Work for Launching RIB with Vehicle (SSB1.5)	5	1 5	
2	Transportation - Insecure/unstable loading (RTA)	4	2 8	Follow Safe System of Work for Launching RIB with Vehicle (SSB1.5)	4	1 4	
3	Access/Egress from site- vehicle stuck in sand/mud	3	3 9	Follow Safe System of Work for Launching RIB with Vehicle (SSB1.5)	3	1 3	
4	Launching - Foot injuries/hit by trailer on recovery	3	2 6	Follow Safe System of Work for Launching RIB with Vehicle (SSB1.5)	3	1 3	
5	Recovery - Foot injuries/hit by trailer/ropes under tension	3	2 6	Follow Safe System of Work for Launching RIB with Vehicle (SSB1.5)	3	1 3	
6	Slip/Trip/Fall	3	2 6	Follow Safe System of Work for Launching RIB with Vehicle (SSB1.5)	3	1 3	
7	Launching - injuries to hands using hand winch on trailer	3	1 3	Follow Safe System of Work for Launching RIB with Vehicle (SSB1.5)	2	1 2	
8	Recovery - injuries to hands using hand winch on trailer	3	1 3	Follow Safe System of Work for Launching RIB with Vehicle (SSB1.5)	2	1 2	

Help		Risk Assessment						
TASK OR WORK OPERATION		Task Description Accessing the deck area of NEG III and general risk associated with using deck equipment including haulers, winches and survey equipment.						
Assessor D McCandless	Assessment Date 19/02/2025							
Assessment No. RA9	Re-Assessment Date 31/01/2026							
Employees at Risk All Offshore personnel		Adjacent people and jobs that might be affected by this work Potentially visitors to vessel/other vessels/other officers & personnel						
Hazards		Initial Risk		Controls		Residual Risk		
		HP	L	R		HP	L	R
1	Boarding from pontoons/harbour walls onto or off vessel, slipping, falling	5	2	10	Follow Safe Systems of Work Patrol Vessels General Deck Work (SSB1.7)	3	2	6
2	Use of ladders slipping, falling	5	2	10	Follow Safe Systems of Work Patrol Vessels General Deck Work (SSB1.7)	3	2	6
3	Mooring/slipping berth, crush, abrasions, lacerations	4	1	4	Follow Safe Systems of Work Patrol Vessels General Deck Work (SSB1.7)	3	1	3
4	Falling overboard	5	2	10	Follow Safe Systems of Work Patrol Vessels General Deck Work (SSB1.7)	3	2	6
5	Slips/ trips and falls on board	4	2	8	Follow Safe Systems of Work Patrol Vessels General Deck Work (SSB1.7) & Engine Room (SSB1.8)	2	2	4
6	Winches - Crush, abrasions, lacerations	5	3	15	Follow Safe Systems of Work Patrol Vessels General Deck Work (SSB1.7)	5	2	10
7	Haulers - Crush, abrasions, lacerations	5	3	15	Follow Safe Systems of Work Patrol Vessels General Deck Work (SSB1.7)	5	2	10
8	Survey Equipment - Crush, abrasions, lacerations	3	3	9	Follow Safe Systems of Work Patrol Vessels General Deck Work (SSB1.7)	3	2	6
9	Radar - Exposure	2	2	4	Follow Safe Systems of Work Patrol Vessels General Deck Work (SSB1.7)	2	1	2

Help		Risk Assessment			
TASK OR WORK OPERATION		Task Description			
Assessment No. RA9a		Utilising NEG III for shellfish potting surveys			
Assessment Date 19/02/2025 Re-Assessment Date 31/01/2026		Adjacent people and jobs that might be affected by this work Potentially visitors to vessel/other vessels/other officers & personnel			
Employees at Risk All Offshore personnel None identified					
		Initial Risk		Residual Risk	
		HP	L	HP	L
Loading survey pots onto NEG III. Muscular-skeletal injury is possible from manual handling. Injury is possible if body is hit or trapped by the fishing gear whilst lifting		3	3		
		<p>A clear plan for moving the gear will be agreed before operations commence.</p> <p>Good communication to be maintained between all staff members throughout operation</p> <p>Equipment will be stowed and strapped securely in the trailer for safe transport to the vessel and vehicle only driven by staff with valid trailer licence</p> <p>Pots will be loaded on to NEG III on an appropriate high tide, when the vessel can be moored alongside the quay, as close to the trailer as possible.</p> <p>Crew will ensure vessel is moored securely before moving any fishing gear</p> <p>Crew members will be divided appropriately between the quayside and the deck of NEG III. Pots will be passed from the quayside using correct lifting techniques</p> <p>Once on board fishing pots will be stored neatly on deck, with rope and legs flaked correctly, to allow the gear to go overboard smoothly</p> <p>All crew will be aware of position of fishing gear on deck</p> <p>All crew will wear appropriate PPE throughout operations, including steel toe capped boots and life jackets</p>			
Transporting pots on board NEG III. Slip/ trip on deck could result in cuts, abrasions or head injury. Could also result in man overboard and possible drol, 'Tling.		5	3		10
		<p>Follow Standard Operating Practices for potting surveys. Potting gear will be stored securely on deck before transit.</p> <p>All crew members to be made aware of fishing gear position on the deck of NEG III</p> <p>Crew members never to work between the fishing pots and the sea.</p> <p>All crew will be wearing appropriate PPE: steel toe capped boots, lifejackets. Crew will be familiar with Man Overboard procedure</p> <p>Potting surveys will not be carried out if sea and weather conditions are considered too severe.</p>			
Deploying pots from NEG III. Injury if body parts are hit by gear as it goes overboard. Body parts being hit by gear as it goes overboard could result in cuts, abrasions, head injuries are entanglement and dragged overboard.		5	3		10
		<p>Follow Standard Operating Practice for potting surveys. Crew will be familiar with the safety drill procedures, including Man overboard</p> <p>A full briefing will be carried out prior to the deployment of the pots to cover the safe deployment, operation and recovery of the equipment. Familiarisation for all crew involved with the standard operating procedure. Instruction for all crew involved with the equipment</p> <p>All crew will be wearing appropriate PPE: steel toe capped boots, lifejackets with knives. Good communication to be maintained between all crew members throughout operation. One crew member will be assigned to deploy the 'ends' of the gear. All other crew member will maintain a safe distance from the gear as it goes overboard. Vessel will maintain a slow, steady speed during deployment of the fishing gear. One crew member will be positioned in the wheelhouse doorway, responsible for maintaining communications between crew member on deck deploying the fishing gear and the skipper. This crew member will maintain constant communication, updating the skipper as pots go overboard. Crew member in the wheelhouse door will alert skipper immediately if gear becomes snagged, allowing the skipper to take safe action i.e. come astern. Crew not to touch pots or related gear (lines, dabs, buoys) during deployment and never position themselves between the pots and the water. All crew to maintain a good distance from the fishing gear as it is being deployed in case of ropes or pots snagging. One crew member will need to cast the ends away and should move to a safe distance away once they have done so. If pots or ropes snag crew are to let the pots go overboard tangled. Pots can then be recovered and redeployed. If pots or ropes snag on a part of the vessel where it is unlikely to detach crew are to immediately alert skipper, so action can be taken. Crew members to never</p>			
Recovering survey pots from NEG III. Potential for crew member to slip/ go overboard as attempting to recover ends of fleets from the water to the vessel. All hazards could result in a slip/fall on deck and possible cuts, abrasions or head injury. Activity could also result in crew member going overboard and possible drowning		5	3		10
		<p>Crew familiar with Standard Operating Practice for potting survey. Crew will be familiar with the safety drill procedures, including Man overboard. All crew will be wearing appropriate PPE: steel toe capped boots, lifejackets with knives and hard hats if using hauling equipment. Good communication to be maintained between all crew members throughout operation. Crew member recovering the ends of the fleet will use a grapple to catch the line, ensuring both feet are on deck and they are in a secure position. Competent crew member will operate the hauler on the port side of the boat to bring pots aboard. Crew member operating the hauler will pass the pots to the receiver who will empty content of pots. One crew member will be tasked specifically with stacking pots safely on deck, with ropes flaked correctly and pots 'unbent' in accordance with the Standard Operating Practice. Anchors and buoys should be detached and stored correctly once it is safe to do so. All crew to be vigilant when gear is being recovered, ensuring feet do not become tangled in the rope. If this does occur then all hauling crew should be alerted immediately so action can be taken. If during hauling the rope becomes sufficiently taught to stop the hauler, the hauler should be stopped and the skipper notified to enable the vessel to be manoeuvred to lessen the tension on the rope in accordance with the Standard Operating Practice. If any pot has come fast to the seabed, hauling should stop immediately, and the hauler operator should notify the skipper. Dynamic planning will be carried out to establish how the pot will be freed in accordance with Standard Operating Practice. Crew members should never work between the fishing pots/ ropes and the sea. Good communication to be maintained between all deck crew members and skipper. All crew will be wearing appropriate PPE: steel toe capped boots, lifejackets. Crew will be familiar with Man Overboard procedure. Potting operations will not be carried out if</p>			

Environmental factors such as exposure to extreme heat or cold could cause dehydration, sunburn or hypothermia.	5	4	20	Wear suitable clothing and be prepared for sudden changes in the weather. If working during periods of warm weather, ensure crew members take regular breaks to drink water to stay hydrated, wear a cap, use sunscreen to avoid sunburn on areas of exposed skin. If working during periods of cool weather, ensure crew members take regular breaks to drink warm drinks and wear appropriate layers including thermals if needed. Check weather conditions every two hours.	2	1	2
Environmental factors such as fatigue resulting from long survey days.	2	4	8	Ensure crew have regular breaks and have plenty of fluids. If crew members have been or are feeling unwell they should not take part in the survey.	1	4	4

Help				Risk Assessment			
TASK OR WORK OPERATION				Task Description The safe operation of the NEG III is dependant upon the repair and maintenance of equipment within the engine room. Much of this work is undertaken by the PB engineer(s) with the aid of trained and competent crew.			
Assessor D McCandless		Assessment Date 19/02/2025 Re-Assessment Date 31/01/2026		Adjacent people and jobs that might be affected by this work Contractors			
Assessment No. RA10		Employees at Risk Patrol Boat Engineer/Crew					
Hazards			Initial Risk	Controls	Residual Risk		
	HP	L	R		HP	L	R
1 Injury to officer undertaking maintenance	5	2	10	Follow Safe Systems of Work Patrol Vessel Engine Room (SSB1.8)	4	1	4
2 Maintenance- trapping fingers/clothing	4	2	8	Follow Safe Systems of Work Patrol Vessel Engine Room (SSB1.8)	4	1	4
3 Accumulation of fumes	4	2	8	Follow Safe Systems of Work Patrol Vessel Engine Room (SSB1.8)	3	1	3
4 Use of wrong tools - injury to officer	3	2	6	Follow Safe Systems of Work Patrol Vessel Engine Room (SSB1.8)	3	1	3
5 Fire	5	2	10	Follow Safe Systems of Work Patrol Vessel Engine Room (SSB1.8)	4	2	8
6 Burns to officer from hot machinery	3	2	6	Follow Safe Systems of Work Patrol Vessel Engine Room (SSB1.8)	3	1	3
7 Electric shock from live circuits	4	2	8	Follow Safe Systems of Work Patrol Vessel Engine Room (SSB1.8)	3	1	3
8 Water ingress into engine room - flooding	5	2	10	Follow Safe Systems of Work Patrol Vessel Engine Room (SSB1.8)	3	1	3
9 Engineroom Noise	3	2	6	Follow Safe Systems of Work Patrol Vessel Engine Room (SSB1.8)	3	1	3
10 Slip/Trip/Fall into machinery	4	3	12	Follow Safe Systems of Work Patrol Vessel Engine Room (SSB1.8)	4	1	4

Help				Risk Assessment			
TASK OR WORK OPERATION				Task Description Launching and recovery of the NEG III RIB			
Assessor D McCandless		Assessment Date 19/02/2025 Re-Assessment Date 31/01/2026		Adjacent people and jobs that might be affected by this work Other staff			
Assessment No. RA11		Employees at Risk Offshore Personnel					
Hazards			Initial Risk	Controls	Residual Risk		
	HP	L	R		HP	L	R
1 Collison with mother ship	4	3	12	Follow Safe Systems of Work Launching and recovery of RIB (SSB1.6)	3	2	6
2 Staff tripping or falling overboard	4	3	12	Follow Safe Systems of Work Launching and recovery of RIB (SSB1.6)	4	2	8
3 Winch or warp failure	1	4	4	Follow Safe Systems of Work Launching and recovery of RIB (SSB1.6)	1	4	4
4 Untrained staff operating winch	5	2	10	Follow Safe Systems of Work Launching and recovery of RIB (SSB1.6) and general deck work (SSB1.7)	4	1	4

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<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; min-height: 20px;">TASK OR WORK OPERATION</div>				<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Task Description</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">RIB's are used by staff at sea to undertake the boarding and inspection of fishing vessels.</div>						<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; min-height: 40px;">Adjacent people and jobs that might be affected by this work</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Fishermen/vessel operators</div>			
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Assessor</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">D McCandless</div>		<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Assessment Date</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">19/02/2025</div>		<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Re-Assessment Date</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">31/01/2026</div>		<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; min-height: 40px;">Employees at Risk</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">All staff</div>							
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Assessment No.</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">RA12</div>		<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; min-height: 40px;">Employees at Risk</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">All staff</div>											
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; min-height: 40px;">Employees at Risk</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">All staff</div>													
Hazards				Initial Risk		Controls				Residual Risk			
				HP	L	R					HP	L	R
1 Engine Fire				4	3	12	Follow Safe Systems of Work Operation of Patrol Vessels at Sea (SSB1.12)				3	2	6
2 Hit Submerged Object				5	3	15	Follow Safe Systems of Work Boarding/Disembarking Vessels at Sea (SSB1.4)				4	2	8
3 Propellor becomes Fouled				2	3	6	Follow Safe Systems of Work Boarding/Disembarking Vessels at Sea (SSB1.4)				2	2	4
4 Loss of Power				3	3	9	Follow Safe Systems of Work Operation of Patrol Vessels at Sea (SSB1.12)				3	2	6
5 Damage to RIB from Boarding vessel (unstable)				3	3	9	Follow Safe Systems of Work Boarding/Disembarking Vessels at Sea (SSB1.12)				2	2	4
6 Grounding				3	2	6	Follow Safe Systems of Work Boarding/Disembarking Vessels at Sea (SSB1.12)				3	1	3
7 Collision				3	2	6	Follow Safe Systems of Work Boarding/Disembarking Vessels at Sea (SSB1.12)				3	1	3
8 Boarding: Falling between vessels				5	3	15	Follow Safe Systems of Work Boarding/Disembarking Vessels at Sea (SSB1.12)				5	2	10
9 Coxswain falling overboard				4	2	8	Follow Safe Systems of Work Boarding/Disembarking Vessels at Sea (SSB1.12)				3	1	3
10 Crew member falling overboard				5	2	10	Follow Safe Systems of Work Boarding/Disembarking Vessels at Sea (SSB1.12)				5	1	5
11 Illness to crew				4	1	4	All staff must have a valid medical certificate and also inform senior managers of any health concerns they have before undertaking boarding/RIB operations.				3	1	3
12 Falling inside of RIB				3	3	9	Follow Safe Systems of Work Boarding/Disembarking Vessels at Sea (SSB1.12)				3	2	6
13 Injury to crew from unexpected manoeuvre				3	3	9	Follow Safe Systems of Work Boarding/Disembarking Vessels at Sea (SSB1.12)				3	2	6
14 Capsize of Vessel				4	2	8	Follow Safe Systems of Work Boarding/Disembarking Vessels at Sea (SSB1.12)				4	1	4

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<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; min-height: 20px;">TASK OR WORK OPERATION</div>				<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Task Description</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">NEG III is the primary enforcement vessel of the Authority, this risk assessment covers the safe operation of the vessel at sea, in terms of manning requirements, maintenance and navigation. Separate Risk assessments exist for tasks which the vessel undertakes i.e RIB launching.</div>						<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; min-height: 40px;">Adjacent people and jobs that might be affected by this work</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Fishermen/vessel operators</div>			
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Assessor</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">D McCandless</div>		<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Assessment Date</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">19/02/2025</div>		<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Re-Assessment Date</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">31/01/2026</div>		<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; min-height: 40px;">Employees at Risk</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">All offshore personnel</div>							
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Assessment No.</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">RA13</div>		<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; min-height: 40px;">Employees at Risk</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">All offshore personnel</div>											
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; min-height: 40px;">Employees at Risk</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">All offshore personnel</div>													
Hazards				Initial Risk		Controls				Residual Risk			
				HP	L	R					HP	L	R
1 Engine Fire				4	2	8	Follow Safe Systems of Work Operation of Patrol Vessels at Sea (SSB1.12) and Patrol Vessel Engine Room (SSB1.8)				4	1	4
2 Hit Submerged Object				3	3	9	Follow Safe Systems of Work Operation of Patrol Vessels at Sea (SSB1.12)				3	2	6
3 Propellor becomes Fouled				4	2	8	Follow Safe Systems of Work Operation of Patrol Vessels at Sea (SSB1.12)				2	2	4
4 Loss of Power				3	2	6	Follow Safe Systems of Work Operation of Patrol Vessels at Sea (SSB1.12) and Patrol Vessel Engine Room (SSB1.8)				3	1	3
6 Grounding				5	1	5	Follow Safe Systems of Work Operation of Patrol Vessels at Sea (SSB1.12)				3	1	3
7 Collision				3	2	6	Follow Safe Systems of Work Operation of Patrol Vessels at Sea (SSB1.12)				3	1	3
8 Illness to crew				4	1	4	All staff must have a valid medical certificate and also inform senior managers of any health concerns they have before undertaking sea patrols.				3	1	3
9 Injury to crew from unexpected manoeuvre				4	2	8	Follow Safe Systems of Work Operation of Patrol Vessels at Sea (SSB1.12)				2	2	4
10 Capsize of Vessel				5	1	5	Follow Safe Systems of Work Operation of Patrol Vessels at Sea (SSB1.12)				4	1	4
11 Navigation of Vessel				4	2	8	Follow Safe Systems of Work Operation of Patrol Vessels at Sea (SSB1.12)				3	1	3
12 Flooding				5	2	10	Follow Safe Systems of Work Operation of Patrol Vessels at Sea (SSB1.12) and Patrol Vessel Engine Room (SSB1.8)				3	1	3

Help		Risk Assessment	
TASK OR WORK OPERATION		Task Description	
Assessor D McCandless		All staff are involved in use of Authority vehicles or own cars for work purposes.	
Assessment No. RA14		Assessment Date 19/02/2025	
Employees at Risk All Staff		Re-Assessment Date 31/01/2026	
		Adjacent people and jobs that might be affected by this work	
		Members of the public	
Hazards		Initial Risk	Controls
		HP L R	Residual Risk
1	Fatigue	5 3 15	Follow Safe Systems of Work Driving at Work (SSB1.10)
2	Inclement weather conditions	4 3 12	Follow Safe Systems of Work Driving at Work (SSB1.10)
3	Use of mobile phone	5 2 10	Follow Safe Systems of Work Driving at Work (SSB1.10)
4	Defective brakes/tyres	5 2 10	Follow Safe Systems of Work Driving at Work (SSB1.10)
5	Excessive speed	5 2 10	Follow Safe Systems of Work Driving at Work (SSB1.10)
6	Not wearing Seatbelts	5 2 10	Follow Safe Systems of Work Driving at Work (SSB1.10)
7	No MOT/Insurance	5 2 10	Follow Safe Systems of Work Driving at Work (SSB1.10)

Help		Risk Assessment	
Intertidal Survey Work		Task Description	
Assessor D McCandless		Intertidal Survey Work	
Assessment No. RA 15		Assessment Date 19/02/2025	
Employees at Risk All staff involved in intertidal survey work		Re-Assessment Date 31/01/2026	
		Adjacent people and jobs that might be affected by this work	
		Members of the public	
Hazards		Initial Risk	Controls
		HP L R	Residual Risk
1	Access and egress to survey area with vehicle	2 1 2	Follow Safe System of Work 'Driving at Work (SSB1.10)
2	Access and egress to survey area - stranded in mud or sand	5 2 10	When undertaking beach seine net work officers must operate in teams of at least three. Implement lone working procedure for all surveys (See SSB5), Follow Safe System of Work for surveys (SSB1.11)
3	General public contact with survey equipment	2 3 6	Survey area to be clearly marked and manned at all times, Survey equipment to be monitored by staff. Notify local stakeholders where possible.
4	Slips/Trips/ Falls resulting in injury/stranding/submersion	5 2 10	When deploying a beach seine net, work in pairs, progress slowly and with caution. Implement lone working procedure for all surveys (See SSB5), Follow Safe System of Work for surveys and wear a lifejacket at all times (SSB1.11)
5	Cuts from collection of samples	3 2 6	Follow Safe System of Work for surveys (SSB1.11)
6	Stings from weeverfish	3 2 6	If in doubt with regard to positive fish identification seek advice before handling. Do not directly manual handle weeverfish and Follow Safe Systems of Work for Surveys (SSB1.11)
7	Injury caused from lifting/handling survey equipment	3 2 6	Use of correct manual handling procedure. (SSB7)
8	Wading out of depth	5 3 15	Only wade out to lower chest height and follow Safe System of Work for Surveys and wear a lifejacket at all times (SSB1.11)
9	Impact/Collision with staff/public from Vehicle operating on the beach.	5 2 10	Travel at low speeds and keep away from the general public wherever possible. Safe Working practices ATVs SSB1.10
10	Working in a remote location	3 2 6	When undertaking beach seine net surveys officers must work in teams of at least three. Follow procedure for Working Alone in Safety (SSB5)
11	Exposure to the elements/ Weather	5 2 10	Ensure use of PPE. Follow Discard survey guidelines (SSB1.13) and only work in settled conditions.
12	Stranded by tides	5 3 15	Follow Safe Systems of Work for Surveys (SSB1.11)
	Taken out to sea by tides or currents or swamped by waves	5 3 15	Only undertake the activity in settled conditions. Know the state and type of tide - complete dynamic risk assessment prior to commencing the survey and wear a lifejacket at all times.
13	Working outside normal office hours	2 2 4	When undertaking on-shore seine net surveys officers must work in teams of at least three. Follow procedure for Working Alone in Safety (SSB5)

TASK OR WORK OPERATION		Risk Assessment	
SUA Operntion Onshore		Task Description Take off, operating and landing a Small Unmanned Aircraft (SUA) from land.	
David McCandless	Assessment Date 2310412020		
	Reviewed: 19102/2025		
Assessment No. RA16		Adjacent people and jobs that might be affected by this work Members of public, property, Vessels	
	All staff		

Hazards		Initial Risk	Controls	Residual Risk		
Near misses or collisions with other aircraft, powerlines, buildings, vessels, wildlife or persons	5	3	Undertake pre-flight site assessment, weather and air space checks including NOTAMS as per SUA operations manual. Utilise minimum one flight crew tasked with monitoring of air space for potential incursions and hazards. Adhere to minimum approach distances as per operational permissions. Do not operate in low light or low visibility conditions due to high risk of losing sight of drone or inability to detect hazards. Avoid flight in near flocks of birds.	5	2	10
Public incursion into take off/landing point	4	3	All flight operations must have required permissions as per SUA operations manual. Operations manual including PFCO, relevant permissions and any other releant documentation should be available during operations. If risk of public incursion is high, further cordoning off of the area should be undertaken before the flight and additional flight crew used to manage public access to site.	2	2	4
Personal injury or property damage from falling drone	5	3	Reference SUA operations manual and manufacturers user manual. Before take off ensure the drone has sufficient satellite connections and the controller is correctly paired with the drone. Check sufficient battery charge for both SUA and controller before take off. Once in the air complete a test to ensure the operator has full control of the aircraft. Complete flight including return time and landing with greater than 20% capacity left in the batteries.	5	1	5
Personal injury or property damage from falling SUA payload due to improper attachment	5	2	Proper maintenance, safe transportation and usage in reference to SUA operations manual and manufacturers user manual. Visual inspection and physical manipulation of payload before flight to ensure secure attachment and full range of expected movements.	5	1	5
Damaged LiPo LiHV battery catching fire	5	3	Proper maintenance, safe transportation and usage in reference to SUA operations manual and manufacturers user manual. Visual inspection of batteries pre and post flight to identify defects. Store batteries in fire proof LiPo bag, metal cabinet or container or similar. LiPo fires are chemical reactions and difficult to extinguish. A carbon dioxide extinguisher should be available at all times to contain the fire and stop it from spreading. All SUA pilots must have suitable fire fighting training.	4	1	4
Fire risk while charging LiPo LiHV battery	5	3	Ensure the correct charger, cables and batteries are used. Never leave a charging or discharging battery unattended. Reference SUA operations manual and manufacturers user manual. LiPo fires are chemical reactions and difficult to extinguish. A carbon dioxide extinguisher should be available at all times to contain the fire and stop it from spreading. Any staff undertaking charging must have suitable fire fighting training.	4	1	4
Skin burns from battery acids	3	3	Visually inspect battery for defects before charging. If battery leakage is detected, do not use and DISCARD battery as per manufacturers user manual. Ensure appropriate gloves are worn when handling batteries.	1	3	3
Electrical shock from battery during assembly	3	2	Ensure drone assembly is conducted in a clean, dry environment away from sources of water or in cover of rain. Reference to SUA operations manual and manufacturers user manual. Ensure the Splashdrone GPS hatch is securely and tightly fastened at the end of assembly to reduce the risk of water penetrating the drone body. Dry Splashdrone before attempting to remove the battery.	3	1	3
Burn to hands or fire risk due to overheating of drone	3	2	Do not expose drone and battery to direct sunlight for a sustained period of time. Drone operations should not be undertaken outside of safe operational limits as per SUA operations manual and manufacturers user manual. If drone becomes overheated do not attempt to handle until it has sufficiently cooled.	3	1	1
Losing control or sight of drone due to environmental conditions causing damage to people or property	4	3	Follow guidance in manufacturers user manual and procedures in SUA operations manual regarding environmental condition thresholds to be considered before and during flight. Only undertake flight if within thresholds. If conditions deteriorate during flight, cease operations and return to landing point.	4	1	4
Lacerations or bodily harm from drone propeller blades	3	4	Ensure propellers are smooth and undamaged before assembly. Ensure drone power is disconnected during assembly. During drone assembly ensure the propellers are fitted correctly in reference to SUA operations manual and manufacturers user manual. Maintain a minimum 30m exclusion zone around the take off and landing point for those not directly involved with flight operations. During take off and landing, pilot and flight crew should maintain a minimum distance of 10m. Do not attempt to launch or receive drone by hand. Ensure pilot and flight crew are positioned upwind and to the side of the drone for take off and landing. During flight maintain visual contact at all times to ensure that SUA does not come within 50m of people or properties/objects that are not under your control or within 150m of a congested area. Do not fly above crowds of more than 100 people. Do not attempt to touch the propeller blades until motors have completely stopped.	3	1	1
Pilot incapacitation	5	2	Flight operations only to be undertaken with minimum one flight crew in addition to pilot. Undertake pre-flight briefing and assign flight crew responsibilities as per SUA operations manual.	2	2	4

Risk Assessment										
TASK OR WORK OPERATION			Task Description With the exception of Sunderland, assessment of the mandatory requirement to wear stab vests within the NEIFCA district							
Assessor David McCandless			Assessment Date 29/01/2024							
Assessment No. RA17			Reviewed: 19/02/2025							
Employees at Risk All front line operational staff			Adjacent people and jobs that might be affected by this work Members of public, vessels							
Hazards			Initial Risk			Controls		Residual Risk		
			HP	L	R			HP	L	R
1 Risk of stabbing or attack from a disgruntled fisherman or member of the public			5	2	10	For all ports and areas outside Sunderland, where a separate, site specific risk assessment has been completed, the current risk of a potential stabbing is considered remote. This means that the action priority requires supervision and the general mandatory wearing of stab vests, outside Sunderland is not required at this time. Stab vests are supplied to all staff as an item of standard PPE equipment and active use will remain voluntary and supported by a dynamic risk assessment undertaken by the individual officer having taken account of any changing circumstances on the ground or potentially resulting from any planned enforcement actions. The overall risk of a stabbing occurring within the NEIFCA district will remain under continuous review and if there are any changes in that risk level the control status will be reviewed.		5	2	10

Risk Assessment						
TASK OR WORK OPERATION		Task Description Sunderland, assessment of the mandatory requirement to wear stab vests.				
Assessor David		Assessment Date 29/01/2024				
Assessment No. RA17a		Reviewed: 19/02/2025				
Employees at Risk All front line operational staff		Adjacent people and jobs that might be affected by this work Members of public, vessels				

Hazards	Initial Risk			Controls	Residual Risk		
	HP	L	R		HP	L	R
1 Risk of stabbing or attack from a disgruntled fishermen or member of the public	5	2	10	Following continuous intelligence review at Sunderland, the current likelihood of a potential stabbing at Sunderland is considered to be remote and in line with the rest of the NEIFCA district the action priority requires supervision and the general mandatory wearing of stab vests at Sunderland is not required at this time. Stab vests are supplied to all staff as an item of standard PPE equipment and active use will remain voluntary and supported by a dynamic risk assessment undertaken by the individual officer having taken account of any changing circumstances on the ground or potentially resulting from any planned enforcement actions. The overall risk of a stabbing occurring at Sunderland will remain under continuous review and if there are any changes in that risk level the control status will be reviewed.	5	2	10



NEIFCA

SAFE WORKING
PRACTICES

2025/2026

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SSB 1 – Safe Systems/Procedures of Work

SSB1.1 Quayside Working

- 1) Officers must always have in their possession a work issued operational mobile phone. That phone must be fully charged and all associated operational software, such as tracking and lone working facilities, must be activated at all times.
- 2) When working outside of normal work times 2200 – 0400 Officers working alone must implement the Lone Working Procedure.
- 3) Officers must wear appropriate non-slip, safety footwear.
- 4) Where the possibility of falling into the water exists officers must wear a buoyancy device.
- 5) Any objects such as trawl nets, fish boxes, containers and other heavy objects should be lifted in accordance with manual handling techniques.
- 6) Beware at all times of forklifts, trolleys, derricks or any other type of mechanised fish handling/weighing equipment. Inspections should be carried out in safe areas away from such equipment/machinery.
- 7) When walking/moving along the quay be aware of any spillages/fish slime/ice and the slipping threat they pose. Be aware of any loose ropes/wires.
- 8) Protective 'stab' vests are provided to all officers as a standard item of personal protective equipment. The active use of the vest currently remains at the discretion of the officer and should be based on a dynamic risk assessment made at the time.

SSB1.2 Handling Catch/Fishing Gear

- 1) When measuring shellfish or whitefish ensure standard handling practices are followed at all times.
- 2) When handling fishing gear always wear non-slip, safety footwear.
- 3) Any objects such as trawl nets, fish boxes, containers and other heavy objects should be lifted in accordance with manual handling techniques
- 4) Some areas inspected can be subject to contamination by rats (Weils Disease), all employees are advised to cover any cuts and abrasions and wear protective gloves in such situations. Hands must be washed or sanitised at the earliest opportunity following such inspections and hand sanitiser is provided to all staff.

SSB1.3 Boarding/Disembarking Vessels in Harbour

- 1) The employees own discretion must dictate whether or not it is safe to board a fishing vessel from the quay, having regard to the fact that, in doubtful circumstances, the skipper or crew should be invited to assist and facilitate a safe boarding. Slack mooring ropes, which may allow the boat to move away from the quay and stowed fishing gear, such as trawls and dredges are potential hazards to note.
- 2) Where practicable, an employee should tell a fellow employee when they are about to board a vessel moored alongside a quayside.
- 3) When boarding or crossing from vessel to vessel, extreme care must be taken. Officers must wear non-slip footwear and a lifejacket/ buoyancy aid.

- 4) Quayside ladders are frequently in a dilapidated state, so therefore can be unsafe. Visual and physical checks should be carried out before descending any harbour ladder.
- 5) When using ladders, it can be very dangerous to carry any gear one-handed. Gear and equipment should be hung safely around the shoulders or lowered by rope.
- 6) Do not board vessels when derricks are being raised or lowered, or when a weight is being swung.
- 7) Sharp, pointed equipment and knives can be dangerous items when clambering over vessels or up and down ladders. All such items should be placed in a strong bag or safe pockets.
- 8) Particular care must be exercised when fishing gear is being handled on the vessel, or fish boxes are being loaded/unloaded.

SSB1.4 Boarding/Disembarking Vessels at Sea

Equipment and Clothing

- 1) Whenever an employee is operating in a RIB, they must wear an automatic lifejacket.
- 2) Suitable waterproof clothing.
- 3) Non-slip footwear.
- 4) Lower back support belts are provided to all employees, operating in a RIB, as part of standard issue PPE.
- 5) Helmets must be worn at all times when embarking and disembarking from a RIB.
- 6) A portable radio should always be taken by the boarding officer.
- 7) The coxswain should ensure that kill cords are connected and operational at all times.

Use of RIB

- 1) The RIB coxswain should be fully aware that the safety of himself and the crew are paramount.
- 2) The coxswain is in charge of the vessel and must ensure that at all times when travelling at speed or manoeuvring the crew are not in danger of falling and must be seated safely.
- 3) The coxswain must make it clear to everyone their intended manoeuvres.
- 4) The coxswain and crew must maintain an effective lookout at all times.
- 5) Regard must be given to the location of boarding in shallow inshore areas which may result in grounding of the RIB.
- 6) Regard must be given to the type of vessel being boarded, its gear and likely manoeuvres during the approach. Particular care should be paid to pair team operations.
- 7) Whether or not gear is being worked from the side you wish to board should be assessed before boarding.
- 8) On larger fishing vessels, the large freeboard and awkward access may dictate that good communications with the skipper are paramount, so that he may instruct his crew to help the boarding officer to embark and disembark.
- 9) Access and pilot ladders must be used with extreme caution. They may not be adequately maintained or secured.

- 10) If deemed prudent by the boarding officer, the boarding phase is to be delayed until the fishing vessel has completed its hauling or shooting operation and is stopped in the water.
- 11) As far as possible, the boarding position must be away from propellers, discharges, moving machinery and running gear secured outboard and other obstructions.
- 12) When using any stand-alone RIB the lone working policy must be implemented
- 13) When using a stand-alone RIB reliable weather forecasts should be obtained prior to the patrol commencing.

Weather Conditions

After discussion between the patrol boat skipper, the coxswain, crew or designated person in charge, it will be mutually decided, if the prevailing weather, visibility, and sea conditions are acceptable, to undertake boardings. The possibility of further weather deterioration must be borne in mind. Generally, if there is any doubt about the transfer, it should be aborted. The safety of all staff is paramount at all times.

SSB1.5 Launching Vessels with Vehicles

General

- 1) All drivers of any Authority vehicles must hold full DVLA licences and be 25 years of age
- 2) All drivers of Authority vehicles for the purposes of launching any vessel must be fully conversant with 4 x 4 vehicles, competent in towing a trailer and hold the necessary licence endorsements, if required, or be authorised by the CO or Deputy CO.
- 3) All staff must be trained in and follow correct manual handling techniques.
- 4) All staff must wear protective footwear whilst launching and recovering any vessel.

Launching and Recovery of Vessels from the Shore

Launching and recovery of vessels from the shore must only be undertaken upon the authorisation and instruction of the senior officer present on the day.

Authority vessels must not be launched or recovered at any site except those carrying specific authorisation.

- 1) Launching must only take place following a full risk assessment of the site. This should also include a full assessment of prevailing and projected weather conditions and the state of the tide. Such assessments will form part of a standardised 'check sheet' and the senior officer must be able to demonstrate that they have taken place.
- 2) The final decision to launch will be taken by the senior officer. If any crew member has concerns or queries these must be brought to the attention of the senior officer prior to launching. **If there is any doubt the launch must be aborted.**

- 3) Prior to launching and recovery of any vessel, staff must be fully briefed and if necessary de-briefed. The senior officer must be able to demonstrate that such briefings have taken place.
- 4) Operation of any vehicle during launching and recovery must only be undertaken by trained personnel.
- 5) Where any launch is conducted the officer responsible for releasing the RIB from the trailer will be in charge of the launch procedure, he must ensure verbal communication is maintained with all staff during the launch procedure.
- 6) The vessel must remain secured to the trailer until it is launched.

Towing

Whenever the towing of the trailer is undertaken the following checks must be completed:

- 1) Brakes Operational
- 2) Tyres correctly inflated and turning freely
- 3) Light board operational and secure
- 4) Number plate mounted and correct
- 5) Boat adequately secured to trailer and ancillary equipment safely stored
- 6) Bilge water removed
- 7) Propellers guarded where necessary
- 8) No additional equipment loose or stored in boat that would cause instability or overloading
- 9) Brake activation cord attached to vehicle and 'deadman's' chain secured
- 10) Jockey wheel raised and securely stowed.

Maintenance

It is the responsibility of senior management to ensure the vehicle and trailer are serviced in line with the manufacturer's recommendations. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure all maintenance and equipment checks are carried out prior to any launching procedure.

Safety Equipment

All mandatory pre-launch and post-launch checks must be completed for each trip detailed on respective lists. These lists contain detailed checklists on towing and maintaining the RIB and associated equipment, as well as detailed lists of all safety equipment and items to be carried on board the vessel for all operations. All safety equipment must, as a minimum, be checked and inspected on a monthly basis. It is the responsibility of the senior officer to ensure that such checks have taken place prior to launching.

SSB1.6 Launching & Recovering the RIB (NEG III)

Launching RIB from NEG III

- 1) Key personnel involved in launching and recovery operations are skipper, RIB coxswain and winch operator, both RIB coxswain and winch operator to be nominated by the skipper of NEG III and both to be fully trained and competent in the correct procedures.

- 2) RIB is only to be launched when skipper and RIB coxswain are satisfied as to the suitability of prevailing sea conditions.
- 3) All personnel must follow instructions given by the winch operator.
- 4) Before beginning launching operations, RIB coxswain and his/her crew must be fully dressed in all safety clothing and equipment and to have taken up their positions aboard the RIB, RIB engine must be checked and ready to start
- 5) When coxswain and crew are ready to launch, coxswain makes clear signal to winch operator to release safety clip.
- 6) When winch operator has received instructions to release RIB, he must use a bar to release pin, keeping well clear of quick release mechanism.
- 7) All clips, cables and shackles etc must be regularly inspected for wear and damage.

Recovering RIB from NEG III

- 1) When recovering, RIB to stand off astern of NEG III and await heaving line attachment.
- 2) Designated crew member to connect winch cable.
- 3) Winch cable to be made taught by winch operator and all personnel to be cleared of winching area (ramp)
- 4) RIB engine to be stopped at winch operators signal.
- 5) RIB occupants must stay aboard RIB until the RIB is fully secured on the NEGIII stern ramp.

SSB1.7 Patrol Vessels General Deck Work

- 1) When approaching the vessel from a pontoon care and consideration must be given in any conditions.
- 2) Quayside ladders are often in a neglected state, visual and physical checks should be carried out before descending or ascending any ladder.
- 3) There is to be no-smoking on the patrol vessel or RIB at any time.
- 4) Employees are not to venture onto the fore deck whilst the vessel is underway during inclement weather conditions except in an emergency situation and under the authority of the skipper
- 5) Whenever underway or making way a lifejacket must be worn whilst working on deck.
- 6) Items of equipment and ropes should be made secure at all times when operational.
- 7) All visitors to the vessel/s must undergo a Health and Safety briefing.
- 8) The radar and any other forms of radiation must be switched to standby when any person is aloft or entering a harbour or marina area.
- 9) When general maintenance work is to be undertaken on the wheelhouse roof, the vessel must be within the confines of any harbour or port, or where possible, anchored. Where working aloft is necessary at sea, a safety harness must be used to arrest any possibility of a fall from the roof.
- 10) During mooring/berthing operations staff must always ensure that they have on their person a fully functioning portable radio to enable full communication with the wheelhouse and follow the instructions of the skipper and do not make any ropes fast until instructed to do so by the skipper.
- 11) When disembarking the vessel, staff must ensure they do not jump/leap from the vessel at any time. Always use the access ladders provided.

- 12) All deck machinery including winches and haulers must only be operated by trained experienced staff in accordance with agreed operating procedures. A deck officer will be designated to oversee the safe operation of all equipment.
- 13) All staff and personnel including visitors must follow and comply with all guidance and instruction provided by the designated deck officer.

SSB1.7.1 Patrol Vessels Deck Machinery

ALL WINCHES MUST BE DE-CLUTCHED AT THE END OF EACH OPERATION.

ALL OPERATORS MUST BE AWARE THAT ANY SIMULTANEOUS OPERATION OF OTHER HYDRAULIC EQUIPMENT MAY REDUCE OR INCREASE THE SPEED OF THE MACHINERY THEY ARE OPERATING.

GENERAL SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS RELEVANT TO ALL HYDRAULIC WINCHES AND DECK MACHINERY

All winches and deck machinery are to be operated by trained, confident personnel only, is that you?

Are you fully conversant with this particular winch?

If you are not sure of the operation do not touch any winch controls

Never leave a winch running unattended

Never use the winch from a position where you are stretching to reach the controls.

Have someone else on the controls if necessary

Avoid loose clothing when in area of operation, be careful if using gloves to handle warp or chain

When winches are to be left under load for anytime both clutch and brake should be applied

A visual check should be made of all wires, chains, shackles and running gear before any operation, replace any frayed, stranded or worn equipment

If in doubt seek advice or do not proceed, do not take risks, this is dangerous machinery if not operated correctly in safe conditions

During winch operations particular attention must be given to the load on your winch and to the positions of other personnel onboard the vessel, follow the instructions of the skipper at all times

Use of HIAB on board NEG III.

Only trained and competent employees are permitted to operate the HIAB onboard NEG III using the following operating instructions and they must ensure that all safety and cut-off devices are identified, working and activated:

- 1) The HIAB onboard the NEG III will be tested in line with the certification of lifting equipment regulations and any ancillary equipment has also been fully tested and certified.
- 2) Under no circumstances should the crane be subjected to loads that exceed the limitations shown on the capacity chart supplied with the crane.
- 3) In various places around the crane there are labels to remind of the restrictions, operating instructions, information and technical data. The

location of each is shown for familiarisation purposes. Pay attention to the information on the plates.

- 4) Wear proper personal protective equipment. Wearing of a safety helmet is mandatory
- 5) Carry out a visual check of crane before starting work.
- 6) Stop the crane immediately if any unusual noise is heard, or it functions incorrectly.
- 7) When operations are being carried out using a crew member to secure the load for lifting, it should be this person who gives the signals to be carried out by the operator. As soon as the task of securing the load has been completed, the assistant should move away from the operating area before the load is lifted.
- 8) At the end of crane operations make sure that the crane is stowed in its folded position.
- 9) Operators must always be mindful of the stability and safety of the vessel during any lifting operations.
- 10) Never walk or work under a suspended load.

Operation of trawl winches on board NEG III.

Only trained and competent employees are permitted to operate the trawl winches onboard NEG III using the following operating instructions and they must ensure that all safety and cut-off devices are identified, working and activated:

- 1) **Dog clutch.** This is not to be engaged whilst the main shaft or drum are rotating; the clutch is inched round using the controls and can be easily slid into engagement once the dogs are correctly aligned. For disengagement it is necessary to first apply the brake, and then separate the dog-faces using the reverse controls. The dogs will then easily slide out of the engagement. You will find it virtually impossible to disengage the clutch whilst the dog faces are under load.
- 2) **Manual brake.** This is used to hold any load whilst the winch is stopped. It is also used to pay off wire when shooting the gear, having first disengaged the dog clutch.
- 3) **Limit of travel.** There is no provision for limiting the extent of travel of the winch. Therefore the operator must stop the winch before the load contacts the winch frame. Serious damage may occur if this happens. Also when the load is fully paid out, at least six turns must remain on the winch drum.
- 4) **Guiding-on-gear.** Spool the wire evenly across the drums, trying to build up even layers. When the shackles arrive at the drums endeavour to place them where they will easily come off again. Do not use shackles too large for your gear as this may damage the rollers on the guiding-on-gear.

Anchor winch on board the NEGIII

Only trained and competent employees are permitted to operate the anchor winch onboard NEG III using the following operating instructions and they must ensure that all safety and cut-off devices are identified, working and activated:

- 1) **Safety Notes.** The anchor should not be deployed until clear instruction has been received from the skipper to do so. Operation of this winch must only be undertaken by two personnel. The second person is to be utilised only for observations and communications.
- 2) **Dog clutches.** These are not to be engaged whilst the main shaft or gypsy are rotating, the clutches are inched round using the control valve and can be easily slid into engagement once the dogs are correctly aligned. For disengagement it is necessary to first apply the brake, and then separate the dog faces using the control valve. The dogs will then easily slide out of engagement. You will find it virtually impossible to disengage the clutch whilst the faces are under load.
- 3) **Brakes.** These are used to hold any load whilst the winch is stopped. They are also used to pay off chain when using the anchor, having first disengaged the dog clutches.

Sounder winch on board the NEGIII

Only trained and competent employees are permitted to operate the sounder winch onboard NEG III using the following operating instructions and they must ensure that all safety and cut-off devices are identified, working and activated:

- 1) **Safety Notes.** The operation of this winch must only be undertaken by two personnel the second person is to be utilised only for observations and communications. The operator must ensure that the deck area is clear of all personnel and any potential hazards prior to commencing any operations.

This winch is not clutched and is therefore permanently engaged any movement of the control will result in movement of the winch. There is no mechanical brake on this winch, it is braked hydraulically. The guide on gear is fully automatic on this winch and will move each time the main control is operated.

- 2) The winch control is variable speed in both forward and reverse.
- 3) The wire is slacked away by reversing the winch, do not reverse at excessive speed as this will result in the wire becoming fouled on the drum
- 4) Tension must be kept on the wire at all times to eliminate the gear going fouled.
- 5) This winch has by far greater pulling capacity than the wire has breaking strain so attention must be given to load at all times
- 6) This winch has a hydraulic brake. When the winch is in stop position it will be braked automatically.
- 7) Extreme care must be taken not to damage the cable during operation.

Use of pot/ Net hauler on board the NEGIII

Only trained and competent employees are permitted to operate the pot/net hauler on board NEG III using the following operating instructions and they must ensure that all safety and cut-off devices are identified, working and activated:

- 1) Do not rely on the hauler to hold a suspended load for any length of time; these must be tied off securely to a strong point.
- 2) Great care should be taken if fouled equipment is hauled to the surface.
- 3) Reversing the hauler may cause the rope to release suddenly from the vee wheels, this operation should be only be done at slow speed.
- 4) Ensure any rope on deck is well away from the operator and cannot snag a foot on sudden release.
- 5) When working fishing gear crew members are to be aware of hazards that come with retrieving or shooting of the said gear and where practicable observe safe manual handling techniques and practices.
- 6) When using the hauler to work survey pots all crew members involved should be familiar with and adhere at all times to the supporting Standard Operating Practice.
- 7) Avoid the use of gloves where practicable whilst using the hauler.
- 8) Do not use loose clothing when operating the hauler.

SSB1.8 Patrol Vessel Engine Room

- 1) The engine room vents should be opened before entry into the engine room is permitted.
- 2) Machinery is not to be operated unless manufacturer's safeguards are in place. Machinery (engines) should be allowed to cool before any work is undertaken and safety gloves worn, except in emergency circumstances.
- 3) Equipment (electrical or mechanical) should be isolated and power turned off before any work is undertaken.
- 4) Employees must ensure they have no loose clothing, when in the vicinity of machinery.
- 5) Ear defenders are to be worn in the engine room when the engines are running.
- 6) Non-slip safety footwear is worn at all times.
- 7) A regular maintenance regime is in place and is followed to ensure valves/machinery/engines are working correctly and all alarms are tested.
- 8) Only trained and competent staff members as determined by the skipper should undertake any maintenance work within the engine room.
- 9) The engine room should be kept clean and tidy and free from any oil/fuel spillages which should be immediately cleaned up.

SSB1.9 Working on board vessels

- 1) Beware of sudden unexpected vessel movements when derricks are raised or lowered, or when a weight is being swung.
- 2) Sharp, pointed net gauges and knives can be dangerous items when clambering over vessels. All such items should be placed in a strong bag or safe pockets.
- 3) Particular care must be exercised when fishing gear is being handled on the vessel, or fish boxes are being loaded/unloaded.
- 4) Once aboard, always stand well clear of all gear and machinery on deck, whether or not it is working - it may start up unexpectedly.
- 5) Never straddle a rope or wire - it may unexpectedly come under tension. Never stand in a bight of any rope, wire and chain. Always avoid slack wires laid on

deck between two bollards, sheaves or blocks. (If the wire should come under sudden tension, a person's legs can be whipped from beneath them with possible severe injuries).

- 6) Beware of the dangers of walking on slippery hatch covers or on hatch boards which may not be properly secured over a deck opening. Always check that hatch covers are clipped back or otherwise secured, before descending into a fish or net hold.
- 7) When inspecting any hold, always have a member of the crew to assist you.
- 8) Trawl nets, fish boxes, containers, and other heavy objects should, where possible, be lifted in such a manner which conforms to manual handling techniques and where possible assistance should be sought.
- 9) Be aware of fire hazards and always ensure that a quick exit route from the vessel is available.

SSB1.10 Driving at Work

Employees have a duty to ensure that the activities they undertake whilst driving are safe and do not pose a danger to other road users. Where at all possible and/or practicable Officers should seek to 'car share'.

Use of Authority Vehicles

- 1) The Chief and Deputy Chief Officers are responsible for ensuring that all Authority vehicles are serviced and maintained in line with the manufacturer's recommendations.
- 2) Any employee using the vehicle shall be responsible for ensuring that before use a relevant Weekly Inspection Sheet has been completed.
- 3) All use of the vehicle is to be authorised by a senior manager.
- 4) Any employee using any Authority vehicle, is required to complete all necessary documentation in full. Any faults suspected or detected by an employee must be reported to the senior manager immediately. An entry must be made in the vehicle log book, **and where any fault may affect safety, then the vehicle must not be used.**
- 5) Any employee involved in a traffic offence or accident, either in their personal vehicle or Authority vehicles, or suffering any illness which may affect the ability to drive, or having been prescribed any medication, which may affect the ability to drive, must advise the CO, Deputy CO or line manager as soon as is practical.
- 6) Before using the four wheel drive capability of the Vehicle, or taking the vehicle into an off road situation, employees must be conversant with the correct and safe handling of the vehicle in that situation.
- 7) All drivers must be 25 years of age or over unless given express consent to operate that vehicle by the Chief or Deputy Chief Officer.
- 8) Employees will abide by the provisions of the Highway Code at all times.
- 9) Employees must comply with annual driving licence checks and any associated insurance requirements.

Use of All Terrain Vehicles

Only officers that have received the appropriate training in the operation and use of ATVs are authorised to use them to support NEIFCA operations and must observe the following safe working practices:

- 1) When using ATVs suitable head protection must be worn at all times (with the exception of vehicles fitted with a fully enclosed cab). A motorcycle helmet which meets BS6658 should be worn. The helmet should be comfortable and not restrict breathing. All straps should be intact and undamaged. The helmet should be checked for any visible signs of damage. On detection, damage should be reported to the relevant line manager.
- 2) Eye Protection consisting of a visor or safety glasses to EN 166 should be worn to protect against dust particles and flying insects (with the exception of vehicles fitted with a fully enclosed cab).
- 3) Protective boots must be worn with grip and ankle support which complies with EN345-1 during loading/unloading of the ATV (with the exception of vehicles fitted with a fully enclosed cab).
- 4) Ensure gloves are available to protect against wind chill in cold weather
- 5) Ensure suitable outer garments are worn appropriate to the weather conditions on the day, suitable waterproof clothing should be carried at all times.
- 6) Ensure drinking water is available to prevent dehydration.
- 7) A first aid kit should be carried at all times. The user should be trained in first aid in line with NEIFCA safe working practices document.
- 8) A VHF Radio, mobile phone, foot pump, puncture repair kit and extra fuel must be present when working intertidally.
- 9) A folding shovel and boards are provided in case of bogging.
- 10) A check list must be completed prior to each occasion any ATV is used. For multi operator vehicles a means of stopping use by other riders when a check has revealed a fault is useful, eg DO NOT USE tag for over key slot
- 11) When leaving any ATV on the foreshore officers must ensure that it is parked beyond the high water mark and should not be left in idle for prolonged periods.
- 12) Any ATV operations invoke the Authority's lone working procedures. **Officers must use ATV's in pairs only, there must be no single officer use.** The lead Officer responsible for the operation of the ATV must supply the following information to the designated Lone Working contact:
 - Start time
 - Journey Plan, to include detailed location and passage information
 - Estimated Time of return
 - Purpose

Information must be of sufficient detail to enable emergency services to initiate a search.

Use of Officers Vehicles

- 1) Employees will abide by the provisions of the Highway Code at all times.
- 2) Vehicles must have a current MOT certificate, current Road Tax, Business Use Insurance and be roadworthy at all times.

- 3) Any employee will be responsible for checking and ensuring the safe operation of their vehicle before use.
- 4) Employees must comply with annual driving licence checks and any associated insurance requirements.

Excessive Mileage and Fatigue

- 1) When undertaking long journeys, employees should, when practicable follow the guidance contained within the Highway Code.
- 2) Where normal work patterns are disrupted i.e for shore officers attending NEGIII. If the expected working day exceeds 12 hours and 250 miles travelled, then officers should make alternative accommodation arrangements, by either travelling up the previous day and staying in accommodation overnight or seeking accommodation following the working shift.

Weather Conditions

Consideration should be given when making any journey as to the weather conditions. If any concern exists then this should be relayed to the relevant senior manager. i.e attending NEG III in winter then seek advice from the Deputy Chief Officer/Offshore Operations Manager or First Mate otherwise seek guidance from the immediate line manager, on the day in question.

SSB1.11 Surveying Shellfish Beds

- 1) Prior to surveying on any shellfish bed, the Lone Working Procedure must be implemented irrespective of the number of people engaged in sampling.
- 2) There will be a designated officer in charge of the sampling and a minimum of 2 people are required for any survey. When engaged in sampling employees should ensure that they work in pairs as a minimum requirement. The designated officer should ensure that all necessary safe working practices and equipment are in place.
- 3) Access to and from beds must be taken using established tracks/exit routes. Avoid areas of unstable substrate when moving across the beds.
- 4) The designated officer should assess the likely weather conditions to ensure no severe weather is expected that could increase the risks highlighted in the risk assessment i.e Fog/Precipitation.
- 5) The tide times should be verified and work/surveying should only **occur 4 hours before LOW WATER.**
- 6) Each person engaged in surveying should have a work issue mobile phone and coverage from the network verified. The phone must be fully charged and all associated operational software, such as tracking and lone working facilities, must be fully activated.
- 7) The following safety equipment must be taken:
 - ❑ First Aid Kit
 - ❑ Fully functioning mobile phone
 - ❑ 1 Handheld GPS
 - ❑ Life jacket with AIS locator
 - ❑ Waterproof/warm clothing for each person.

- ❑ Compass
- ❑ VHF

SSB1.12 Operation of Vessels at Sea

NEG III Manning Requirements/Qualifications

In Harbour Movements:

- 1) When the vessel requires moving within the boundaries of any harbour, for example to take fuel, or re-mooring, there must be a **MINIMUM CREW OF 3**.

Vessel movement outside any harbour boundaries

- 1) This will include routine sea patrols, sea trials, passage voyages etc. There must be a **MINIMUM CREW OF 3 – which must include the skipper, 1 full time crew member and a competent other**.
- 2) When there is a requirement to carry out boardings of other vessels there must be a **MINIMUM CREW OF 4**

The Patrol Boat Skipper or relief skipper must be suitably experienced and qualified to coding requirements.

Stand Alone Vessel Manning Requirements/Qualifications

Stand Alone Vessels

Only vessels certificated under the Workboat Code can be used as Stand Alone Vessels.

For any activity undertaken by the vessel there will be a **MINIMUM CREW OF 2, 1 during boarding operations.**

All coxswains of stand-alone vessels must be qualified to RYA advanced powerboat certification unless under the supervision of a member of staff holding an advanced power boat certificate.

When RIBs are engaged in ‘mother/daughter’ operations with NEG III a minimum crew of 1 is permitted.

Maintaining a Navigational Watch

The skipper of each vessel (NEG III/RIB) will ensure that watch keeping arrangements are adequate for maintaining a safe navigational watch.

Watch Arrangements/Look Out

The composition of the watch shall at all times be adequate and appropriate to the prevailing circumstances and conditions and shall take into account the need for maintaining a proper lookout.

Fitness for Duty

The watch system shall be such that the efficiency of watch keeping officers is not impaired by fatigue.

Navigational Duties and Responsibilities

- 1) The helmsman shall keep his watch on the bridge which he shall under no circumstances leave until properly relieved.
- 2) The helmsman will continue to be responsible for the safe navigation of the ship, despite the presence of the skipper, until the skipper informs him that he has assumed responsibility and this is mutually understood.
- 3) The helmsman will notify the skipper when in any doubt as to what action to take in the interests of safe navigation or vessel safety.

Safety Equipment

- 1) All employees must be trained in the use of safety equipment. Once trained they must use all items of safety equipment and protective clothing relevant to their duties.
- 2) They must identify all safety gear stowage points aboard the patrol boats, to enable a quick and concerted action in the event of an unexpected emergency.
- 3) It is the employees own responsibility to ensure that he/she is adequately equipped for particular duties. They must also ensure that official equipment in their care is regularly serviced and maintained, e.g. automatic lifejackets.
- 4) If any equipment is found to be defective in any way, it must immediately be reported to the Offshore Operations Manager, First Mate, DCO or CO for renewal or repair.

Maintenance

It is the responsibility of senior management to ensure all maintenance regimes are followed in their respective work area. Additionally, it is the responsibility of all staff to ensure all items of equipment/machinery are in working order prior to any activity being undertaken. Any defects must be reported immediately and if necessary operation of vessels should be aborted until such problems are rectified.

Weather Conditions

The skipper shall assess the weather conditions before any planned voyage/trip, to ensure the safety of the vessel and crew.

SSB1.13 Surveys Onboard Fishing Vessels

- 1) Prior to undertaking any surveying, the Lone Working Procedure must be implemented irrespective of the number of people engaged in sampling.
- 2) Officers must wear non-slip footwear and a lifejacket.
- 3) Each person engaged in surveying should have work issue mobile phone. The phone must be fully charged and all associated operational software, such as tracking and lone working facilities, must be fully activated.
- 4) The appropriate Line Manager should satisfy him/her/themselves that the vessel being used to survey from is in good sea worthy condition, has a reliable and well known skipper and has the necessary safety equipment on-board and a relevant MCA Code of Safety Inspection.
- 5) Officers should satisfy themselves that the vessel chosen is going to sea in weather/conditions that are suitable. **If there is any doubts on any safety related issues and or conditions the survey should be aborted immediately.**
- 6) The following equipment must be taken:
 - ❑ Life jacket with AIS locator
 - ❑ Warm/waterproof clothing
 - ❑ Means of communication

SSB1.14 Inspecting Premises

- 1) When inspecting any new premises officers must identify themselves and fully explain to the manager/owner the purpose of the inspection and powers under which the inspection is being undertaken
- 2) Officers must always have in their possession a fully operational work issue mobile phone. The phone must be fully charged and all associated operational software, such as tracking and lone working facilities, must be fully activated.
- 3) When working outside of normal work times 2200- 0400 Officers must implement the Lone Working Procedure.
- 4) Officers must wear non-slip, safety footwear and protective clothing appropriate for the premises being inspected.
- 5) Prior to entering any premises Officers should ensure that they are wearing appropriate gloves, face and or head coverings.
- 6) When inspecting cooked/uncooked products officers must take suitable precautions as advised by the owner in order to prevent cross-contamination of food products.
- 7) When measuring shellfish or whitefish ensure the correct handling procedure is followed,
- 8) Any objects such as trawl nets, fish boxes, containers and other heavy objects should be lifted in accordance with manual handling techniques.
- 9) Be aware at all times of any machinery operating such as forklifts, always conduct inspection of fish in safe location.
- 10) Employees must familiarise themselves with the premises emergency procedures in case of fire etc.
- 11) Never enter a cold room or freezer unattended and always ensure the door cannot be closed behind you.

SSB1.15 Inspection of Person/s

All officers will at sometime during the course of their duties inspect person/s unknown to them. In such circumstances Officers must follow the procedure below:

- 1) Officers must always have in their possession a fully operational work issue mobile phone. The phone must be fully charged and all associated operational software, such as tracking and lone working facilities, must be fully activated.
- 2) When working outside of normal work times 2200 – 0400 Officers must implement the Lone Working Procedure (LWP).
- 3) When operating in any location, officers must risk assess the potential for any violence and implement the LWP (SSB4), where any doubt exists the LWP must be invoked and standard issue protective vest worn.
- 4) When operating against person/s who are known to the Authority as being a threat to officers safety the LWP must be invoked.
- 5) Where a new person is inspected by officers and any concerns are raised, the officer must liaise with senior management who will liaise with the Police to obtain any relevant information on the threat this person may pose.
- 6) WHERE ANY THREAT OF VIOLENCE EXISTS OFFICERS MUST LEAVE THE AREA IMMEDIATELY, SAFETY OF STAFF IS PARAMOUNT.

SSB1.16 Inspection of Vehicles

- 1) Officers must always have in their possession a fully operational mobile phone. The phone must be fully charged and all associated operational software, such as tracking and lone working facilities, must be fully activated.
- 2) When working outside of normal work times 2200 – 0400 Officers must implement the Lone Working Procedure (LWP).
- 3) If officers are unsure about the nature of the person being inspected they must implement the LWP for the course of the inspection.
- 4) When inspecting any vehicle ensure the engine is switched off and request that the key is removed.
- 5) Before commencing any inspection request that the handbrake to the vehicle is engaged.
- 6) Always request the driver to accompany you during the inspection.
- 7) When inspecting refrigeration units always ensure the door is locked open and that the driver accompanies you at all times. Ensure you have warm clothing.
- 8) When accessing a vivier lorry/van ensure the threat of fall is removed by using suitable access provisions.
- 9) Be aware at all times of the environment surrounding you, conduct the inspection in a quiet location away from the threat of other traffic/vehicles.
- 10) If following a vehicle, officers must ensure they abide by the Highway Code at all times.
- 11) Do not use your vehicle to block any vehicle in.
- 12) Do not follow vehicles into remote locations where the threat of isolation exists.

SSB1.17 Use of Mobile Phones

General Use

- 1) When working, all officers must ensure that their work issue mobile telephones are switched ON, fully charged, operational and all associated operational software, such as tracking and lone working facilities, fully activated. During work time phones should only be switched off during the following circumstances (Paragraphs (2) to (4)).
- 2) When using a mobile telephone, Officers must ensure that they conform to the Road Vehicles [Construction and Use] [Amendment] [No 4] 2003, which prohibits the use of hand held devices whilst driving. A copy of this regulation and its guidelines is available to all staff
- 3) At all other times Officers shall assess whether the use of a Mobile Telephone could cause distraction which may affect the officer's safety or that of any other person or property. If the officer feels that any such risk is possible then the Mobile Telephone should not be used or switched off.
- 4) When attending Staff/Authority Meeting's, Magistrates Court, Crown Court or Training Sessions etc. Mobile Telephones should be switched OFF. If a possibility of accidental connection exists then the battery of the Mobile Telephone should also be removed.

Message Service

- 1) Officers must ensure that during working hours if their Mobile Telephone is switched OFF a voice mail or message service is functional on their phone.
- 2) During the course of a normal working week (Monday-Sunday) whilst not on duty and the officers Mobile Telephone is switched OFF, provision must be made for a voice mail message service to be functional on their Mobile Telephone.

SSB1.18 Operation of Drones

Pre-Flight Checks

- 1) Environmental conditions must be assessed before any drone activity is undertaken. Check the local weather forecasts before travelling to site and reassessing once at the site and during flight operations.
- 2) Where possible check for any known aircraft that might be operating in the area.
- 3) Ensure drone and controller batteries are fully charged before flying using battery tester if necessary. It is dangerous to fly the drone with low power. This could result in damage to the battery and risk of the drone crashing.
- 4) Make sure all electrical fittings are fully connected and secured.
- 5) Take care when installing or removing propellers to prevent cutting or scratches to hands.
- 6) Check all propellers to ensure that there is no damage, they are correctly installed and securely fastened.
- 7) Ensure the drone camera is properly secured before each flight. If calibration is required make sure you have sufficient space before completing the process with reference to the appropriate manual.

- 8) Prior to take-off ensure that the drone has a minimum connection to at least 9 satellites
- 9) It is strictly forbidden for any operator to handle a drone whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Take Off

- 1) During take-off, when operating from land, any drone should be placed in GPS mode and on the ground at a distance of 50m from the operator.
- 2) Ensure due care and attention is paid to sea state and vessel manoeuvres if operating a drone in an offshore environment. The operator must be safely positioned on the boat away from open sides or hazards.
- 3) When powering on the controller make sure all switches are in the upwards position. Test and ensure the controller has a good connection with the drone before take-off.
- 4) Whilst the drone is completing the power on auto check the operator should keep the drone stationary and when operating from land, ensure it is positioned in an open space away from the operator and others.
- 5) The operator should stand upwind and to the side of the drone during take-off and landing or when operating from a vessel, ensure the vessel is positioned upwind of the drone's location.
- 6) During take-off, flying and landing the operator should take note of wind direction and speed in relation to the vessel or location at all times and then plan and proceed accordingly.
- 7) The option of take-off or landing from hand should be generally avoided with other safer options taking preference. Where take-off or landing from hand is carried out the correct PPE including a helmet with face shield and suitable gloves must be worn by the handler. The handler should use an outstretched arm and be cautious to keep to drone away from the body until motors have come to a full stop

Flight

- 1) During flight it is important to constantly monitor the battery voltage as flying conditions like strong winds and fast movements can deplete the battery rapidly. If the battery power falls below 14v the drone should be safely landed and recovered.
- 2) The operator should follow the rules of the UK Drone Code at all times whilst flying.
- 3) In an emergency crash landing the operator should stop the motors by pushing both joysticks down and outwards. This will reduce chance of damage or injury.
- 4) The operator must maintain eye contact with the drone at all times and should not operate the drone in low light or low visibility conditions.

Landing & Post Flight

- 1) When operating offshore the drone should be landed against the wind.
- 2) After landing the operator must ensure the motors have fully come to a stop before handling the drone.

- 3) When operating offshore and retrieving the drone from the sea the operator and or assistant must ensure safe footing is maintained and correct equipment is used (boat hook). Follow Safe Systems of Work Boarding/Disembarking Vessels at Sea (SSB1.4)
- 4) Following any use the drone and camera should be rinsed in fresh water to prevent corrosion paying special attention to the motors, gimbal parts and mounting brackets of the landing gear.

Storage

- 1) If drone is out of action for an extended period the operator should store the drone in dry and ventilated environment in a temperature of 20-28C.

SSB1.19 Medications at Sea

- 1) In certain circumstances, such as chronic illnesses, a duplicate medication should be carried at all times. (E.g. Relief medication such as inhalers that relieve the symptoms of an asthma attack are needed on an ad-hoc basis with little warning) In relation to such medications:-
- 2) (a) One set should be carried in a waterproof container stowed in a secure compartment on satellite and shore launched vessels *and/or*-
(b) In the case of NEGIII duties, a mutually agreed safe place known to the individual requiring the medicine and the master of the vessel.
(c) Depending on the medication, a duplicate must be carried on the person requiring the medication at all times. Particularly, if the individual is onboard the land based rib or NEG III satellite vessels undertaking patrols/boardings.
- 3) The Master of NEGIII and/or lead officer in the case of shore launched vessels/NEGIII satellite vessels must be made aware of any medication carried, whether duplicate or not. No sea going duties are to be undertaken unless essential medication is present and in the case of mechanical administering devices (such as an inhaler) are in full working order. Details given should include frequency of self administration and any special requirements pertaining to the medication.
- 4) It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure that he or she has the appropriate medication when undertaking sea going duties and that the master or lead officer is informed.

SSB 2 – Risk Assessments

The following generic risk assessments have been conducted for work activities undertaken by NEIFCA staff. These assessments are held electronically and are detailed in Annex 1 for information. Furthermore the electronic risk assessment is designed to be flexible and as new work activities are undertaken staff, in conjunction with senior managers, are responsible for ensuring any new task is risk assessed before work activity commences.

RA1	Surveying Shellfish Beds	RA11	Patrol Vessels Launching/Recovering RIB
RA2	Inspection of vessels/catch	RA12	Operation of RIB at sea
RA3	Inspection of Premises	RA13	Operation of NEG III at Sea

RA4	Inspection of Person/s	RA14	Driving at Work
RA5	Inspection of Vehicles	RA15	Intertidal Survey Work
RA6	Lone Working	RA16	Operations of Drones
RA7	Surveys	RA17	Mandatory Stab Vests District
RA8	Launching of RIB with Vehicle and Trailer	RA17a	Mandatory Stab Vests Sunderland
RA9	Patrol Vessels General deck Work		
RA9a	Patrol Vessel Potting		
RA10	Patrol Vessel Engine Room		

SSB3 – COSHH Assessments

Any substances used in day to day operations are detailed within the NEIFCA COSHH Assessments Files which are held centrally at the Town Hall, on the Patrol Vessel NEG III and at storage facilities. Officers must ensure that before using any substances, they must refer to the COSHH Assessment Files and take any necessary precautions as identified within each substances assessment. All new substances must be assessed before use, and the assessment retained in the relevant file.

SSB4- Violence, Challenging Behaviour and Working Alone in Safety

Verbal Abuse and Threats

- 1) All Staff will receive appropriate training on how to deal with difficult situations.
- 2) Any cases of verbal abuse and or threat to any employee must be reported to their Senior Officer and a detailed record will be kept and monitored using a specific report sheet held electronically in the Health and Safety File.
- 3) Where a pattern of threats or abuse is revealed, the Chief/ Deputy Chief will seek the advice of and assistance from appropriate agencies, and take any necessary action.

Physical Assault

The Authority will adopt the following procedure as appropriate where:-

- A physical attack can be reasonably foreseen in the future from a potential aggressor:
- A physical attack has taken place:
 - Call the Police [Ambulance if required]
 - Report the incident to a Senior Officer verbally.
 - Liaise with the police, be prepared to make a Statement, and obtain a crime number.
 - The Senior Officer will decide on any other immediate action thought necessary in the interests of safety.

- ❑ Complete written report regarding the incident.
- ❑ Liaise with Hospital or GP, if appropriate obtaining written evidence of injuries if possible.
- ❑ Counselling will be offered to Staff where necessary.

Lone Working Procedure

This procedure has been developed in order to improve communications and provide support to employees who are engaged in lone working. Although there may be occasions when employees other than lone workers would benefit from using this system, for example, employees working outside normal office hours (2200 – 0400).

Lone working is an integral part of NEIFCA officers/employees operations and, as an employer, NEIFCA recognises that lone workers face particular problems due to the nature of their work and will not require officers/employees to work alone where this results in unacceptable risks. Management must therefore assess the risks its lone workers face and wherever possible should strive to remove or reduce risks to an acceptable level.

To ensure success of this procedure and thus maximise the safety of all NEIFCA officers/employees there needs to be full co-operation of all staff in the implementation of the procedure.

Identifying Lone Workers

NEIFCA management has undertaken a risk assessment of all work activities and identified areas/tasks undertaken in the course of officers duties which pose possible hazards, the consequences of those hazards, the risk factors and the control measures to be implemented in order to reduce the risk to Authority employees.

As part of that risk assessment areas have been identified which pose a possible risk in terms of lone working/workers. It is important to be aware that the risks associated with lone working are not associated only with individuals. Small groups working in remote locations can experience some of the risks associated with lone working- for example, If during a survey on a shellfish bed one of them suffers injury and the group needs to divide to get assistance.

Below is a table, which identifies through the NEIFCA Risk Assessment, areas which are classified as lone working.

Identified Lone Working Activities

LW1 - Surveys on Shellfish Beds
LW2 - Working in Identified locations
LW3 - Working outside of normal office hours 2200-0400
LW4 - Surveys on board fishing vessels
LW5 - Use of Stand Alone Vessels
LW6 - Any situation/location suitably assessed by officer

Shore Based Lone Working Procedure

- 1) Officers/employees must ensure that they carry a reliable means of communication at all times (work issue mobile telephone). All phones must be fully charged, operational and all associated operational software, such as tracking and lone working facilities, fully activated.
- 2) Officers/employees must ensure that before undertaking any lone working procedure (as identified) they have read the relevant NEIFCA Risk Assessment/Safety Services Booklet. Officers/employees must also ensure they have all the relevant equipment identified for the task they are to undertake.
- 3) Lone workers must log on at the beginning of the identified work activity and log off when the activity ends. The procedure laid out below must be used for logging on and off.

Logging On/Off

- 1) During all hours, officers should must log on verbally with their respective senior manager using one of the following numbers:
 - DCO 07879815464
 - Senior IFCO 077787859736
 - Acting Senior Environmental & Scientific Officer 07833555859
 - First Mate 07867910409
- 2) Once contact has been made then they should be informed of the following information:
 - ☐ Location
 - ☐ Expected activity
 - ☐ Expected finish times
 - ☐ Intended frequency of contact
- 3) The officer must agree the frequency of contact with the contact officer covering the duration of the lone working period.
- 4) Once logged on, lone workers must make contact at the agreed times. FAILURE TO DO SO MAY RESULT IN THE SEARCH PROCEDURE BEING ACTIVATED.

SSB5 – Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences (RIDDOR)

Accident and Incident Reporting

All accidents, or incidents involving dangerous occurrences and/or near misses shall be reported. The Operational Support Manager shall ensure that systems and procedures are in place to monitor and record all incidents.

The procedures to be followed for reporting and recording such events are contained within the 2 flow charts:

- 1) Accident Reporting Procedure (HSE)
- 2) Accident Reporting Procedure (MAIB)

These procedures are set down by law for reporting and recording all accidents and incidents either terrestrially (HSE) or at sea (MAIB).

Accident Reporting Procedure (HSE)

NEIFCA accepts that the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 and other statutes place a duty on it to ensure that accidents and incidents are recorded and investigated.

All accidents and incidents should be investigated and recorded to ensure future work activities are modified accordingly to ensure a safe working environment. The 'Accident Reporting Procedure (HSE) Flow Chart' contains the relevant procedures to be followed in reporting and recording all accidents and incidents within the terrestrial work environment.

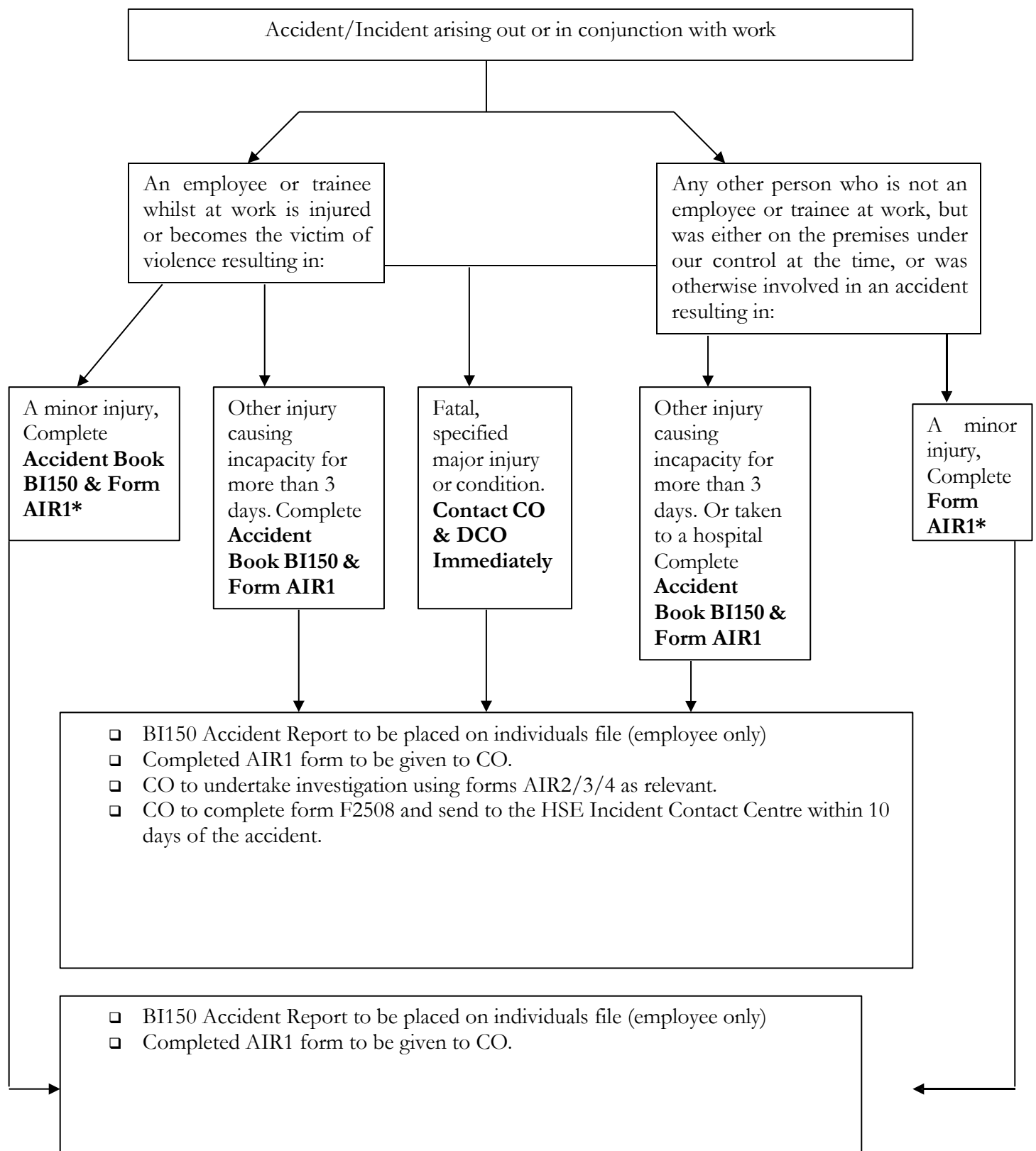
Accident Reporting Procedure (MAIB)

NEIFCA accepts that the Merchant Shipping Act 1995, and the Merchant Shipping (Accident and Reporting Regulations) 2005, place a duty on it to ensure that accidents and incidents are recorded, reported and investigated.

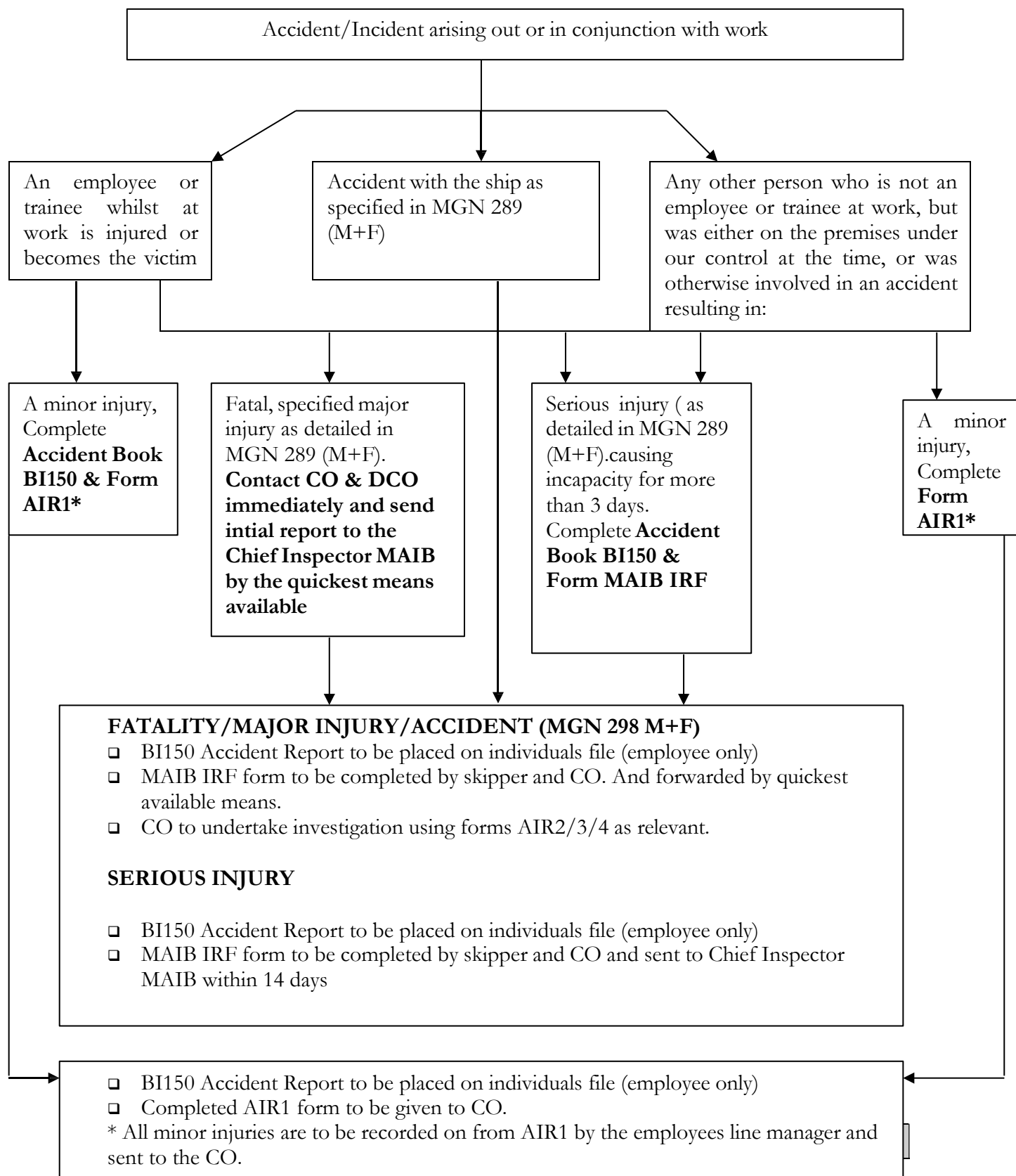
All accidents and incidents should be investigated and recorded to ensure future work activities are modified accordingly to ensure a safe working environment. The 'Accident Reporting Procedure (MAIB) Flow Chart' contains the relevant procedures to be followed in reporting and recording all accidents and incidents within the marine work environment.

ALL RELEVANT REPORTING FORMS ARE HELD ELECTRONICALLY AND WILL BE SUPPLIED TO LINE MANAGERS.

Accident Reporting Procedure (HSE) Flow Chart



Accident Reporting Procedure (MAIB) Flow Chart



Procedure for Assessments

STEP 1

All staff who use a computer are to complete a **'User Assessment Form'**. This is to ascertain if the member of staff is classed as a 'habitual user', and thus falling into the scope of the regulations. 'Non users' need not proceed any further.

STEP 2

If the member of staff is clearly classed as a 'user' then he or she must complete the **'Workplace and Display Screen Assessment Form'**. Once this has been completed it should be returned to the CO.

STEP 3

As CO it is your responsibility to analyse the responses, and as far as is reasonably practicable, address any areas of concern. All assessment forms and details of actions should be retained and kept in the electronic 'Health and Safety' File.

STEP 4

The assessment process must be repeated when any of the following circumstances occur:

- A major change in hardware and/or software
- A major change in furniture, office environment, and/or relocation of the workstation
- A substantial increase in the users time spent at their workstation

NORTH EASTERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Report to: Executive Committee
6 March 2025

NEIFCA Byelaws Update

Report by the Chief Officer

A. Purpose of Report

1. To update Members on progress with the following byelaws which were made at a meeting of the Authority held on 1 December 2022:

XXVIII Shellfish Permit Byelaw 2022

XXIX Humber Estuary Fishing Byelaw 2022

2. To update Members on progress with the following byelaw which was made at the meeting of the Authority held on 6 June 2024:

XXXIII Beam Trawling Byelaw 2024

B. Recommendation

1. That members receive the update and note the report.

1. Background

1.1 *XXVIII Shellfish Permit Byelaw 2022*

- 1.1.1 At the Authority meeting held on 1 December 2022 members supported the making of a new byelaw XXVIII Shellfish Permit Byelaw 2022 (Minute Item 32 refers).

The key aims of the new byelaw are to establish a new flexible management framework which will more effectively cover the exploitation of listed shellfish species throughout the NEIFCA district, both offshore and onshore. The new proposed byelaw will also consolidate existing byelaw regulations and introduce an effort management system for commercial potting within the district. The provisions contained within the byelaw will be applied via conditions attached to the permit which can be varied following an appropriate review process, without the need to formally remake the whole byelaw. Two permitting schemes will be established, Category 1 for licensed commercial vessels and Category 2 for recreational operators. It is proposed that during year one a maximum of 234 Category 1 permits will be offered and permit holders restricted to working a maximum of 1000 pots. A permit charge would also be levied for Category 1 permits linked to the number of pots worked. The number of Category 2 permits offered will remain unrestricted but a new £10 charge would be levied, and the number of pots permitted reduced from 10 to 5 per permit holder with daily bag limits remaining unchanged.

- 1.1.2 Since the making of the byelaw on 1 December 2022 it has been subject to further internal quality assurance checks, informal consultation with fishing groups and wider formal statutory consultation which completed on 27 October 2023.
- 1.1.3 During this process the following adjustments were made to the draft byelaw regulation:
- Prior to the commencement of formal consultation the scope of the byelaw was widened to include, European green crab, mussel, common periwinkle, pullet carpet shell, Norway Lobster, razor clam and scallop. This was felt prudent and necessary to improve the active management of intertidal shore gathering by large ethnic groups which has become an increasing issue in some areas of the NEIFCA district.
 - Prior to formal consultation additional provisions were also added to allow for the varying of fees and charges and the implementation of management by 'pot type' alongside a further provision clarifying that, in terms of Category 1 applications, first priority would be given to those vessels who held a permit on 1 December 2022.
 - The supporting Regulatory Impact Assessments were also updated to include some additional information from the 2023 shellfish landings report and intertidal shore gathering.
- 1.1.4 Following the completion of the formal statutory consultation process on 27 October 2023 the outcome was presented to members, alongside the proposed next steps, at the Authority meeting held on 8 December 2023 (Minute 75 refers). The outcome was published on the NEIFCA website on 11 January 2024 and stakeholders notified via email.
- 1.1.5 In line with the statutory process the draft byelaw regulation and supporting documentation was sent to the Marine Management Organisation for a Quality Assurance assessment on 11 January 2024 with a recommendation that it be further considered for formal confirmation by Defra. The first phase of the MMO QA process was received back from the MMO for comment on 11 April 2024.
- 1.1.6 Following a detailed review of the recommendations from the first phase of the MMO QA assessment the draft byelaw and supporting Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) were revised, updated and returned to the MMO for phase 2 assessment on 12 July 2024. Whilst all of the primary intentions of the draft byelaw have been retained, key changes relate to the structuring of the byelaw, further additions to the definition and permitting sections to improve clarity for stakeholders and the removal of the longstanding deeming clause.
- 1.1.7 The MMO returned the QA phase 2 response on 12 September 2024 and following a review the RIA and draft byelaw documents were revised updated and returned to the MMO for phase 3 assessment on 24 September 2024.
- 1.1.8 The MMO returned the QA phase 3 response on 6 December 2024 and following a review the RIA and draft byelaw documents were revised, updated and returned to the MMO for phase 4 assessment on 19 December 2024 which is expected to be completed and returned on 22 February 2025.
- 1.1.9 Officers anticipate that the QA process in relation to this byelaw will take a further two months to complete and the draft byelaw will then move to Defra for final confirmation.

1.2 ***XXIX Humber Estuary Fishing Byelaw 2022***

- 1.2.1 At the Authority meeting held on 1 December 2022 members supported the making of a new byelaw XXIX Humber Estuary Fishing Byelaw 2022 (Minute Item 31 refers).

- 1.2.2 Whilst retaining all existing management measures in relation to fishing activities within the boundaries of the Humber Estuary the new byelaw included a revision to the boundaries of an existing protected area to support the expansion of eel grass habitat.
- 1.2.3 Following completion of the statutory consultation process on 27 October 2023 the outcome was presented to members, alongside the proposed next steps, at the Authority meeting held on 8 December 2023 (Minute 75 refers). The outcome was published on the NEIFCA website on 11 January 2024 and stakeholders notified via email.
- 1.2.4 In line with the statutory process the draft byelaw regulation and supporting documentation was also sent to the Marine Management Organisation for a Quality Assurance assessment on 11 January 2024 with a recommendation that it be further considered for formal confirmation by Defra. The first phase of the MMO QA process was received back from the MMO for comment on 3 April 2024.
- 1.2.5 Following a detailed review of the recommendations from the first phase of the MMO QA assessment the draft byelaw and supporting Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) were revised, updated and returned to the MMO for phase 2 assessment on 12 July 2024. In line with the Shellfish Permit byelaw all the primary intentions of the draft Humber Estuary Fishing Byelaw have been retained and key changes relate to grammar, detail and clarity for stakeholders.
- 1.2.5 The QA phase 2 assessment was received back from the MMO on 12 September 2024 and following a review both the RIA and draft byelaw documents were revised, updated and returned to the MMO on 24 September 2024 for QA phase 3 assessment. The QA phase 3 assessment was received back from the MMO on 30 October 2024 and following a further review both the RIA and draft byelaw documents were revised, updated and returned to the MMO on 15 November 2024 for QA phase 4 assessment.
- 1.2.6 The QA phase 3 assessment was received back from the MMO on 27 January 2025 with some minor, final recommendations prior to submission to Defra for formal confirmation.

1.3 **XXXIII Beam Trawling Byelaw 2024**

- 1.3.1 At the Authority meeting held on 6 June 2024 members supported the making of a new byelaw XXXIII Beam Trawling Byelaw 2024 (Minute 12 refers).
- 1.3.2 The key aims of the new byelaw are to replace the current emergency regulation with flexible management framework that will support the effective management of the king scallop stock from targeted beam trawling activity alongside any associated impacts on the wider environment in the medium to longer term.
- 1.3.3 Following the making of the byelaw on 6 June 2024 formal consultation commenced on 11 July 2024 and terminated on 23 August 2024. Alongside the formal consultative process officers submitted a written request to Defra for a six-month extension to the current emergency byelaw regulation until 17 January 2025 to enable the process of making and confirming the new replacement byelaw regulation to be completed before expiry. This was consented on 17 July 2024.
- 1.3.4 During the formal consultation process officers received two written responses from hobby vessel operators objecting to the proposed requirement to hold and pay a fee for an additional permit to use a small beam trawl. Following consideration of the two objections and a review by the Executive Committee on 3 September 2024, an exemption was added to the byelaw to enable hobby operators to use a single beam trawl, not exceeding 2.5m in length, without the need to hold an additional permit.

- 1.3.5 The draft byelaw regulation and supporting RIA was submitted to the MMO for QA stage 1 review on 13 September 2024 and was received back on 30 October 2024. Following a review both the RIA and draft byelaw documents were revised, updated and returned to the MMO for QA stage 2 review on 15 November 2024.
- 1.3.6 The MMO QA review completed on 6 January 2025 and the byelaw is now awaiting formal confirmation by Defra.

1.4 **Summary Update**

1.4.1 **XXVIII Shellfish Permit Byelaw 2022**

Made on 1 December 2022. Currently in MMO Quality Assurance stage 4 as of 19 December 2024. Projected to be confirmed May 2025.

1.4.2 ***XXIX Humber Estuary Fishing Byelaw 2022***

Made on 1 December 2022. Currently awaiting submission to final stage MMO Quality Assurance as of 27 January 2025. Projected to be confirmed April 2025.

1.4.3 **XXXIII Beam Trawling Byelaw 2024**

Made on 6 June 2024. Currently with Defra awaiting formal confirmation by the Minister as of 6 January 2025. Projected to be confirmed March 2025.

Contact Officer

David McCandless, Chief Officer
Ext. 3690

NORTH EASTERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Report to: Executive Committee
6 March 2025

Chief Officer's Operational Update

Report of the Chief Officer

A. Purpose of Report

To provide members with an operational report covering the period December 2024 to February 2025.

B. Recommendation

That Members note the report.

1. Overview

1.1 NEIFCA

New Fisheries Vessel Build - Update

The new vessel build is covered within a separate report presented at this meeting. Officers remain extremely pleased with the standard of work and craftsmanship exhibited by Parkol Marine Ltd at Whitby and the vessel remains both on schedule for launching at the end of April 2025 and on budget.

Sale of North Eastern Guardian III - Update

Documentation supporting the marketing and sale of (NEG III) was finalised during February 2024 in consultation with the East Riding of Yorkshire Council procurement team. The vessel was formally marketed for sale during May 2024 as part of a formal, closed electronic tender process. A deadline of 31 July 2024 was set for receipt of bids which was subsequently extended to 7 August 2024. Despite a very good level of interest in the vessel it remained unsold and following consultation with the East Riding of Yorkshire Council (ERYC) procurement team, Clerk and Treasurer a second, informal sale process was commenced on 12 August 2024.

In response to the second informal process Officers entered into further negotiations with a Polish based Company, UXO Marine Ltd, in consultation with the Clerk, Chair and Treasurer. A sale contract was agreed and signed with UXO Marine Ltd on 12 December 2024 and full payment for the vessel was completed on 3 February 2025. The ownership was formally transferred to UXO by the NEIFCA Chair on 17 February 2025 and arrangements are now being made to deliver the vessel to Poland from Whitby.

Staffing and Recruitment

A recruitment process commenced on 10 January 2025 to seek applications for the two full time offshore vacancies. A deadline of Monday 24 February was set for receipt of applications. At the time of writing this report 30 applications had been received with shortlisting and interviews planned for the first half of March 2025.

Environmental & Scientific Work

Since December 2024 the Environmental and Scientific team have been focusing on the data analysis and annual stock status reports for lobster, crabs and scallops. Data and information gathering has been focusing on the active, permitted scallop dredgers, the intertidal fixed net permit holders, quayside and the occasional observer trip onboard potting vessels.

1.2 National Work streams

IFCA Conduct and Operations Report

Every four years there is a statutory requirement under Section 183 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 for the Secretary of State to 'lay' a report to Parliament on the conduct and operations of IFCAs. The third such report, covering the period 2018 to 2022, was published by Defra on 6 February 2025 and a copy is attached as item 12a, for members review and information.

At the time of writing this report, given the timing of the publication, IFCAs as a collective are still in the process of reviewing and digesting the contents. Some key points of note include the period of the review, 2018 to 2022, which covered the COVID global pandemic and significant political flux surrounding both in terms of EU exit and UK government administrations which all impacted significantly on IFCAs. IFCAs have also continued to strengthen and develop since 2022. A more detailed assessment will be presented to the June Authority meeting.

Fisheries Management plans

On 14 December 2024 Defra published 5 Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs) including crab and lobster, sea bass, king scallop, whelk and Channel non-quota species. The development of FMPs is a key component of the 2020 Fisheries Act to inform future fisheries management policy delivery across a range of exploited stocks in the UK. The FMP programme has now expanded across some 40 plans covering a wide range of species.

NEIFCA staff are currently directly involved in two of the current, national FMP implementation groups including crab and lobster and king scallop. One of the objectives in the crab and lobster FMP is to set up pilot scheme for the North East and South West, exploring and trialling fine scale management measures for the regions. The first focus of this pilot scheme will be to examine potential changes in the minimum landing size of lobsters and NEIFCA is working in close partnership with Northumberland IFCA on that.

1.3 Priority Work streams for the next six months

- Monitoring final phases of construction of the new vessel through to delivery
- Commissioning and operationalisation of the new vessel including recruitment of two new staff members
- Supporting the delivery of North Eastern Guardian III to Poland.
- Submission of all the finalised byelaws to DEFRA for confirmation 2025
- In terms of biometric survey work, prioritising potting, scallop dredging and beach net fisheries

- Further implementation of the new fisheries database including the capture of electronic catch and effort returns.

1.4 Summary of meetings and events attended

MMO Marine Planning	2 nd December 2025
National Association of IFCAs meetings	3 rd December 2024
Humber Estuary Stakeholders Liaison meeting	6 th December 2024
IFCA Chief Officers Group meeting	10 th December 2024
Seafish/NEIFCA/MMO/DEFRA FMP meeting	10 th December 2024
Seafish/MMO/DEFRA/NEIFCA Industry meeting	10 th December 2024
NEIFCA Staffing meeting	11 th December 2024
Mussel restoration network meeting	12 th December 2025
Marine Stewardship Council meeting	16 th December 2025
NEIFCA/MMO Byelaw meeting	17 th December 2024
FMP Programme – King Scallop Implementation Group	18 th December 2024
NEIFCA/MMO byelaw meeting	20 th December 2025
New Vessel Build Project Update meeting	10 th January 2025
IFCA Chief Officers Group meeting	15 th January 2025
DEFRA Byelaw meeting	15 th January 2025
UKSF (Seafood funding) feedback meeting	15 th December 2025
IFCA/MMO Strategic Operations Group meeting	22 nd January 2025
NEIFCA budget monitoring meeting	27 th January 2025
NEIFCA Annual Staffing Appraisals	27 th January – 3 rd February 2025
UXO Marine Ltd	4 th February 2025
MMO/IFCA Greater Wash SPA meeting	4 th February 2025
DEFRA FISP project ‘ELSP’ close out meeting	6 th February 2025
ABP survey on static gear footprint meeting	10 th February 2025
CEFAS scallop stock assessment meeting	11 th February 2025
GYKF steering group meeting	11 th February 2025

New Vessel Build Project Update meeting	11 th February 2025
IFCA Chief Officers Group meeting	12 th February 2025
MEDIN meeting with Eastern IFCA	13 th February 2025
Guest lecture on inshore fisheries at University of Salford	14 th February 2025
IFCA Vessels Management & Operations Group	15 th February 2025
DEFRA/CEFAS/AIFCA Coastal Health Symposium	24 th February 2025



Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities

Conduct and Operations Report 2018-2022



HM Government

Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities Conduct and Operations Report 2018-2022

Presented to Parliament pursuant to

Section 183 (1) of the Marine and Coastal Access Act (2009)



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Summary

This report on the conduct and operation of the Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs) has been laid before Parliament by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

It meets the requirements of s.183(1) of Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MaCAA), stating that the Secretary of State must lay before Parliament a report about the conduct and operation of the authorities for any Inshore Fisheries and Conservation districts in existence as soon as is reasonably practicable after the end of every relevant four-year period.

The Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs) are statutory regulators responsible for sustainably managing the exploitation of sea fisheries resources and furthering the conservation objectives of Marine Conservation Zones to six nautical miles from territorial baselines. Further information on the background to the IFCAs is described in Annex A.

Defra legislation (Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MaCAA)) set up the IFCAs to deliver IFCA statutory duties and priorities. Accountability and funding arrangements are shared between Defra and the Local Authorities, as well as the governing committees for each IFCA.

This is the third quadrennial report to have been prepared for Parliament and covers the period 2018 to 2022, through which significant events such as Covid-19 and EU Exit took place. The Joint Fisheries Statement, Fisheries and Environment Acts were all introduced through this period. Whilst the consultation was focused on this time period, it is acknowledged that some stakeholders might have included their reflections on their experience of conduct and operations since 2022.

The overall approach to the consultation considered evidence produced by Defra which showed that fishers favour informal conversations over formal consultations. Questions for stakeholders were developed by Defra based on success criteria previously developed and agreed by the IFCA Chief Officers. The following channels used these questions to gather information and evidence which was analysed for this report:

- Questionnaire sent to Chief Officers (August and September 2022)
- In-person engagements as part of quayside conversations (October 2022 to January 2023)
- Citizen Space and Qualtrics online survey platforms which ran for 8 weeks (23 February 2024 to 22 April 2024)
- Data commission and additional information from IFCA Chief Officers (May to July 2024)
- Other relevant information

In total, over 500 responses were received, and the breakdown of respondents is shown in Annex B. As a result, this is the most comprehensive report published by

Defra on the conduct and operations of the IFCAs since they were established under MaCAA.

The report has been constructed around key themes that emerged using the responses to the consultation questionnaires and summaries of conversations. This has allowed for greater flexibility when undertaking the consultation analysis rather than using predefined headings, which may not align with the information gathered through the consultation response. Further detail on the consultation methodology is found in Annex C.

We are very grateful for the time that all stakeholders and Chief Officers have taken to provide constructive input to help us create this report.

The production of this report has aimed to create a concise and cohesive narrative on the conduct and operations of the IFCAs, without losing the detail contained within the consultation response.

Findings of the report

The report is structured by overarching themes, developed through analysis of the data: Accountability, Governance and Finance; Engaging Stakeholders and Working in Partnership; Evidence and Data; Fisheries Management; and Compliance and Enforcement.

The analysis has led to thirteen government conclusions, which are addressed by the Government Response. The conclusions are as follows:

1. IFCA committee structure and membership

IFCA committee structures are set out in accordance with IFCA Orders and the MMO appoints general members following guidance issued by Defra. Stakeholders report that committee general membership does not adequately reflect fisher representation with respect to knowledge, expertise and input to decision making and that there is an imbalance between fisher and environmental interests.

2. Oversight of IFCA activities

The IFCAs collaborate with other organisations, including the MMO, on various workstreams such as intelligence gathering, enforcement, training, and byelaw development. Stakeholders note duplication particularly between IFCAs and the MMO which may impact on delivery of partnership outcomes, including efficient ways of working.

3. Transparency around decision making

The divergence between the Chief Officers and stakeholder feedback indicates that although the IFCAs may engage with stakeholders to inform decision making and publish decisions, the process between engagement and final decision is not sufficiently transparent for stakeholders.

By not understanding the decision-making process or how the IFCAs have balanced multiple viewpoints, stakeholders (particularly fishers) are not feeling sufficiently engaged and are not able to understand if their inputs have influenced the resultant decision.

4. Funding and accountability

Chief Officers and stakeholders shared concerns with the funding provided to and utilised by IFCAs. Government acknowledges the range of IFCA revenue budgets. It is for IFCA committees to agree work plans that fulfil the IFCAs statutory duties and determine the corresponding level of funding. The current funding model, including accountability arrangements between Defra and Local Authorities, is not transparent and limits the oversight of the effectiveness IFCA management such as day to day running costs associated with the organisations, risks associated with budget management, and delivery of duties.

5. Transparency around consultations

There are a wide variety of engagement methods that the IFCAs use with a significant range of stakeholders, with communication by email and consultations being common

methods. Less common methods included stakeholders accessing authority meeting papers, attending authority meetings, or through social media.

In quayside conversations stakeholders expressed a need and preference for face-to-face communication and indicated that online approaches didn't reach some, in particular older members of their community.

Stakeholder perception was mixed around transparency of consultations which led to reduced confidence and trust in IFCA public consultations and how the information is used.

6. Tailoring engagement

Effective stakeholder engagement through the Covid-19 pandemic was challenging.

The large spatial geography of some IFCA districts creates obstacles for effective communication. Stakeholders wished to see engagement that was closer to their home ports and communities. Specific stakeholder groups wish to see engagement and communication channels tailored to the needs of the audience.

7. Promoting partnership working arrangements

IFCAs work closely with other public bodies across several workstreams and through a number of fora. Stakeholders perceive that partnership working is not always communicated sufficiently and appropriately.

8. Stakeholder engagement through data collection

IFCAs gather evidence from a wide variety of stakeholders which enables them to identify and prioritise issues while balancing the needs of local sectors and communities. Fishers perceived that evidence they provided was not always utilised and reflected in reports. Fishers, as an important stakeholder group, wished to see more encouragement of fishers and contractors contributing to data collection and science programmes.

9. Balancing stakeholder views in decision making

IFCA management decisions are shown to be evidence based, using a range of available sources. Some stakeholders, in particular inshore fishers, do not feel that they have sufficient ability to influence management decisions; they reported that their fisheries are not balanced alongside other users of the marine environment, which can impact trust in IFCAs as fishing regulators. IFCA statutory duties as set out in section 153 and 154 of MaCAA state that IFCAs must ensure that the Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in their district are appropriately protected from damaging fishing activities.

10. Byelaw making process

The process for making and confirming byelaws across the IFCAs, MMO and Defra is complex, and Defra acknowledges the rigour required to implement new legal instruments is extensive.

Efficiencies across partners could be explored to improve stakeholder engagement and the pace at which new measures can be implemented.

11. Building trust

IFCA officers that undertake enforcement are trained in accordance with the requirement of the statutory powers afforded to them through warrants. Stakeholders believe that there is a disproportionate emphasis on enforcement. Some stakeholders report that this may be influenced by the volume of IFCA employees with a police or military background.

12. Knowledge of the fishing industry

IFCA compliance and enforcement strategies are in accordance with Government's Codes of Practice, such as the Regulators Code and Powers of Entry. Officers are highly trained and work in accordance with the codes and associated legislation, as they are legally required to do.

Some fishers would like to see a greater tailoring of approach to include the possibility of face-to-face communication where appropriate, and an increase in enforcement staff who have a background in the fishing industry. Differences are reported between MMO and IFCA enforcement approaches and decisions.

13. Complaints

Efforts are made by IFCA's to conduct activities as a fair and proportionate regulator. Defra recognises that in support of this, there is a need for a consistent and effective complaints process across all IFCA's that is published and easy to navigate.

Government Response to these findings

We are very grateful for the time that all interested parties have taken to provide constructive input to help us create the IFCA Conduct and Operations Report 2018-2022 (“the report”). The conclusions of the report have guided our approach to developing recommendations to support the improvement of the conduct and operations of the IFCAs. Conclusions have been drawn from the analysis of the evidence arising from the consultation response and supporting data commissions, and recommendations are grouped to address multiple conclusions.

Government will work with interested parties where appropriate, to support the work required to fulfil the implementation of the recommendations. A review of progress will be undertaken by government and reported on in subsequent Conduct and Operations Reports.

Defra will undertake work to further look at the MMO/IFCA interface and regulatory responsibilities. This will include close work with the MMO and IFCAs, and if necessary other marine regulators, to review the roles and responsibilities of MMO and IFCAs as marine regulators, with an eye to improving the regulatory cohesion, simplifying the landscape and developing and agreeing an optimal operational model (**Conclusion 2, 7**).

This review will look back at the findings of the 2019 IFCA independent evaluation and will consider the themes explored throughout this report, considering, under any future operating model, how to ensure that decision-making and communication thereof is transparent and reflective of key stakeholder interests and sets out best practice where it can be demonstrated (**Conclusion 3, 5, 6**).

Effective and clear funding and accountability arrangements are critical to the longevity of any organisation. This consultation has highlighted concerns about the complexity of funding arrangements for IFCAs, complicating forward planning and effective delivery. An additional aspect to the review will consider accountability for delivery as well as setting common standards for IFCAs. As part of the wider review on roles and responsibilities mentioned above, Defra will consider funding and accountability arrangements to enable future delivery of statutory duties and government priorities (**Conclusion 4**).

Given that stakeholder feedback has suggested that committee general membership does not adequately reflect fishers’ interests, The review will also seek to strengthen Defra guidance to the MMO with respect to committee general member appointments and will consider ways to increase fisher representation on committees (**Conclusion 1**). The byelaw making process will be considered including what efficiencies could be made to reduce the time it takes to make and confirm byelaws and communicate those in a timely way to stakeholders (**Conclusion 10**). It will also consider other guidance that Defra has provided to the IFCAs and any other guidance that may be useful.

In the immediate term, the Minister encourages IFCAs to implement the following recommendations:

Firstly, to ensure that all stakeholders are given the opportunity to maximise their input into management decisions (Conclusion 9). In parallel, IFCAs should maximise transparency and communication around decision making processes and consultations, ensuring stakeholders can determine how their input is used, and that engagement is tailored to the needs of stakeholder groups (Conclusion 3, 5, 8, 6).

Where IFCAs are compelled to prioritise MPA protection over fisheries management, IFCAs should clearly explain the reasoning for this prioritisation to help build trust and understanding. The IFCAs should aim to be transparent when other constraints impact fisheries management decisions (Conclusion 9).

IFCAs should consider ways to improve collaboration and communication when undertaking regulatory duties to build understanding and trust amongst fishers, such as on the thresholds for issuing advice and guidance and/or taking enforcement action. (Conclusion 11). IFCAs should consider whether closer collaboration with those with a background in the fishing industry can support appropriate enforcement approaches (Conclusion 12). IFCAs should also consider ways to work with local authorities to improve the adequacy of complaints processes and review their effectiveness from a customer-facing perspective (Conclusion 13).

Consultation Response and Government Conclusions

Theme 1: Accountability, Governance, and Finance

Organisational and financial accountability, funding, committee structure, decision making, strategy, planning and reporting are considered. The summary response is below with full detail around sub-themes explored in Annex D.

Chief Officer responses highlighted work undertaken to provide strategic oversight for the authorities, including annual planning and subsequent reporting that informed a broad range of marine and fisheries strategies, statutory duties and government policy. They highlighted a general concern about funding levels, including the uncertainties associated with the reliance on Defra's New Burdens funding, funding security, and the resulting challenge in aligning IFCA duties with emerging opportunities and risks.

Through the Defra Accounting Officer System Statement (AOSS), the IFCAs are listed as a public body for which the Defra Permanent Secretary as Principal Accounting Officer is responsible for the funding Defra provides. The Local Government Act 1999 identifies roles within Local Government that have an accountability role regarding finance and conduct. However, this mix of accountability is complicated and not widely understood.

Constitutions for IFCAs and their delegation of functions also provide an accountability mechanism for which IFCA committees are responsible.

Stakeholder feedback primarily focussed on the structure and functioning of IFCA committees, with concerns ranging across oversight, balance of membership, appointments, impartiality, transparency, experience, knowledge, and decision-making. Concerns were also raised in relation to the efficient use of funding to undertake day-to-day activities, and the sufficiency of funding levels.

Government has highlighted the following key areas from which conclusions are drawn:

Conclusion 1. IFCA committee structure and membership

Chief Officer responses did not focus on the structure of their committees, in part because this was not explicitly asked, and in part because the Order of each IFCA sets out the proportion of membership which is followed.

The appointment of general members of each IFCA committee is undertaken by the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) and follows guidance issued by Defra to MMO in 2010 in accordance with s.38 MaCAA ([ifca_appointments_guidance.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444444/ifca_appointments_guidance.pdf) ([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk))). General members agree to abide by the terms and conditions of their appointment which set out a duty to balance the sustainable management of fisheries with the protection of the marine environment, which includes annual appraisals.

Several stakeholders felt there was an imbalance in committee membership across recreational, commercial, angling, local authority, and conservation members, questioning whether those making decisions were representing their interests or had sufficient experience of their sector.

Many fishers felt that senior IFCA employees had too much indirect influence over decision making when members lacked knowledge on a specific issue. It was stated that knowledge was uneven across committees, with some members holding significant knowledge and others less so.

When excluding the 17 IFCA General Members from the Qualtrics and Citizen Space samples, of the remaining 74 respondents, 21 felt that the IFCA membership was balanced between those who are familiar with the needs and opinions of the fishing community in their district and those who have knowledge or expertise in marine environmental matters, whilst 37 respondents did not feel this was the case.

The Association of Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (AIFCA) provided individual IFCAs with training materials and advice for IFCA members.

Government concludes:

IFCA committee structures are set out correctly in accordance with IFCA Orders and the MMO appoints general members in accordance with guidance issued by Defra. Stakeholders perceive that committee general membership does not adequately reflect fisher representation with respect to knowledge, expertise and input to decision making.

Conclusion 2. Oversight of IFCA activities

IFCA Committees provide oversight for all operational activity. Day to day decision making is supported by working with other IFCAs and organisations. Examples include intelligence sharing, input into national enforcement groups, monthly tasking and coordination group meetings informing work plans, and joint operational activity such as those carried out with the MMO.

The MMO has a responsibility for quality assuring IFCA byelaws as set out in Defra guidance '[Defra guidance to IFCAs about making byelaws](#)' to the MMO and IFCAs.

Data that informs workplans is monitored and discussed with other arm's length bodies (ALBs) to assess potential marine protection and fisheries management advice.

Constraints when working with other organisations are acknowledged, such as the consideration by Chief Officers on data sharing agreements, compatible information and other technology systems.

Stakeholder feedback showed they would like to see increased integration of MMO into IFCA activities to provide stronger oversight and to prevent duplication of workstreams. IFCA members from one district suggested that better co-ordination by the AIFCA could prevent duplication across districts. Several fishers from various districts commented that operations took place with insufficient oversight or scrutiny.

Government concludes:

The IFCA's collaborate with other organisations, including the MMO, on various workstreams such as intelligence gathering, enforcement, training, and byelaw development. Stakeholders perceive that workstreams are duplicated between the MMO and IFCA's which may impact on delivery of partnership outcomes, including efficient ways of working.

The consultation response points to a need for Defra to look at the MMO/IFCA interface (and other marine regulators if necessary) and regulatory roles and responsibilities, as well as improving the regulatory cohesion, simplifying the landscape and developing and agreeing an optimal operational model.

Conclusion 3. Transparency around decision making

Chief Officers stated that decisions made by IFCA's are publicly available to increase transparency and accessibility. In addition, early informal engagement with local stakeholders was key in shaping the development of management measures which facilitated formal decision making. Minutes of committee meetings are published on IFCA websites in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 and the public may attend or put questions to the committee for consideration.

Stakeholder feedback indicated that commercial and recreational fishers did not feel they had significant input into or impact upon decision making. More broadly, several stakeholders indicated that they were not aware of how their IFCA committee operates and were not aware of its structure, with others suggesting their IFCA could better convey decisions where multiple viewpoints had been considered through the decision-making process.

Representatives from conservation organisations suggested that working groups and sub-committees were not as transparent as they could be, indicating that reasons contributing to decision-making were not always clear to the public.

Government concludes:

The divergence between the Chief Officers and stakeholder feedback indicates that although the IFCAs may engage with stakeholders to inform decision making and the decisions are then published, the process between engagement and final decision is not considered transparent by stakeholders.

By not understanding the decision-making process or how the IFCAs have balanced multiple viewpoints, stakeholders are not feeling sufficiently engaged and are not able to understand if their inputs have influenced the resultant decision.

Conclusion 4. Funding and accountability

Chief Officers highlighted concerns with funding levels and the uncertainties associated with Defra New Burdens Funding (NBF), resulting in financial challenges with aligning planned IFCA activities with emerging risks and opportunities. One IFCA saw funding uncertainties contribute towards a fifty per cent turnover of staff and struggled to deliver statutory duties of fisheries management in the reporting period. The same IFCA relied on general reserves funding to maintain their ability to meet their statutory duties.

Several fishers felt that their IFCA concentrated their funding on purchasing new assets such as new vehicles, which had left limited resources for day-to-day activities and functioning of their IFCA.

Government concludes:

Chief Officers and stakeholders shared concerns with the funding provided to and utilised by IFCAs. Government acknowledges the wide range of IFCA revenue budgets. It is for IFCA committees to agree work plans that fulfil the IFCAs statutory duties and determine the corresponding level of funding. The current funding model, including accountability arrangements between Defra and Local Authorities, impacts the effectiveness of IFCA management and the day to day running costs associated with the organisations, including longer term risks associated with budget management and delivery of duties.

Theme 2: Engaging Stakeholders and Working in Partnership

Considerations included working with other ALBs, engagement methods with stakeholders, and the impact of restricted engagement through COVID-19.

The responses provided by the IFCA Chief Officers illustrated the breadth of work undertaken to engage a broad range of stakeholders, both formally and informally, throughout bespoke projects and routine activities.

Whilst stakeholder feedback showed that most stakeholders felt they could contact their IFCA when needed, and online engagement had been a valuable development, particularly through the pandemic, there were broader issues highlighted in relation to the transparency of consultations and their outcomes. This included the specific engagement needs of inshore fishers and desire for more convenient face-to-face communication. Whilst approximately a third of respondents had no opinion. As many as 19 of 66 people stated they were dissatisfied with the standards of IFCA communication with some Defra Group ALBs.

A summary of all consultation responses can be found in Annex E. Government has highlighted the following key areas from which conclusions are drawn:

Conclusion 5. Transparency around consultations

Chief Officers outlined that formal public engagement included calls for evidence and consultation, the results of which were used to refine management proposals over time. Of 79 respondents who indicated how they engaged with their IFCA, the most common method was through email (58 respondents), followed by taking part in consultations (48 respondents).

Despite this, some fishers felt that IFCA consultations were conducted to satisfy convention and regulations rather than to allow for meaningful input into management decisions. Terms such as 'token' were used to describe their experience of consultations.

Government concludes:

There is a wide variety of engagement methods that the IFCAs use with a significant range of stakeholders, with communication by email and taking part in consultations being common methods. Less common methods included reading authority meeting papers, attending authority meetings, or through social media.

In quayside conversations stakeholders expressed a greater need for face-to-face communication and indicated that online approaches didn't reach some, in particular older members of their community.

Stakeholder perception was mixed around transparency of consultations which led to reduced confidence and trust in their engagement with public consultations.

Conclusion 6. Tailoring engagement

Chief Officers outlined that methods of engagement were adapted to the needs of the individual stakeholders, with face-to-face communication, letters and phone calls offered alongside a variety of online options such as text, email, and hybrid meetings. This engagement took place through specific stakeholder groups for commercial and recreational fishers, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), and others.

Despite this range of engagement, 9 of 17 inshore fishers felt that fisheries management measures were not explained clearly. This contrasted with the responses of the six anglers surveyed, where none felt that the explanation of management plans was unclear. 32 of all 73 respondents across Citizen Space and Qualtrics felt that clarity of fisheries management measures was poor or very poor.

Several stakeholders reported that communications around specific activities or consultations had been either insufficient or had taken place during busy periods, and respondents reiterated a desire for face-to-face communication, indicating that online approaches did not reach some. Several stakeholders also indicated that meetings were not held close enough to their communities or home ports, affecting their ability to attend in person.

Government concludes:

Effective stakeholder engagement through the Covid-19 pandemic was challenging.

The large spatial geography of some IFCA districts creates obstacles for effective communication. Stakeholders wished to see engagement that was closer to their home ports and communities. Specific stakeholder groups wish to see engagement and communication channels tailored to the needs of the audience.

Conclusion 7. Promoting partnership working arrangements

Chief Officers outlined the range of work they do in partnership with Defra Group Arms-Length Bodies (ALBs), including coordinating policy and practice through the National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group, Technical Advisory Group and Chief Officers Group, as well as sitting on various national stakeholder engagement and industry advisory groups. Specific workstreams were also highlighted, such as inputting into the programme of national Marine Protected Area condition monitoring overseen by Natural England.

Despite this, only 18 of 66 of respondents across Citizen Space and Qualtrics were either 'Satisfied' or 'Very Satisfied' with the standard of their IFCA's communication regarding the EA, and this figure was 16 of 66 for MMO. Many of those surveyed indicated they had 'No Opinion', possibility indicating a lack of communication between IFCA's and government

ALBs, and lack of understanding from stakeholders surrounding this ALBs work in partnership to deliver. Other ALBs were not included in these results.

Government concludes:

IFCAs work closely with other public bodies across several workstreams and through a number of fora. Stakeholder feedback suggests that partnership working is not always communicated sufficiently.

Theme 3: Data and Evidence

Chief Officers highlighted their use of annual planning to identify evidence needs, with evidence collected through a range of sources and in collaboration with partner organisations such as MMO and the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas). Sub-themes from these responses included data sources, data sharing, evaluating interventions, and stakeholder input.

Stakeholder views in relation to data and evidence included omission of experiential knowledge, concern over how data would be used and whether it was being used at all, and a need to encourage engagement of fishers and contractors in science projects and programmes. Whilst more than half of stakeholders surveyed agreed (32 of 51 respondents in Qualtrics) that IFCA's decisions were supported by evidence that was fit for purpose, fewer than half of stakeholders surveyed agreed (39 of 90 respondents across Qualtrics and Citizen Space) that their IFCA responds appropriately when evidence changes, or new evidence emerges.

A summary of stakeholder responses can be found in Annex F, and have led to the following conclusions:

Conclusion 8. Stakeholder engagement through data collection

Chief Officers noted in-person and online stakeholder engagement, and citizen science as sources for their evidence collection, with progress in gathering and acting on evidence being included in annual reporting. They also evidenced their engagement with other organisations and stakeholders to identify and prioritise issues while balancing the needs of local sectors and communities. IFCA Research and management groups drew evidence from IFCA staff, the fishing industry, Natural England, citizen science, and the Marine Conservation society.

Despite this, fishers felt that evidence provided to IFCA's was not always passed on to its intended recipients and that this was occasionally reflected in the content of reports and other outputs. A lack of trust also meant that some fishers did not feel comfortable providing their IFCA with information, over concern that it could be used to implement management restrictions that would negatively affect their livelihood.

Fishers in one district stated they would like to see greater encouragement of fishers to engage in data collection for science programmes, as a way of building trust and transparency. A number of fishers suggested that IFCA's should invite contractors or industry to undertake science projects more often.

Government concludes:

IFCA's gather evidence from a wide variety of stakeholders which enables them to identify and prioritise issues while balancing the needs of local sectors and communities. Fishers perceived that evidence they provided was not always utilised and reflected in reports and wished to see more encouragement of fishers and contractors in data collection and science programmes.

Theme 4: Fisheries Management

Chief Officers outlined work to underpin and tailor management measures and approaches and contribute towards national priorities, alongside flagging delays caused by interactions within the byelaw making process. They also set out enhanced management for protected areas, the additional evidence collection that is required to do so, and work to mitigate the spatial pressures caused by a combination of protected areas, other marine projects, and other vessels. Sub-themes from these responses were balancing local and national priorities, protected sites and features, and spatial closures and pressures.

Stakeholder feedback highlighted a lack of trust in IFCA as fisheries regulators amongst specific stakeholder groups, and concerns that management had been ineffective, difficult to understand, and did not strike the correct balance between various considerations. Concerns with spatial boundaries and differing byelaws were also flagged.

A summary of stakeholder responses can be found in Annex G and have led to the following conclusions:

Conclusion 9. Balancing stakeholder views in decision-making

Chief Officers noted that data is collected to inform the annual plans and reports that set out their strategic approach to sustainable management, with data collected by environmental and scientific teams through various means such as surveys, Habitat Regulation Assessments and Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) assessments, and risk registers. Data was also collected through engagement with academia, local industry, and other stakeholders, with the Chief Officers stating that management measures can be adapted in response to the outcomes of this engagement. As stated earlier in this report, engagement with stakeholders is done both formally, through consultations, and informally, throughout bespoke projects and routine activities.

As stated earlier, fishers in multiple districts did not feel there was sufficient impartiality in IFCA Committees when voting on management decisions. A number felt that there was not enough transparency around possible conflicts of interest, and some stated that they felt pressure to agree with management decisions based on personal concerns that their fishery might be threatened if they dissented.

Often fishers stated that they did not feel that they were given equal consideration with other sea users. 30 of all 91 Qualtrics and Citizen Space respondents felt that the IFCA balanced their responsibilities to contribute to sustainable fisheries and protect the marine environment. When asked through Citizen Space and Qualtrics how well their IFCA had accounted for the local needs of sea fisheries resources within their district, 39 of 91 respondents felt this had been done 'poorly' or 'very poorly', 14 indicated a neutral stance, and 32 felt their IFCA had done 'well' or 'very well'. 6 had no opinion on the matter.

Among different sea users, inshore commercial fishers had a particularly high level of dissatisfaction with their respective IFCA on this topic: a majority, 10 of 13, indicated that local needs of sea resources had been 'poorly' or 'very poorly' accounted for. One fisher stated that they would like to see a greater focus on 'whole ecosystems functioning' consideration in management and byelaw creation, including social impacts.

Government concludes:

IFCA management decisions are shown to be evidence based, using a range of available sources. Stakeholders, in particular inshore fishers, do not feel that they have sufficient ability to influence management decisions and consider that their fisheries are not prioritised alongside other users of the marine environment, impacting on trust in IFCAs as regulators. IFCA statutory duties are set out in section 153 and 154 of MaCAA; IFCAs must ensure that the Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in their district are appropriately protected from damaging fishing activities.

Conclusion 10. Byelaw making process

When working with Defra and the MMO to confirm the introduction of new byelaws, a number of issues were highlighted by Chief Officers as impacting on timelines. In one case these issues resulted in several byelaws taking three years between creation and confirmation.

Issues outlined were conflicting legal and policy opinion through MMO and Defra processes, amendments required as a result of the byelaw review process, and an increasing amount of national policy from Government impacting on capacity. This constant change in national fisheries management has also made it difficult to plan beyond a one- or two-year timescale at the local level, although identifying drivers and priority workstreams has mitigated this to some degree.

Government concludes:

The process for making and confirming byelaws across the IFCAs, MMO and Defra is complex, and Defra acknowledges the rigour required to implement new legal instruments is extensive.

Efficiencies across all partners could be explored to improve the pace at which new measures can be implemented.

Theme 5: Compliance and Enforcement

All IFCAs have a published Enforcement Strategy which are consistent with other marine and environmental regulators and in accordance with the Regulators Code and the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006. Regulatory activities should be based on risk, and various compliance and enforcement actions can be applied to those persons suspected of breaking fisheries related law. The risk-based approach and subsequent actions include advisory letters, written warnings, cautions, financial administrative penalties and prosecution.

Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officers are required to be highly trained, competent and adhere to local and national inspection codes of practice, such as those relating to Powers of Entry when undertaking inspections or investigating offences. In pursuit of well trained and professional staff, one Chief Officer highlighted that staff had undertaken relevant management training through a nationally recognised scheme, with another contributing to the AIFCA National Lead Training Officer (NTLO) programme.

Chief Officer responses illustrated the range of work undertaken in pursuit of fair, effective, and proportionate enforcement. Chief officers highlighted that enforcement activity is governed by strategies, policies, and plans, coordinated through various national and regional fora, and informed by data collection and assessments. Chief Officers also highlighted the range of training undergone by their enforcement officers, bespoke work undertaken to support MMO and EU exit preparations more broadly, and the new and emerging technologies utilised over the reporting period to support compliance and enforcement activities.

Stakeholder feedback highlighted the emphasis placed on enforcement, perception of unfair inspections and ineffective communication, and lack of complaints and arbitration processes. Stakeholders also felt that interactions could seem combative, and there was a desire to see enforcement staff hired who had a background in the fishing industry.

A summary of all responses can be found in Annex 5 and have led to the following conclusions:

Conclusion 11. Building trust

Trust is an essential element of compliance, with one Chief Officer stating that compliance by consensus is the objective, of which education and advice to stakeholders are key elements. The majority of Chief Officers did not highlight efforts to build trust with stakeholder groups when outlining their enforcement strategies.

Some stakeholders did not feel trusted by their IFCAs and felt there was a disproportionate emphasis on enforcement itself. Some stakeholders felt that the volume of IFCA employees with a police or military background influenced this emphasis on enforcement, with one stating that they felt inspections and interactions with their IFCA had been more combative since officers had received training on interviewing as part of their enforcement duties.

Government concludes:

IFCA officers that undertake enforcement are trained in accordance with the requirement of the statutory powers afforded to them through warrants. Stakeholders believe that there is a disproportionate emphasis on enforcement, and this may be influenced by the volume of IFCA employees with a police or military background.

Conclusion 12. Knowledge of the fishing industry

To ensure that enforcement officers work to clear standards of professionalism and conduct, and are effectively trained, Chief Officers outlined a range of training programmes that were made available for these officers, alongside direct support from senior colleagues. This included a standardised training programme developed in partnership with the MMO which allows officers to demonstrate their professional credentials.

IFCAs also worked closely with each other and the MMO to develop and share best practice for compliance and enforcement. This included building and sharing experience with the other agencies involved with patrols: Police, Local Authorities, Environment Agency, Natural England, Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority.

Stakeholders in many districts commented that they had positive relationships with local fishery officers and representatives from IFCAs who come to ports and harbours, who they often viewed as fair and professional. On the contrary, challenging relationships with more senior authority members were mentioned.

Several fishers raised that enforcement and correspondence around regulatory issues were often communicated in writing, as opposed to face-to-face communication. Stakeholders also stated that they would like to see an increase in enforcement staff hired who had a background in the fishing industry.

Government concludes:

IFCA compliance and enforcement strategies are in accordance with Government's Codes of Practice, such as the Regulators Code and Powers of Entry. Officers are highly trained and work in accordance with the codes and associated legislation, as they are legally required to do.

Some fishers would like to see a greater tailoring of approach to include the possibility of face-to-face communication where appropriate, and an increase in enforcement staff who have a background in the fishing industry.

Conclusion 13. Complaints

Through alignment with partner agencies and national models of best practice, IFCA decisions to pursue enforcement action is based on a strong evidence base, with one Chief Officer noting that the decision to prosecute is informed by legal advice based on evidential and public interest tests (as laid out in the Code for Crown Prosecutors). Like

other regulatory public bodies, the emerging use of body worn cameras was another example of the objective collection of evidence to inform enforcement activities, as well as protecting the health and safety of staff.

Despite this, only 17 of 62 respondents felt that their IFCA Officers had undertaken inspections fairly, and concerns were raised around ineffective or a lack of complaints processes when fishers experienced issues or had enforcement problems with their IFCA. Stakeholders from several districts suggested that based on difficulties in communicating with their IFCA in the past they would instead choose to contact MMO when encountering an issue.

Government concludes:

Efforts are made by IFCAs to conduct activities as a fair and proportionate regulator. Defra recognises that in support of this, there should be a consistent and effective complaints process across all IFCAs that is published and easy to navigate.

Annex A: Background of the IFCA's

The overarching duty of the IFCA's is described in s.153 Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MaCAA). They must ensure the exploitation of sea fisheries resources is carried out in a sustainable way, seek to balance the social and economic benefits of exploiting the sea fisheries resources of the district with the need to protect the marine environment from, or promote its recovery from, the effects of such exploitation; take any other steps which in the IFCA's opinion are necessary or expedient for the purpose of making a contribution to the achievement of sustainable development, and seek to balance the different needs of persons engaged in the exploitation of sea fisheries resources in the district. Section 154 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act (2009) states that the conservation objectives of Marine Conservation Zones must also be furthered and must take precedence over any of the duties in section 153.

The ten IFCA's when created in 2009 were successors to Sea Fisheries Committees. They are all in scope for the report and are:

Cornwall IFCA

Northumberland IFCA

Devon and Severn IFCA

North West

Eastern IFC

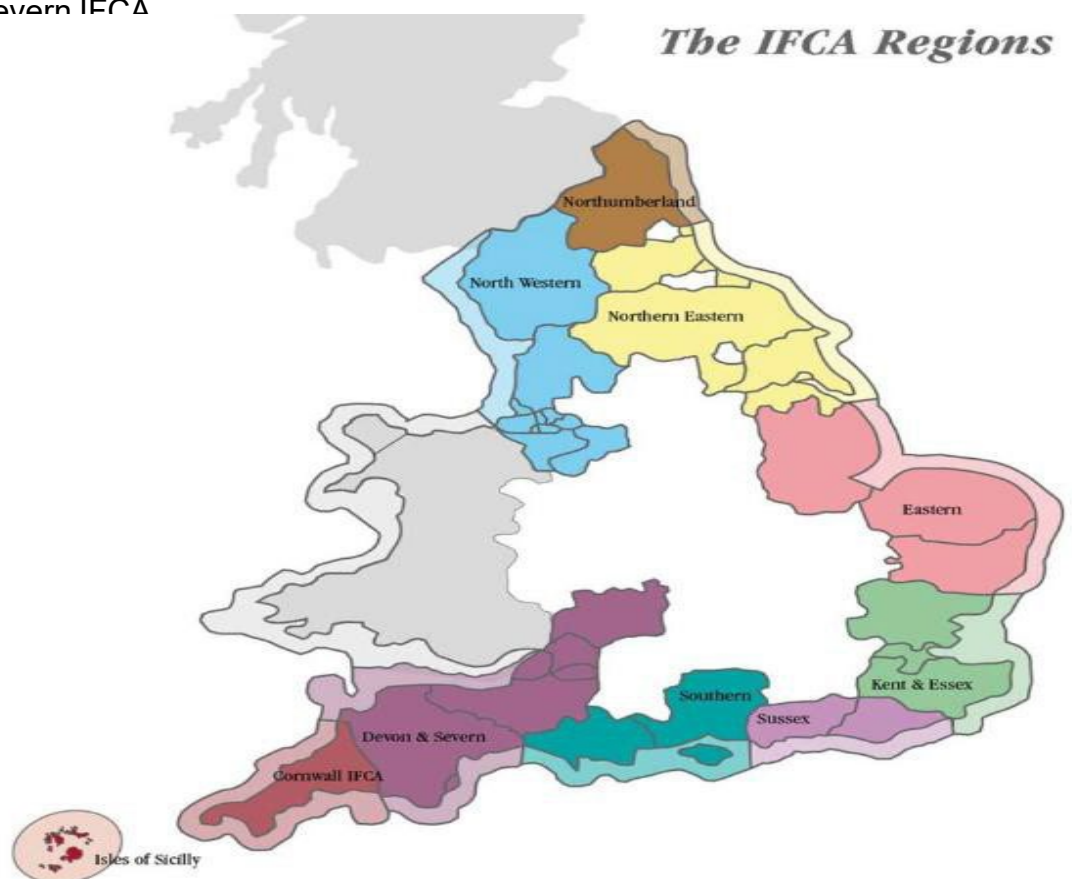
Isles of Scill

Kent and Es

Southern IF

North Easter

Sussex IFC,



Annex B: Breakdown of Respondents

- IFCA Chief Officer data submission - ten out of ten IFCA Chief Officers responded
- Qualtrics online survey - ninety
- Citizen Space – thirty-nine (public / other interested parties)
- Quayside conversations – seventy-four quayside visits were conducted between October 2022 and January 2023 in each IFCA district, through which 392 people were able to share their views. Respondents to the quayside conversations included skippers, crew, and owners of vessels both over and under 10 metres fishing across a range of gear types and species (e.g., crab, lobster, whelks, bass, cockle, herring, mackerel, scallops, oysters); ex-fishers; boat builders; recreational fishers and charter boat operators; fishmongers; and wider representatives from fishing and aquaculture industry bodies and conservation bodies.

Table 1. Numbers of Qualtrics and Citizen Space Respondents collected during the call for evidence

Respondent type	Qualtrics (n.90)	Citizen Space (n.39)
Academic Researcher	5	
Arm's Length Body Employee	6	
IFCA General Member	20	
Inshore Fisher	27	
Local Government Councillor	11	
Recreational Anglers	9	
Other	8	
General Public		23
NGO	4	16

Table 2. List of Meeting Locations for the Quayside Engagements

IFCA District	Port/quay	Number of conversations
Cornwall	Cadgwith	5
Cornwall	Hayle	3
Cornwall	Helford	2
Cornwall	Looe	7
Cornwall	Mevagissey	8
Cornwall	Mousehole	2
Cornwall	Newlyn	7
Cornwall	Newquay	4
Cornwall	Padstow	4
Cornwall	Plymouth	6
Cornwall	River Fal	2
Cornwall	Sennen	3
Cornwall	St Ives	4
Isles of Scilly	St Marys	3

IFCA District	Port/quay	Number of conversations
Devon & Severn	North Coast (Clovelly, Appledore, Ilfracombe, Porlock, Minehead, Watchet, Weston-Super-Mare)	17
Devon & Severn	South Coast (Brixham, Torbay, Dartmouth, Teignmouth, Salcombe)	27
Devon & Severn	Plymouth	12
Eastern	Boston	15
Eastern	Cromer	4
Eastern	Gorleston-on-sea, Great Yarmouth	2
Eastern	King's Lynn	2
Eastern	Lowestoft	1
Eastern	Suffolk	1
Eastern	Wells-next-to-the-sea	2
Kent & Essex	Dungeness	1
Kent & Essex	Essex	1
Kent & Essex	Harwich	1
Kent & Essex	Isle of Sheppey	1
Kent & Essex	Leigh-on-Sea	1
Kent & Essex	Ramsgate	4
Kent & Essex	Southend-on-Sea	1
Kent & Essex	West Mersea	1
Kent & Essex	Whitstable	4
Kent & Essex	Whitstable, Faversham, Queenborough	7
North Eastern	Bridlington	24
North Eastern	Flamborough	1
North Eastern	Hartlepool	6
North Eastern	Hornsea	11
North Eastern	Redcar	2
North Eastern	Scarborough	7
North Eastern	Seaham	3
North Eastern	Staithes	4
North Eastern	Whitby	13
North Eastern	Withernsea	6
North Western	Barrow-in-Furness/Bardsey, Ulverston	3
North Western	Blackpool, Lytham	4
North Western	Bowness-on-Solway	1
North Western	Fleetwood	1
North Western	Flookburgh	6
North Western	Liverpool, New Brighton	5
North Western	Maryport	4
North Western	Morecambe	4
North Western	Silloth	1
North Western	Southport	2
North Western	Whitehaven	3
North Western	Workington	7
Northumberland	Amble	13

IFCA District	Port/quay	Number of conversations
Northumberland	Beadnell	1
Northumberland	Berwick	1
Northumberland	Blyth	15
Northumberland	Craster	1
Northumberland	Eyemouth	11
Northumberland	Holy Island	1
Northumberland	North Shields	1
Northumberland	Seahouses	14
Southern	Lyme Regis to Swanage	15
Southern	Poole to Portsmouth (inc. Isle of Wight)	13
Sussex	Brighton to Rye	14
Sussex	Emsworth to Shoreham	9
Total		392

Annex C: Methodology

Exact numbers of respondents for Qualtrics and Citizen Space are reported rather than percentages. This is due to respondents being asked different, and individually tailored questions across Citizen Space and Qualtrics, different response rates between stakeholder groups, and respondents being given the ability to skip questions if they did not wish to provide an answer.

For the quayside conversations, Defra provided contractors with a semi-structured guide to engage stakeholders at the quayside, with topic areas focused around the five IFCA success criteria. Due to differences in the ways responses were recorded by contractors for the quayside conversations, and the open-ended nature of the method, analysis of data from quayside engagements focused on providing additional context and detail to the more quantitative Qualtrics and Citizen Space surveys. For brevity, responses provided by IFCA Chief Officers are referred to as responses provided by “IFCAs” when summarised. Stakeholder feedback gathered through in-person engagement have been considered equally alongside all other responses.

Annex D. Theme 1: Accountability, Governance, and Finance

This theme was informed by a wide range of information considered through all strands of the consultation response. It included data on the operational aspects of the IFCA's such as finance and committee structures.

Accountability

Section 150 of MaCAA defines each IFCA as a committee or a joint committee of a local council. Their government body classification is described as an 'other' public body or as a Local Government Body (Office for National Statistics for the purpose of producing the national accounts). A public body is a publicly funded organisation funded to deliver a public or government service.

The IFCA's are accountable to Defra for the delivery workstreams as communicated to them by Defra officials to underpin the statutory duties of protecting the marine environment and promoting sustainable fisheries as laid out in MaCAA. Chief Officers are held to account through various forums such as data provision to Defra officials, including reporting, such as through the provision of annual plans and reports.

Defra is not consulted nor has a duty on IFCA budget planning or resource utilisation. That is for the IFCA committees, Local Authority Finance Officers, and IFCA Chief Officers to determine dependent on local needs, workplans, budgets and constraints.

Financial accountability

Defra funding is referenced in the Defra Accounting Officer System Statement and is in scope of Treasury requirements around the propriety of the use of Defra funds. IFCA's must publish their annual plan and annual report that sets out the plan of work and how the IFCA has achieved their objectives and budget. These are published on individual IFCA websites.

Accountability with respect to Local Authority funding is governed by two key roles appointed through legislation which have responsibility for governance and financial administration, as described below. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) do not have a responsibility for IFCA accountability, other than to set the framework for which Local Authorities operate within:

The s151 Officer (Chief Finance Officer) - Local Government Act 1972. Every local authority shall make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and shall secure that one of their officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs.

The Monitor - [section 5 of the 1989 Local Government and Housing Act](#). A Monitoring Officer is the statutory officer responsible for the legal governance of a local authority in much the same way that a section 151 officer is responsible for a council's finances. The IFCA's are specifically mentioned in the 1989 Act, including the role of the Monitor in relation to joint committees and the IFCA's.

Each IFCA Order sets out the local authorities within their membership. Under MaCAA, local authorities have a legal duty to pay the levy (Annex I). Although an IFCA is a levy authority, the elected council members of an IFCA, as the democratically accountable members for local public taxation, have a right of veto over a budget.

Audit and assurance

The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 established new arrangements for the accountability and audit of local public bodies in England. The Act makes specific provisions for local public bodies including smaller authorities such as parish councils, parish meetings and internal drainage boards, IFCA's are not included as relevant bodies as set out in Schedule 2 and Schedule 13(3)(1) to the Act, and accordingly, fall out of the scope of these provisions.

The IFCA's, guided by their Responsible Financial Officer, must still meet their responsibilities as local public bodies. How they do so has been subject to local arrangements.

Committee Structure

Section 151 of MaCAA and article 5 of each IFCA Order sets out the overall membership of IFCA's as follows:

- Persons who are elected members of a relevant council.
- Persons appointed by the MMO, known as General members or MMO appointees. These are persons acquainted with the needs and opinions of the fishing community of the district, and/or persons with knowledge of, or expertise in, marine environmental matters. General members must include at least one employee of the MMO
- Two additional members; one appointed by the Environment Agency and one appointed by Natural England.

As committees of local government, the membership holds the IFCA to account with respect to the delivery of IFCA duties, funding and other governance responsibilities expected of them. The IFCA structure and the balance of membership is set out in each IFCA order and is summarised in Table 3. The maximum number of members in any IFCA is capped at 30 members. Any change to the proportion of membership would require a change to legislation.

Defra issued guidance under section 38 of MaCAA to the MMO on the appointment of General Members who lead on the appointment process. General Members are required to consider all the local fishing and marine conservation interests in the waters of the IFCA district in a balanced way. In practice, all members should take full account of all the economic, social and environmental needs of its district. Whilst representatives of fishing organisations and associations can be appointed, General Members must have regard to the balance of considerations above, rather than a personal or business interest. All General members are required to agree to be bound by the terms and conditions of the appointment, which includes an annual appraisal.

Table 3. IFCA membership committee structure

IFCA	Number of Local Authority Members	Number of Local Authorities	Number of General Members	Number of Defra Group Arm's Length Body nominees	Total number of Members in IFCA
Cornwall	7	1	11	3	21
Devon and Severn	12	8	15	3	30
Eastern	7	3	11	3	21
Kent and Essex	9	5	9	3	21
North Eastern	13	11	14	3	30
North Western	10	9	17	3	30
Northumberland	7	2	11	3	21
Isles of Scilly	4	1	1	2*	7
Southern	9	6	9	3	21
Sussex	7	3	12	3	21

*denotes Isles of Scilly IFCA does not have a representative from the MMO.

There is an expectation that General Members can serve a maximum of ten years. A pragmatic approach was taken in 2021 as many General Members approached the maximum term, having served on an IFCA since April 2011. This approach was agreed across Defra, MMO and the AIFCA whereby these vacancies were advertised. Any members approaching ten years were eligible to apply and be considered alongside other candidates. Following successful interview, discussion about sector representation in each district and the needs of the Committees enabled IFCA's to make appointments, hold reserve lists and consider succession planning.

The consultation feedback highlighted several areas linked to committee membership as follows:

- Fishers raised concerns over the composition of their Authority's Committee, often reflecting on the balance between recreational, commercial, and angling fishing sectors and local authority or conservation organisations. A respondent from one district noted that vetting processes for MMO appointments are national and do not take account of local issues.

- Fishers also commented on possible imbalances of membership within committees concerning vessel size, gear type, and geographical location of home ports. Stakeholders in one district commented positively on the increase in positions within the IFCA filled by women. Respondents from one district raised concerns that those with a fisheries penalty are not permitted to serve on committees.
- In quayside conversations and free-text boxes in Qualtrics and Citizen Space, respondents including anglers, inshore fishers, and NGO representatives frequently indicated that their IFCA had a wide body of legislative, science, and policy knowledge. Whilst some felt that there were no gaps in knowledge for their IFCA, others questioned whether those making decisions were representing their interests or had sufficient experience of their sector, or suggested there was limited expertise to explore social and economic issues affecting fisheries and coastal communities in their district.
- In some instances, it was felt that knowledge was unevenly held across boards, with most of the knowledge on certain subjects consolidated in a small number of members. Conversations also explored the issue of staff turnover at some IFCAs, its implications for institutional knowledge, and how this also affected maintaining and building trust with stakeholders.
- Of 91 Qualtrics and Citizen Space responses to a question asking whether IFCA membership was “balanced between those who are familiar with the needs and opinions of the fishing community in their district and also have knowledge or expertise in marine environmental matters”, 43 respondents indicated ‘No’, with 32 stating ‘Yes’ and 16 answering ‘Don’t Know/ No Opinion’. When excluding the 17 IFCA General Members from the sample, of the remaining 74 respondents, 21 felt that the IFCA membership was balanced on these issues, whilst 37 did not. 16 answered ‘Don’t Know/ No Opinion’.
- IFCA General Members were asked the following through the Citizen Space survey: ‘Between 2018 – 2022, did you receive adequate training to perform your role?’ Of 17 respondents, 8 indicated they felt the training they had received was adequate, 6 indicated that it was not, and 3 stated that they were unsure. General Members were also asked if they received an induction. Of the same 17 respondents, 9 responded ‘Yes’, 4 ‘No’, and 4 were unsure.

Decision Making

With stakeholders engaged through Qualtrics and Citizen Space, respondents demonstrated an awareness of what activities IFCAs had undertaken. Of 84 respondents, 72 indicated they were aware that their IFCA had developed byelaws and 74 were aware they had undertaken enforcement activities, 66 stated their IFCA had conducted conservation activities protecting habitats and species, and 48 were aware of the introduction of voluntary local agreements to manage fisheries or protect the marine environment.

Table 4. Number of complaints received by each IFCA over the reference period

IFCA	No of complaints received 18/19	No of complaints received 19/20	No of complaints received 20/21	No of complaints received 21/22
Cornwall	0	0	0	0
Isles of Scilly	0	0	0	0
Devon and Severn	1	6	0	0
Southern	1	1	0	0
Sussex	2	2	0	0
Kent and Essex	1	4	0	0
Eastern	0	0	50	0
North Eastern	5	2	4	5
Northumberland	0	0	0	0
North Western	Data not available			

However, stakeholders from multiple groups across all IFCA districts engaged through quayside conversations indicated that they were not aware of how their IFCA committee operates, or aware of its structure. Fishers stated that communication received from their IFCA could better explain where multiple viewpoints had been considered through the decision-making process.

In quayside conversations, lack of trust in decision-making processes and a perceived lack of transparency among some stakeholders limited their desire to engage with their IFCA. Several also commented that, owing to either previous experience with instances of confrontation or an inability to affect change, they felt meetings were no longer productive and did not regularly attend. The Chief Officers provided information relating to the complaints received over the four-year period (Table 4). This data includes complaints raised with the Chair, those raised about byelaws (outside of the formal process) and raised through the Local Government Ombudsmen.

Some fishers stated that they felt pressure to agree with management decisions based on concern that their fishery might be threatened if they dissented. Fishers in multiple districts raised concern that they did not feel there was sufficient impartiality in Authority Committees when voting on management decisions, and a number felt that there was not enough transparency around possible conflicts of interest.

A number of fishers felt that Chief Officers, Chief Finance Officers and Chairs of IFCA had too much indirect influence over decision-making, in particular when members lacked knowledge on a particular voting issue. Several fishers expressed concern over the decision-making power of their IFCA more generally.

Sea users, in particular inshore commercial fishers, suggested, in both the quayside conversations and Qualtrics, that increased integration of MMO into IFCA activities could fill knowledge gaps and provide stronger oversight to prevent a perceived duplication of workstreams between IFCA and the government.

IFCA members from one district suggested that better co-ordination by the AIFCA could prevent duplication across districts. Several fishers from various districts commented that they did not feel there was sufficient transparency around decision-making processes and that operations took place with insufficient oversight or scrutiny.

Representatives from conservation organisations also suggested that working groups and sub-committees weren't as transparent as they could be, meaning that reasoning for decision-making is not always apparent to the general public. Recreational fishers, anglers, and charter boat operators often commented that they had limited contact with their IFCA; both commercial and recreational fishers did not feel they had significant input into or impact upon decision making.

Answers in both Citizen Space and Qualtrics, indicated that opinion on whether IFCA were knowledgeable on key issue areas affecting marine and fisheries issues was polarised. Across 91 responses to the statement 'Staff in the IFCA(s) were knowledgeable with their approach', 47 either 'Agree[d]' or 'Strongly Agree[d]', 15 indicated a neutral stance, and 24 either 'Disagree[d]' or 'Strongly Disagree[d]'. 5 held 'No Opinion'. For specific sea users, 9 of 13 inshore commercial fishers either 'Disagree[d]' or 'Strongly Disagree[d]', with 1 either 'Agree[ing]' or 'Strongly Agree[ing]'. 3 of 4 anglers felt that IFCA were knowledgeable, and none 'Disagree[d]' or 'Strongly Disagree[d]' with the statement.

Strategy, Planning, and Reporting

Strategic oversight and general management of IFCA remits are provided by the Chief Officers. At an overarching level, this strategic direction is most commonly done through annual planning and subsequent reporting, but examples given also included five-year planning and legislative forecasts. This allows for longer-term, more cohesive approaches to business planning, with business critical workstreams considered alongside future priorities and opportunities.

IFCA highlighted annual plans and reports to set out a strategic approach to sustainable, evidence-based fisheries management, which can have their aims and targets amended through regular reviews and in response to changing conditions. Plans are informed by data collection and review and, in one example, work to collate the best available evidence is conducted through environmental and scientific teams and guided by Scientific Advisory Groups. In some responses, sustainability and fisheries management issues are identified and prioritised by scientific officers and included in reports which are then assessed by members.

In some cases, members are consulted on annual plans, which are then submitted to Defra as a requirement under MaCAA. Specific strategies encompass, but are not limited to, research, management, enforcement, and engagement activities. Examples provided included research and monitoring programmes being incorporated into annual and

strategic research plans, byelaw strategies and working groups being used to assist in consolidating byelaws and standardising legislation, and monitoring and control plans being developed for Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), informed by assessments.

Funding

IFCAs are funded by council tax levy charged to the sponsoring local authorities within their membership and Defra New Burdens Funding through s.31 grants to the Local Authorities. This is in the ratio of approximately two thirds Local Authority to one third Defra as shown in Table 5.

Workplans and associated budgets are put forward with the intention for the IFCA to meet its statutory duties. Local Authority Chief Finance Officers will support decision making when balancing overall budgets, whilst also holding responsibility as section 151 officer.

The Chief Officers provided data on funding for the reporting period as shown in table 5 and Annex I. Each year the ten IFCAs raise their levy for their respective revenue budgets to fund the workplans set out in their Annual Plan. Between 2018 and 2022 Table 5 shows the total levy contribution across the 10 IFCAs increased from £9.31 to £9.97 million, an increase of 7.1%. The increase in Local Authority contributions is variable across the 10 IFCAs, ranging between increases of 0.9% in Devon and Severn IFCA and 15.7% in Eastern IFCA with an average increase (across all 10 IFCAs) of a 5.8% increase across the four-year period.

All IFCAs have a reserves fund that provides resilience for unexpected work pressures (Table 6) or emergencies. Most IFCAs have a minimum reserves policy that ensures costs associated with dissolving the organisation are in place. All IFCAs use general reserves interchangeably between years.

Financial information is also published in Annual Reports which are externally published documents on IFCA websites and that are required to be submitted to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Table 5. Comparison of revenue budgets raised through levy to local authority and increase over reference period (April 2018 to March 2022)

IFCA	Total Defra annual support grant per IFCA (£)	Total levy from local authorities 18/19 (includes Defra grant) (£'s)	Total levy from local authorities 19/20 (includes Defra grant) (£'s)	Total levy from local authorities 20/21 (includes Defra grant) (£'s)	Total levy from local authorities 21/22 (includes Defra grant) (£'s)	Overall increase in levy contribution (£)	% increase in LA Levy
Cornwall	324,838	1,129,831	1,153,000	1,202,716	1,226,770	96,939	8.6
Devon and Severn	409,297*	733,601	724,001	740,000	740,000	6,399	0.9
Eastern	394,145	1,411,008	1,561,571	1,606,590	1,632,384	221,376	15.7
Kent and Essex	363,800	889,600	889,600	904,585	904,585	14,985	1.7
Sussex	205,757	963,591	982,862	1,002,600	1,022,700	59,109	6.1
Isles of Scilly	109,723	123,723	126,723	126,723	126,723	3,000	2.4
North Eastern	301,729	1,200,310	1,224,320	1,285,536	1,298,390	98,080	8.2
Northumb erland	154,640	820,616	837,030	857,956	872,021	51,405	6.3
North Western	406,787	1,285,158	1,310,861	1,337,078	1,363,820	78,662	6.1
Southern	329,425	758,755	773,931	789,409	789,409	30,654	4.0
Combined total	2,999,998	9,316,193	9,592,899	9,853,193	9,976,802	660,609	

***Devon and Severn IFCA do not receive all of the New Burdens Funding from Defra**

Table 6. Balance of general reserves held by IFCAs (excludes reserves held for Capital or other projects)

IFCA	General reserve balance (£'s)	General reserve balance (£'s)	General reserve balance (£'s)	General reserve balance (£'s)
	18/19	18/19	18/19	18/19
Cornwall	636,505	724,975	686,399	759,504
Isles of Scilly	64,000	44,000	33,267	38,267
Devon and Severn	529,000	532,166	528,812	531,517
Southern	252,114	469,200	527,615	503,995
Sussex	638,985	687,973	819,835	904,890
Kent and Essex	830,100	853,523	853,344	878,576
Eastern	376,974	383,658	383,658	346,555
North Eastern	228,450	258,707	228,450	228,450
Northumberland	128,807	131,313	190,890	175,463
North Western	Data not available			

Additional revenue income

IFCAs receive additional revenue from a variety of other sources, such as:

Five IFCAs own leases for Several or Regulating (or hybrid) Orders for shellfisheries in their district. These IFCAs generate additional income from leases or rents of these fisheries (Table 7). Some IFCAs needed to issue refunds as a result of the Covid pandemic. Sussex, Isles of Scilly, Northumberland, North Eastern and North Western IFCAs do not have any Several or Regulating Orders in their district.

- All IFCA's run permit schemes and generate income from these permits; some of which are aligned with permitting byelaw conditions (Table 8). The cost of permits across the IFCA's is highly variable, with many types of permits across a number of IFCA's costing the same throughout the reference period. The reasoning from Chief Officers is that permits must remain affordable for inshore small-scale fishers and those wishing to fish for recreation.
- IFCA's also have scope, where feasible, for commercial revenue generation and research and development work, such as survey work, science projects or data management. Most IFCA's report receiving a number of grants for projects.

IFCA's may be awarded full or partial cost recovery for prosecutions. Fees associated with financial administration penalties (FAPs) are not allowed under Treasury rules to be kept by the IFCA's.

Table 7. Income generated by Several and Regulating Order during the reference period.

IFCA	Underlying legislation	Order type	Income 18/19 (£'s)	Income 19/20 (£'s)	Income 20/21 (£'s)	Income 21/22 (£'s)
Cornwall	The Fal Fishery Order (2016)	Regulating	9,900	8,085	6273*	6448*
Devon and Severn	The Waddeton Fishery Order (2001)	Hybrid	630	630	0	1,020
Southern	The Poole Harbour Fishery Order (2015)	Several	27,794	27,803	29,713	31,800
Kent and Essex	The Thames Estuary Cockle Fishery Order (1994)	Regulating	87,416	87,416	87,416	87,416
Kent and Essex	The River Roach Oyster Fishery Order (2013)	Several	500	500	500	500
Eastern	The Wash Fishery Order (1992)	Hybrid	21,210	31,570	17,160	17,160

* Refunds issued

Table 8. Numbers, types and costs for permits across IFCA districts

IFCA	Permit is a requirement of byelaw	Type of permit	No. permits issued 18/19	No. permits issued 18/19	No. permits issued 18/19	No. permits issued 18/19	Annual cost of permit* 18/19 (£'s)	Annual cost of permit* 19/20 (£'s)	Annual cost of permit* 20/21 (£'s)	Annual cost of permit* 21/22 (£'s)
Cornwall		Crustacean shellfish	319	281	302	294	0	0	0	0
		Wrasse	5	5	2	2	135	135	135	135
Isles of Scilly		Recreational	0	0	0	215	3	3	3	3
	yes	Fishing gear permit (byelaw)	0	0	0	0	25	25	25	25
Devon and Severn¹	yes	Commercial Potting	53	124	74	122	20	20	20	20
	yes	Recreational Potting	148	181	268	276	20	20	20	20
	yes	Commercial Netting	85	66	87	65	20	20	20	20
	yes	Recreational Netting	44	15	44	21	20	20	20	20
	yes	Mobile Fishing at Sea	44	85	49	65	20	20	20	20
	yes	Mobile Fishing in the Estuary	5	6	5	2	20	20	20	20
	yes	Commercial Diving	14	13	8	10	20	20	20	20
	yes	Recreational Diving	78	112	135	173	20	20	20	20
Southern	Yes	Poole Harbour dredge	45	45	45	45	500	600	600	600
		Solent Dredge permit	0	0	0	24	0	0	0	215

¹ Devon and Severn permits are valid for up to 2 years. There are more permitted operators in the district than the number of issued permits in any one year

IFCA	Permit is a requireme nt of byelaw	Type of permit	No. permits issued 18/19	No. permits issued 18/19	No. permits issued 18/19	No. permits issued 18/19	Annual cost of permit* 18/19 (£'s)	Annual cost of permit* 19/20 (£'s)	Annual cost of permit* 20/21 (£'s)	Annual cost of permit* 21/22 (£'s)
Sussex		Commercial shellfish	n/a	31	52	25	200 ²	200	200	200
		Recreational shellfish	n/a	28	39	41	10	10	10	10
Kent and Essex	Yes	Whelk (commercial)	27	29	31	28	100	100	100	100
	yes	Whelk (recreational)	4	6	7	6	30	30	30	30
	yes	Cockle (category 1)	35	0	0	0	836	962	1,106	1,272
	yes	Cockle (category 2)	0	0	0	0	418	481	553	636
Eastern		Wash Fishery Order (1992) - dredge	3	1	0	0	690	342		
		Wash Fishery Order (1992) - handwork	58	48	52	52	330	678	330	330
		Wash Fishery Order (1992) - Wash restricted area	0	18	0	0	0	44	0	0
		Whelk (Commercial) ³	32	34	29	22	250 max	250 max	250 max	250 max
		Whelk (recreational) ⁴	2	1	0	1	25 max	25 max	25 max	25 max
North Eastern		Scallop dredging	3	3	3	3	500	500	500	500

² Commercial shellfish permits in Sussex IFCA are valid for 2 years.

³ Cost of commercial permit is 50p/tag with a maximum of 500 tags/permit. Each permit costs a maximum of £250 within each permit limit.

⁴ Cost of recreational permit is £5/tag with a maximum of 5 tags/permit. In 18/19 the permit fee totalled £25 over two permits, in 19/20 it was one permit at £25, and in 21/22 it was one permit for one pot at £5.

IFCA	Permit is a requirement of byelaw	Type of permit	No. permits issued 18/19	No. permits issued 18/19	No. permits issued 18/19	No. permits issued 18/19	Annual cost of permit* 18/19 (£'s)	Annual cost of permit* 19/20 (£'s)	Annual cost of permit* 20/21 (£'s)	Annual cost of permit* 21/22 (£'s)
North Eastern (cont.)	Yes	Humber Estuary Trawl Permits	0	0	3	2			500	500
	Yes	Intertidal Fixed netting	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	500
	Yes	Subtidal Fixed Netting	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	500
	Yes	Shellfish commercial	350	350	350	350	0	0	0	0
	Yes	Shellfish leisure	2,462	2,417	1,407	3,061	0	0	0	0
	Yes	Trawl	150	150	150	150	0	0	0	0
Northumberland		Shellfish	91	99	109	107	180	180	180	180
		Trawling	26	33	38	43	50	50	50	50
		Dredging	5	8	4	2	150	150	150	150
		Shellfish Recreational	181	202	210	240	10	10	10	10
North Western	Yes	Cockle and Mussel Hand-Gathering	130	130	130	130	500	500	500	500

Outgoings

Generally, IFCAs require specific arrangements for premises to effectively operate. As independent regulators these are organised autonomously tailored to their operational needs. Most IFCAs lease their premises which allows flexibility in terms of location and financial commitment. All the IFCAs with leases experienced increasing costs (Table 9), though some savings were made during the Covid Pandemic.

Table 9. Costs associated with office leases for IFCAs

IFCA	Cost of leased premises 18/19 (£'s)	Cost of leased premises 19/20 (£'s)	Cost of leased premises 20/21 (£'s)	Cost of leased premises 21/22 (£'s)
Cornwall	22,000	22,000	22,000	25,667
Isles of Scilly	0	0	0	0
Devon and Severn	33,548	32,897	30,245	30,217
Southern⁵	Owned			
Sussex	38,794	42,875	41,217	40,897
Kent and Essex	26,821	25,832	27,935	28,332
Eastern	41,598	41,598	41,931	42,533
North Eastern	29,961	30,372	29,414	46,400
Northumberland	27,500	27,500	27,500	27,500
North Western	Data not available			

⁵ There are additional costs for the upkeep of building (maintenance, rates, insurances etc) but these costs are not accounted for each year.

The consultation feedback highlighted several areas linked to funding as follows:

- Several IFCA's flagged issues and concerns with funding levels within their responses. This included the uncertainties associated with reliance on Defra's "New Burdens" funding, and the resulting challenge in aligning IFCA activities with emerging opportunities and threats. In addition, as certain research activities are applied for and then funded as projects, they are inherently short-term and cannot provide long-term assets or funding security.
- The need to innovate due to funding restrictions was also highlighted by the Chief Officers, with the piloting of new approaches to monitoring that may represent greater cost effectiveness. One IFCA has been relying on general reserves funding to maintain their ability to meet their statutory duties, due to the un-ringfenced grant funding framework where funding has not been given over to IFCA budgets. Specifically, a lack of staff has impacted on their ability to fulfil some Annual Plan commitments to deliver fisheries management in the reporting period. This IFCA saw a 50% turnover of staff in 2018 and 2019, with employees referring to the ongoing uncertainties of funding, high workloads, and lack of resources as reasons for leaving.
- Several fishers commented on staff turnover at their IFCA, suggesting this held implications for institutional knowledge and building trust between the IFCA and fishers.
- Several fishers felt that their IFCA concentrated their funding on purchasing new assets such as new vehicles, which had left limited resource for day-to-day activities and functioning of their IFCA. Stakeholders from one district commented that they did not feel enforcement activities represented value for money. Conversely in some regions stakeholders felt that there was limited resource for enforcement in their district.

Case Study 1

Cornwall IFCA

CIFCA staff were issued with laptops and other equipment via Cornwall Council IT support to enable effective home working and regular staff and team meetings were held online to co-ordinate work and keep our staff up to date with changing circumstances and ensure that they felt supported. New digital ways of working had to be rapidly developed to support financial and administrative processes. Additional PPE and testing equipment was sourced and issued alongside new covid specific risk assessments also shared with other IFCA's to assist with consistency.

Annex E: Theme 2: Engaging Stakeholders and Working in Partnership

IFCAs outlined various means and methods for regular engagement with a significant range of stakeholders, governed by communications and engagement plans/ strategies, and underpinned by stakeholder databases, both of which undergo regular reviews. Examples of the diverse range of stakeholders that Chief Officers provided were other IFCAs, fishers and associations, core Defra and other ALBs (particularly MMO), academia, project groups, and members of the local community. Communication methods were tailored for specific stakeholders and workstreams, and included face-to-face, online/ hybrid meetings, IFCA websites, text, email, phone, print media, letters, and social media. One IFCA noted that they enlist the services of a communications advisor when required.

Generally, stakeholders from all IFCAs felt that they could contact their IFCA representatives when needed. Of 40 Qualtrics respondents, all knew how to contact their IFCA. Of 79 respondents who indicated how they engaged with their IFCA, the most common method was through email (58 respondents), followed by taking part in consultations (48 respondents), contacting an IFCA Member directly (44 respondents), or going to the IFCA website (43 respondents). The least common way stakeholders engaged with their IFCA was through reading authority meeting papers (38 respondents), attending authority meetings (32 respondents), or through social media (15 respondents). In quayside conversations stakeholders reiterated a desire for face-to-face communication and indicated that online approaches didn't reach some, in particular older members of their community.

Many respondents commented that they felt IFCA officers were an important part of explaining fisheries issues to members. Fishers also reflected positively on the role that science and research projects played in proactive communications and engagement from their IFCA, stating that being involved in these meant they were often kept up to date with ongoing activities. IFCAs also outlined their engagement with partners on a range of collaborative projects, in part through the provision of local data and expertise. Another example of engaging stakeholders was reporting progress on managing a complex network of MPAs to the House of Commons, both celebrating that progress and increasing awareness.

Formal public engagement included calls for information and formal consultations, supporting management measures being refined over time, and informal engagement on numerous workstreams as well as early stages of byelaw development. IFCAs stated that their decisions were made public to support transparency and accessibility.

There were concerns amongst fishers that IFCA consultations were conducted to satisfy convention and regulations rather than to allow for meaningful input into management decisions. Terms such as 'token' were used to describe their experience of consultations. Stakeholders raised concerns that communications around specific activities or consultations had been either insufficient or had taken place during busy periods (e.g. the two weeks either side of Christmas), which reduced input and involvement of multiple groups. Stakeholders from several districts suggested that based on difficulties in communicating with their IFCA in the past they would instead opt to contact MMO when encountering an issue.

Examples of how IFCAs identify and prioritise the issues facing their local areas include internal discussions, communication with and feedback from local stakeholders, and

guidance from other organisations. Priorities are also informed through intelligence sharing with the MMO, including through monthly tasking and coordination group meetings to inform priorities and joint working opportunities.

In several cases, anglers and commercial fishers involved in quayside conversations felt their IFCA could better indicate and evidence where multiple viewpoints had been considered in decision-making and wanted their IFCA to adopt a broader range of methods of engagement to ensure all stakeholders received communications around IFCA activities. Quayside conversations also highlighted differences in the degree to which resources and explanations of management measures were available online for different districts.

ALB partnership working

IFCAs outlined their desire to work in partnership with other Arm's Length Bodies of Defra Group to develop best practice in the pursuit of shared priorities. This included data sharing agreements and joint patrols with the MMO, surveys delivered in partnership with other organisations, and the sharing of enforcement records, intelligence and assets.

IFCAs attend various fora to coordinate their policy and practice, ensuring consistent coverage of management, with alignment across administrative boundaries where appropriate. These include those mentioned elsewhere in this report, such as the National Intelligence Marine Enforcement Group, Technical Advisory Group, and Chief Officers Group. IFCAs highlighted developing byelaws and permits, aligning measures, implementing ecosystem services, and adapting technologies as areas that benefit from the sharing of advice and technical support.

The Qualtrics and Citizen Space surveys also gauged 66 respondents' level of satisfaction with the way their IFCA had worked with the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) and the Environment Agency (EA) between 2018-2022. Many of those surveyed – 23 of 66 and 26 of 66 for the MMO and the EA respectively - indicated they held 'No Opinion'.

18 of 66 respondents were either 'Satisfied' or 'Very Satisfied' with the standard of their IFCAs communication with the EA, 11 stated they were either 'Dissatisfied' or 'Very Dissatisfied', 11 indicated that they were 'Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied'.

16 of 66 respondents were either 'Satisfied' or 'Very Satisfied' with their IFCAs communication with the MMO, 19 stated they were either 'Dissatisfied' or 'Very Dissatisfied', and 8 were 'Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied'.

Online engagement

Stakeholders commented that their IFCA has increased its focus on written and online communications when conducting outreach. Some respondents felt that this affected response rates to consultations and calls for evidence, with implications for meaningful engagement of stakeholder groups.

Some stakeholders reflected positively on the increased move toward online engagement, highlighting travel time to meetings as a factor that had previously affected their ability to participate. One General Member suggested that moving to voting online had been a positive move during the pandemic but expressed disappointment that this option was subsequently discontinued when in-person activities resumed following the repeal of Local Government Covid Regulations that had enabled online voting.

Balancing local sectors

To balance often competing interests and needs of local sectors and communities, communication methods were tailored to the unique features of the stakeholder group being targeted. With the full scope of engagement outlined encompassing numerous national and regional sector/ industry/ community/ technical groups and forums, IFCAAs were able to consider views from across this spectrum.

IFCAAs must seek to balance the social and economic benefits of exploiting the sea fisheries resources of the district. Evidencing this requirement, the IFCAAs promote and support local businesses in several ways. For example, supporting industry-led Marine Stewardship Council accreditation and adoption of voluntary measures, and engaging with small scale research projects alongside larger-scale marine developments. Work in this space also includes collaborating with other ALBs and government departments to aid public awareness of fishing and promote local caught fish, examining marketing and development opportunities, and helping the fishing industry to understand the process behind management interventions and permit condition reviews.

Another case study was shared to demonstrate how heritage and tourism were considered within decision making, with the acknowledgement of historically important fishing grounds that support the local economy in part through the economic benefit of tourism. This was considered alongside the need to protect a marine conservation zone, reconciling the views of various site users who share the goal of sustainable management.

Feedback on the clarity with which measures were explained varied by stakeholder. Of 17 inshore fishers surveyed, 9 felt that management measures were not explained clearly, while 5 suggested they were. Among 6 recreational anglers, 3 felt that measures were well explained, with none suggesting they felt measures were unclear. 3 expressed either no opinion or were unsure. There were differences between IFCA districts relating to how easy members of the public felt that they could access resources or information on management measures, including online.

Some IFCAAs outlined the challenge of working on contentious workstreams that highlighted differences in stakeholder opinion. One IFCA outlined the need to listen to and carefully address stakeholder concerns and ensure stakeholder views are reflected in the policy development process. Several fishers raised concerns that enforcement and correspondence around regulatory issues were often communicated by written text, which was an issue for fishers who may have trouble reading or writing. Fishers in one district suggesting that the impact of possible management measures was not adequately conveyed at consultation. In part this was attributed to difficulty understanding and responding to consultation documents.

Fishers engaged through quayside conversations indicated that meetings were not held close enough to their communities or home ports, affecting their ability to attend, and felt that fewer quayside visits had occurred since the pandemic. Fishers commented on the question of costs, expenses, and lost time to attend IFCA meetings, noting that they are often held at times when they would either be fishing or working on maintaining their vessels. A number questioned why local authorities provided fees for their members to attend whilst fishers did not receive similar reimbursement. Fishers in some districts noted that a negative relationship between the IFCA and communities can affect the degree to which people are willing to engage in local initiatives the IFCA are involved with.

COVID-19

Adapting to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meetings of numerous IFCA's were moved online, accelerating the later establishment of hybrid meetings, and online attendance of local stakeholder group meetings. One IFCA noted that authority meetings are now livestreamed publicly, and subsequently shared online alongside published supporting materials. IFCA websites and social media were also utilised to share targeted information and guidance, to improve the user experience and increase reach.

During the pandemic, a joint IFCA/ MMO strategic COVID response group was established to ensure a nationally joined-up approach, overseeing the development of shared policies and addressing shared challenges. This then supported IFCA's to maintain a consistent compliance presence within the limitations of COVID-19 protocols and safe working practices.

Throughout the pandemic, specific covid risks assessments, including those for both environmental and enforcement activities, were developed and shared between IFCA's to ensure consistency of approach alongside the sourcing and testing of PPE. These assessments resulted in the creation of policies and procedures designed to protect staff while maintaining the delivery of statutory functions, allowing all business-as-usual activities to be undertaken safely.

Stakeholders felt that limited interactions over the pandemic meant that management was sub-optimal, and difficulties in licencing acquisition were highlighted. Others commented that levels of engagement had not returned to pre-pandemic levels for many districts and that their IFCA has increased its focus on written and online communications when conducting outreach. Some respondents felt that this affected response rates to consultations and calls for evidence, with implications for meaningful engagement of stakeholder groups. Several fishers highlighted the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the ability for sampling or other research projects to be undertaken or completed.

Fishers also commented that their IFCA adapted well to COVID-19 restrictions, with one IFCA arranging letters so that fishers in their region could continue to work as key workers. It was suggested that increased agency for fishers during this period was important to ensure that fisheries could remain functioning.

Case study 2

Cornwall: Collaboration

The largest CIFCA research project in 2021 was the identification of the seagrass extents in the Fal and Helford SAC. This project was carried out in collaboration with the University of Exeter who were carrying out a contract from Cornwall Council as part of the Defra Local Nature Recovery pilot. The survey work was carried out using the Biosonics MX Scientific Echosounder from the survey vessel. The MX data acquisition software analyses the acoustic returns from the echosounder and provides a real time echogram which shows when sea grass or algae are present. During eight survey days, 407 survey lines were completed over nine seagrass beds. This technique was also deployed in Mounts Bay to support another seagrass survey as part of the above pilot project. Further surveys were conducted in the Plymouth Sound and Estuaries SAC, with the aim of sharing this data reciprocally with the Environment Agency who had undertaken another survey on the Whitsand and Looe Bay MCZ. In total, these surveys have mapped seagrass beds in four MPAs, which has added substantially to the overall mapped extent of this species in the UK and is a great example of collaborative work, where data can be collected once and used many times.

Case Study 3

Eastern IFCA: Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds Marine Conservation Zone project (the MCZ)

In August of 2020, Natural England advice concluded that the pot-based fishery within the MCZ was hindering its conservation objectives, and that management was required in the form of Adaptive Risk Management (ARM).

The MCZ includes areas which are historically important fishing grounds, supporting small scale fishing operations which in turn supports the local economy (including through tourism) and underpins the sense of place for the coastal community. In addition, the site is a treasured dive location with features unique to the UK. In both senses, the site engenders a strong sense of feeling from stakeholders who passionately protect their link to the site.

Eastern IFCA established a Project Board to oversee the delivery of ARM, two Task and Finish groups to undertake necessary work.

Stakeholder involvement is critical to delivery of ARM and to that end a bespoke Communication Strategy was developed. This seeks to reconcile the views of the sites varied users and draw on the shared goal of protecting the site. To facilitate engagement a Stakeholder Group has been established and is co-ordinated by the Marine Conservation Society on behalf of the Project Board. As well as keeping stakeholders informed, an objective of the group is to facilitate engagement with and contributions to the ARM project.

The Project Board and Task and Finish Groups have drawn on the knowledge and expertise of local stakeholders including the fishing industry, beach cleaners and divers in addition to Natural England to develop solutions for managing the site. This work has included development of voluntary measures to reduce the risk of losing pots at sea which can damage the site, a community-based approach to identifying, monitoring, and recovering lost gear within the site and research on gear modification trials.

Case study 4

Kent and Essex Fish Local

As the country entered lockdown in spring 2020 KEIFCA worked with a group of partners and fishermen to launch Fish Local, a project that aimed to connect the local community with the local fish supply, by using the power of social media. Working with industry leaders and a local media and communications company (Band Agency), in 17 days we set up a website and social media pages, then worked with a PR company and local fishermen to help promote the site and the local industry. Features on regional BBC and ITV news as well as 'This Morning' helped raise the profile of the project as well as numerous articles in the regional written press.

Case study 5

Kent and Essex IFCA: Listening Phase

As part of their cockle management review, Kent and Essex IFCA's 6 weeklong 'Listening Phase' consultation started in September 2021 with emails being sent out to all relevant stakeholders on our database and a specific consultation questionnaire being posted on our website. KEIFCA officers worked with Thames Estuary Partnership to promote the consultation to the wider stakeholder community and reach stakeholders that were not in our database.

KEIFCA officers then started engaging with fishers around the coast and posters were put up and business cards handed out with key details of how and when to engage in the process. A 2-day filmed oral evidence session was arranged at a hotel in the centre of our district, where anyone could book a slot and answer a series of set questions or make their own points. The oral evidence session helped add a different type of evidence into the decision-making process and helped capture personal experience and examples which would have most likely become lost in the written evidence. Towards the end of the consultation Senior officers and admin staff reviewed the engagement response from the different sectors identified in the communication plan and based on this additional effort was made to re-engage with some sectors specifically, including re-sending emails or phoning up key individuals that could pass on information to others.

A total of 202 emails, 224 e-bulletins and 53 paper copies of the questionnaire were sent, in addition to 70 business cards which were distributed across the district by Fishery Officers. Of the 35 bookings for the oral evidence sessions 25 people attended and a total of 50 questionnaire responses were received.

Annex F: Theme 3: Data and Evidence

Data Sources

Many IFCA's outlined long-term research plans within annual planning, with identified evidence needs for management driving those plans, and progress in gathering and acting on evidence being included in reporting. IFCA's outlined a range of sources utilized to collect the best available evidence, including in-person and online stakeholder engagement, permit returns, internal research, statutory bodies, NGOs, universities and peer-reviewed literature, and citizen science. An increase in workloads arose across most IFCA's as a result of the designations of Tranche 3 Marine Conservation Zones by Defra in 2019 (Table 10).

Table 10. Numbers of designated Marine Protected Areas in each IFCA district where marine harvesting is known to occur, with percentage of district by area designated as MPA and percentage of assessments completed

IFCA	No. of designated MPAs* 18/19	No. of designated MPAs* 19/20	No. of designated MPAs* 20/21	No. of designated MPAs* 21/22	% district (by area) designated MPA in 2022	% of completed fisheries assessments in MPAs
Cornwall	14	18	18	18	51.3	79
Isles of Scilly	3	3	3	3	32	100
Devon and Severn	15	22	22	22	42.4	79.81
Southern	13	19	20	20	78.3	100
Sussex	10	10	11	11	35	73
Kent and Essex	27	29	29	29	71	89.7
Eastern	19	19	19	19	96	Highest risks completed
North Eastern	9	9	9	9	12	100
Northumberland	10	10	10	10	67	70
North Western	14	18	18	18	78	16

*Number of designated MPAs where marine harvesting is known to occur

To aid the collection of evidence to support decision making and the delivery of objectives, IFCA's explored and used innovative approaches and technologies. This includes within

MPAs, where one IFCA partnered with Oceanmind to develop novel remote sensing tools for analysis of fishing activities. Another highlighted that innovations in quieter gear technologies are being explored and fed into a risk management strategy for endangered, threatened and protected species.

One IFCA outlined work to gather evidence to support IFCA objectives through an adaptive risk management approach, establishing research and management groups to coordinate evidence gathering and develop proportionate management that meets conservation requirements. These groups draw on contributions from IFCA staff, the fishing industry, Natural England, citizen science, and the Marine Conservation society.

One issue presented with this criterion was the resource-intensive demand on IFCAs to collect evidence where other ALBs were not forthcoming, due to the requirement to be evidence-based managers and work in accordance with the precautionary approach. As one IFCA set out, they could not monitor the effectiveness and impact of Minimum Conservation Reference Size increases due to resource constraints, and another could not demonstrate sustainable management best practice altogether due to a lack of data available for their relatively small district. In one case, all research was outsourced, which is an advantage in terms of being able to access a wide level of expertise, but a disadvantage since the IFCA does not build their own institutional expertise. Decisions were therefore based on a higher level of uncertainty.

When asked whether their IFCA responds appropriately when evidence changes, or new evidence emerges, of 90 respondents 30 stated 'No', 39 stated 'Yes', 10 were 'Unsure' and 11 indicated they held 'No Opinion'. In quayside conversations on the topic of evidence, and in free-text boxes in Qualtrics and Citizen Space, fishers in one district raised concern that they felt stock data used in management decisions had been inaccurate and felt that experiential knowledge was often not considered in evidence-based decision making.

In Qualtrics, 51 respondents answered the question: 'Between September 2018-August 2022, to what extent do you agree that IFCAs' decisions were supported by evidence that was fit for purpose?' Of these, 32 either 'Strongly' or 'Somewhat' agreed, while 17 either 'Strongly' or 'Somewhat' disagreed. 2 stated they neither agreed nor disagreed. That same 51 respondents also answered a question on whether they felt 'IFCAs' decisions were well-informed.' 32 either 'Agree[d]' or 'Strongly Agree[d]' with the statement, 15 either 'Disagree[d]' or 'Strongly Disagree[d]', 3 neither agreed nor disagreed, and 1 indicated they held 'No Opinion'.

46 of 90 respondents from Citizen Space and Qualtrics indicated that it was 'clear how evidence was taken into account during the IFCAs' decision-making process'. 32 felt this was not the case, and 12 were either 'Unsure' or stated they had 'No opinion'.

Most respondents in Citizen Space and Qualtrics, 55 of 90, were aware of their IFCA publishing the scientific evidence it had used to support its management decisions. 29 stated that they were not aware of this, and 6 indicated that they held no opinion.

Data sharing

IFCAs provided multiple examples of data sharing and stated that outcomes of collaboration contribute towards national marine monitoring programmes and reporting systems. The Technical Advisory Group was again highlighted as an effective forum for sharing experience and best practice on a range of subjects. One IFCA worked closely

with Cefas to support the processing and analysing of shellfish samples in relation to a multi-agency response into Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning events.

IFCAs also collaborated on shared projects with other ALBs, and organisations involved in MPA protection, such as working with Natural England on evidence gathering to inform assessments and subsequent monitoring and control plans for fishery impacts within Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and working on a project to understand fishing pressure impacts on different habitats and generating information on the impacts of intertidal fisheries.

One IFCA utilised a local biological records centre to develop an interactive map that provided an accessible platform for the sharing of habitat, fisheries, and wider information with all stakeholders.

Inshore Vessel Monitoring System (IVMS) data on inshore vessels, as provided by the MMO, is also used to assess fisheries displacement and the economic impact of Highly Protected Marine Areas (HPMAs). For example, one IFCA noted engagement with the strategic compensation measure planned for a windfarm development, which was proposed to be the extension of a Special Area of Conservation into inshore waters. This IFCA objected on the grounds of restriction of fishing opportunities. Illustrating the need to consider displacement and economic impacts, one IFCA noted that 96% of their district was covered by one or more forms of MPA designation, putting significant spatial squeeze on the inshore industry, and another highlighted pressures to marine industrial projects such as wind farms compounding this issue further.

Evaluating interventions

The principles of ecosystem management and protecting natural capital were highlighted by IFCAs as supporting byelaw development, with direct support for Defra's marine natural capital ecosystem assessment programme also highlighted. One IFCA called Habitat Regulation Assessments (HRAs) the best tool to demonstrate sustainable marine management, stating that HRAs "can define and present the case for the best fishing technique for a fishery as well as the times when fishing is least damaging and the number of fish that can be taken safely."

One IFCA added that evidence is collected after new management measures have been implemented, to demonstrate the extent of effectiveness of intervention. This includes routine monitoring, benthic surveys, work with universities on the impact of fishing, specific monitoring of indicators for new management, and permit returns data.

Another outlined the ways they measure impacts from across different fisheries operating in the district, such as fishery-specific monitoring and control plans that use empirical reference points such as catch-per-unit of effort, annual stock assessments and surveys to measure fisheries resources, and the measurement of stakeholder perceptions through consultations, community forums, and engagement on the coast. One IFCA highlighted socio-economics impacts being measured through the information provided in permit returns.

Stakeholder input

Stakeholders felt that evidence provided to IFCAs was not always passed on to its intended recipients and that this was occasionally reflected in the content of reports and other outputs. Fishers also stated that they did not feel comfortable providing their IFCA

with information, over concern that it could be used to implement management restrictions that would negatively affect their livelihood.

Fishers in one district stated they would like to see greater encouragement of fishers to engage in data collection for science programmes, as a way of building trust and transparency. A number of fishers suggested that IFCA should invite contractors or industry to undertake science projects more often.

Case Study 6

Cornwall IFCA:

Post-implementation monitoring is usually of fishing activity rather than the condition of an MPA itself, for example, as this is the responsibility of Natural England. However, CIFCA was a key partner in a six-year collaborative project with the University of Exeter, Marine Conservation Society and other partners to assess the recovery of subtidal habitats in response to a CIFCA byelaw restricting the use of bottom towed gear within the Eddystone Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Our research vessel collected remote sensing data including drop down video and stills of benthic habitats, which were analysed to compare changes in the biotopes present both inside and outside the restricted areas. This work was published in 2021.

Annex G: Theme 4: Fisheries Management

The IFCA's role in the management and conservation of marine resources, including fisheries, is vital to ensuring that fishing practices balance ecological integrity with the livelihoods of local communities. The need for fisheries management measures arises from a variety of sources and evidence including when byelaws made under MaCAA are reviewed.

IFCAs have a variety of mechanisms available to them to regulate fisheries, including developing voluntary codes of conduct and byelaws. Decisions on the type of management measure that is most suitable is made by Authorities, using recommendations from Working Groups or sub-committees. Most IFCAs also rely on Sea Fisheries Committee byelaws made before 2011, where it is appropriate to do so (Table 11).

Table 11. Number of legacy byelaws (pre-2011) in affect across IFCA districts

IFCA	No. legacy (pre-2011) byelaws in effect 18/19	No. legacy (pre-2011) byelaws in effect 19/20	No. legacy (pre-2011) byelaws in effect 20/21	No. legacy (pre-2011) byelaws in effect 21/22
Cornwall	18	18	18	18
Isles of Scilly	0	0	0	0
Devon and Severn	29	29	29	29
Southern	21	21	20	16
Sussex	6	6	5	5
Kent and Essex	50	49	40	36
Eastern	17	17	17	17
North Eastern	15	14	12	12
Northumberland	0	0	0	0
North Western	26	23	23	23

Defra issued guidance to the IFCAs on their byelaw making powers set out in sections 155 to 164 of MaCAA (2009). The guidance sets out the roles and responsibilities of all those involved which includes the MMO who act as a policy and legal advisor on the process of

making IFCA byelaws. All byelaws should be based on sound evidence, decision making and appropriate consultation.

Table 12. Number of byelaws introduced and revoked in each IFCA district during reference period

IFCA	No. byelaws introduced 18/19	No. byelaws introduced 19/20	No. byelaws introduced 20/21	No. byelaws introduced 21/22	No byelaws revoked 18/19	No byelaws revoked 19/20	No byelaws revoked 20/21	No byelaws revoked 21/22
Cornwall	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Isles of Scilly	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Devon and Severn	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
Southern	0	2	1	2	0	2	4	0
Sussex	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
Kent and Essex	1	0	1	2	1	0	9	4
Eastern	2	3	1	2	1	0	0	0
North Eastern	1	3	1	0	2	2	0	0
Northumber-land	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1
North Western	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	0

IFCAs use informal consultation to gather evidence from stakeholders and this is a critical part of ensuring stakeholders can shape the development of the management measure from an early stage. IFCAs follow a process outlined in Defra guidance when making byelaws, which includes advertising any byelaw and running a formal consultation which informs an Impact Assessment which is considered alongside the byelaw. IFCAs will seek independent legal advice on the drafting of a byelaw, prior to it being made and submitted to the MMO for quality assurance. The Defra Secretary of State has responsibility for confirming byelaws; in practice this is delegated to senior leaders in Defra where the byelaw is not controversial. The byelaw process can be a time- consuming process which requires significant resource. As a result, a relatively small number of byelaws are made and confirmed each year (Table 12).

IFCAs also have powers to make emergency byelaws where it considers there is an urgent need to make the byelaw could not reasonably have been foreseen. Emergency byelaws take effect without confirmation from the Secretary of State but do not remain in force for longer than 12 months. An IFCA may extend that period once and by no more than 6 months. Emergency byelaws are a management tool for exceptional circumstances and require a decision from the IFCA's committee who consider the evidence available. Table 13 shows the number of emergency byelaws that were made during the reference period.

Table 13. Number of emergency byelaws made and revoked during reference period.

IFCA	No. emergency byelaws made 18/19	No. emergency byelaws made 19/20	No. emergency byelaws made 20/21	No. emergency byelaws made 21/22	No. byelaws revoked 18/19	No. byelaws revoked 19/20	No. byelaws revoked 20/21	No. byelaws revoked 21/22
Cornwall	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Isles of Scilly	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Devon and Severn	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Southern	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Sussex	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kent and Essex	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	1
Eastern	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
North Eastern	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
Northumberland	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1
North Western	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0

Feedback on fisheries management was mixed. Some respondents felt that their IFCA was well managed across the period, noting strong engagement of their IFCA with other government delivery bodies on issues such as the Green Island Dredge Closure Area Emergency Byelaw. Fishers also commented positively on conservation and bass

protection measures, the Poole shellfish byelaw, and regulations introduced on berried lobsters, feeling that this had been a strength of their Authority's management in recent years.

On the other hand, stakeholders pointed to the decline in Pollack stocks, sole fisheries, and contentious estuary netting proposals as examples where management had been ineffective for some stocks or issue areas. Fishers in the two districts reflected negatively on the management measures introduced for their cockle fishery, with stakeholders in one suggesting that the impact of possible management measures was not adequately conveyed at consultation. In part this was attributed to difficulty understanding and responding to consultation documents.

Across Qualtrics and Citizen Space responses on the topic of trust, 47 of 100 respondents trusted their IFCA as a fisheries regulator, whereas 41 did not. 11 expressed a neutral stance.

Among specific stakeholder groups levels of trust were highly variable. General members and Local Authorities had high levels of trust in their IFCAs, with 15 of 19 and 7 of 8 respondents from these groups respectively stating that they either somewhat or highly "trusted [them] as a regulator." For other stakeholders, this figure was lower: 3 of 17 inshore commercial fishers, 3 of 24 members of the public, 2 of 6 of anglers, and 9 of 18 NGO representatives stated they either somewhat or highly agreed that their IFCA was a trusted regulator.

Several fishers felt that management measures affected their ability to invest with confidence in their vessels or equipment, noting the industry feels highly uncertain due to perceptions of tightening and rapidly changing regulations. Of 73 respondents across Citizen Space and Qualtrics, 27 felt that fisheries management had been well explained to those affected, while 32 felt clarity on measures was poor or very poor. 10 indicated a neutral stance on this issue and 4 indicated 'Don't Know'.

Balancing local and national priorities

The byelaw system allows for management to be regionally tailored around the coast, accounting for local needs. IFCAs stated that options for implementation are considered and presented in reports to members for agreement. In some cases, flexible permit conditions are utilised, allowing management to be tailored on a fishery-by-fishery basis. Management measures may be changed in response to national policies being introduced, new fisheries emerging in the district, engagement with stakeholders, and new MPAs and features within MPAs being designated. Most of the IFCAs still rely on a number of Sea Fisheries Committee byelaws, known as legacy byelaws (Table 11), though the number is gradually reducing as new management measures are developed.

In some cases, these measures are then included in IFCAs own fisheries management plans, alongside steps to enhance further knowledge of the condition of the stock and associated environmental impacts. Measures can be underpinned by regulatory impact assessments, with impact being considered through tailored monitoring programmes that compare local trends to the national picture.

IFCAs stated that they have also supported the implementation of the Fisheries Act 2020, sitting on various national stakeholder engagement groups/ industry advisory groups, to contribute towards the Joint Fisheries Statement consultation and the development of national Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs).

However, when working with Defra and the MMO to confirm the introduction of new byelaws, several issues were highlighted by IFCA as impacting on timelines. In one case these issues resulted in several byelaws taking three years between creation and confirmation. Issues outlined were conflicting legal and policy opinion through MMO and Defra processes, amendments required as a result of the byelaw review process, and an increasing amount of national policy from Government impacting on capacity. This constant change in national fisheries management has also made it difficult to plan beyond a one or two years at the local level, although identifying drivers and priority workstreams has mitigated this to some degree.

Feedback from stakeholders engaged at the quayside suggested that they did not always feel their IFCA did not struck the correct balance between conservation, financial considerations, and sea resource use. Inshore commercial fishers stated that their IFCA had prioritised enforcement and conservation and did not feel that they were given equal consideration with other sea users. In some cases, they perceived that conservation interests could outweigh considerations of economic and social benefit to coastal communities. One fisher suggested that they would like to see a greater focus on 'whole ecosystems functioning' consideration in management and byelaw creation, including social impacts.

Some fishers also felt that the strict spatial boundaries and differing byelaws between IFCA was hampering their ability to develop cross-boundary management solutions or work in a more collaborative manner. Overall, the perspectives on balancing the priorities of the marine environment and fisheries were strongly divergent between stakeholder groups.

Stakeholders were asked whether their IFCA balanced priorities for fisheries management and the marine environment. Of 91 respondents from groups in Citizen Space and Qualtrics, 30 felt that their IFCA balanced their responsibilities to contribute to sustainable fisheries and protect the marine environment, 20 of the 91 felt that fisheries were prioritised, while 26 considered the marine environment to have been prioritised.

When split by stakeholder group, 3 of 17 IFCA general members, 2 of 4 of anglers, 5 of 23 members of the public, 3 of 18 of NGO representatives, and 2 of 13 of inshore commercial fishers felt that fisheries were prioritised by their IFCA. 9 of 18 NGO representatives, 6 of 13 of inshore commercial fishers, and 8 of 23 members of the public felt that the marine environment was prioritised. 5 of 18 NGO representatives, 4 of 23 members of the public, and 1 of 13 inshore commercial fishers felt that priorities were balanced.

When asked through Citizen Space and Qualtrics how well their IFCA had accounted for the local needs of sea fisheries resources within their district, 39 of 91 respondents felt this had been done 'poorly' or 'very poorly', 14 indicated a neutral stance, and 32 felt their IFCA had done 'well' or 'very well'. 6 had no opinion on the matter. Among different sea users, inshore commercial fishers had a particularly high level of dissatisfaction with their respective IFCA on this topic: a majority, 10 of 13, indicated that local needs of sea resources had been 'poorly' or 'very poorly' accounted for. IFCA General Members felt their IFCA had responded well to local needs: a majority, 11 of 17, answered either 'well' or 'very well' to this question.

Protected sites and features

Management measures are enhanced for protected marine areas and features, such as those found within MPAs and HPMAs. IFCA's noted that managing the risk to these sites and features is a high-priority, resource-heavy element of their work, and education is an important foundation for generating compliance to mitigate the need for enforcement. One example given for this was the publication and signposting of information, including MPA locations and byelaws.

Many IFCA's referenced protected site-specific evidence collection, which was often reported in impact assessment documentation for management options. One IFCA stated that MPA site regulation is reviewed on a 4-year cycle, with reviews being incorporated into strategic plans for that area. Another noted that information collected is fed into IFCA's own fisheries management plans and monitoring and control plans. Data to assess the impact of potential management measures is collected through fishery dependent and independent data, with examples given including surveys, catch and effort monitoring, HRAs and MCZ assessments, biometric information, spatial data, observer programmes, and engagement with academia.

One IFCA stated that detailed monitoring of effort within these areas was provided via a newly added requirement to the permit system. As a result, failure of the requirement to submit this data monthly would result in a breach of the byelaw. This allowed the IFCA to retain oversight of the way in which the levels of activity and effort within the site are distributed, taking action to ensure that no significant increase in effort takes place, in turn helping to achieve the conservation objectives of the site.

Data collected through surveys included an echogram to determine the presence of seagrass or algae, mapping seagrass beds in four MPAs, and substantially adding to the overall mapped extent of this species in the UK. Another survey was conducted by an IFCA in partnership with Natural England to map the distribution of reefs within a Marine Conservation Zone via sonar and a sound camera. This expanded their knowledge of key Sabellaria reef locations in the MCZ area, and consequently their ability to provide adequate protection to them. Examples of academic support include a project to understand fishing pressure impacts on different habitats, understanding the impacts of potting on reef biotopes, and generating information on intertidal fisheries and their impacts.

HRAs also take account of providing feeding grounds for bird populations, ensuring their sustainability alongside sustainable fisheries. In one IFCA, a fixed netting regulation was introduced to enhance protection for a sea bird colony estimated to total a population of 412,000. In another, annual intertidal and subtidal bivalve surveys in estuaries were used to inform both stock assessments and bird food models.

One stakeholder noted that where management interventions that would impact local fishers and stakeholders are proposed based on the precautionary approach, as advised by statutory nature conservation bodies, this can be difficult to communicate to stakeholders and risks damaging relationships. Collecting further evidence helps to determine if the fishery is impacting on a protected feature, but this can take significant resource.

Spatial closures and pressures

Alongside protected areas, IFCA's noted that other marine projects such as windfarms and cable laying further restrict access to available grounds for the fishing industry, leading to spatial squeeze. It was also noted that larger vessels operating close to the 6 nautical mile boundary can further exacerbate this issue, and lead to conflicts between sectors.

Given this spatial pressure, the necessity of ensuring that the evidence justifies management intervention was highlighted. Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) data provided by vessels was stated to be invaluable in assessing fisheries displacement and the economic impacts of protected areas. One IFCA also worked with NE and Defra to assess potential fisheries displacement and economic impact resulting from HPMA's proposed by the Benyon Review into Highly Protected Marine Areas 2022. Where sites have been closed, some are periodically revisited to determine whether closures are still appropriate or require updating.

To mitigate the impacts of spatial pressure, one IFCA outlined a compromise that balances an area that excludes trawling on sensitive and protected habitats, and an area where trawling at a small scale is managed through a permit scheme. Another implemented an emergency byelaw to address the significant challenge resulting from a sudden influx of nomadic scallop dredgers seeking to move onto inshore fishing grounds. Further examples reported by IFCA's included a risk register of gear and feature interactions, and an approach of adaptive risk management as a method to avoid spatial closures on a precautionary basis.

Case study 7

Cornwall – use of new technology

In order to collect detailed data on fishing activity to inform management, Cornwall IFCA installed low-cost vehicle tracking units on volunteer vessels using a range of fishing gears. By filtering the tracking data, it is possible to determine patterns of fishing activity, for example when the vessel is transiting, shooting and hauling. One vessel has an ID beacon attached to the starboard trawl door. The beacon connects to the tracker unit via Bluetooth so whilst the door is out of the water, the beacon shows as connected. When the door goes into the water, the connection is lost and shows as such on the vessels' tracking data. Although speed is a good indication of fishing activity, the ID beacon allows a more accurate indication of when fishing occurs. The next phase of this work, using grant funding from Natural England, will involve the use of radio frequency identification (RFID) equipment to remotely monitor the use of static gear.

Case study 8

Southern IFCA:

The Poole Clam & Cockle Fishery Partnership Project was funded by the MSC OSF and centred around the management of the fishery in relation to protecting ETP species. The project was a joint venture between Southern, PDFA and DWT aiming to establish a co-management system to support fishers to minimise interactions with ETP species. Education materials were developed to include waterproof guides, interpretation boards and a training program for fishers and IFCOs. Fisher-dependent data collection was developed alongside a fishery-independent observer program which provided quality control and fishers' innovations in quieter gear technologies were explored. Outcomes of the project fed into the production of a RMS which considered an adaptive approach to ETP species management incorporating significant stakeholder involvement and elements of co-management. The RMS is designed to be used by other fisheries including those looking to achieve MSC certification and aims to help address Fisheries Objectives under the FA.

Annex H: Theme 5: Compliance and Enforcement

Strategy

The majority of IFCA's undertake their enforcement activities in line with an established governance system in pursuit of a proportionate risk-based approach, including compliance and enforcement strategies, policies, and plans. These strategies are informed by various inputs including risk analysis, legal scrutiny, and intelligence and data gathering. Defra issued guidance to the IFCA's on the establishment of a common enforcement framework in 2011 from which individual IFCA's developed their compliance and enforcement strategies, policies and plans.

Where such a system is not in place, this may be due to a lack of resources and evidence of infringements, with one respondent highlighting that compliance by consensus is the objective, of which education and advice to stakeholders are key elements. One IFCA stated that despite this proactive planning, they still retain a degree of flexibility with their approach, allowing them to respond to emergencies and manage unforeseen issues.

When asked about the issue of enforcement, of 55 total respondents in Qualtrics 48 were aware of their respective IFCA's enforcement policy. This included 6 of 6 of anglers, 11 of 13 inshore commercial fishers, 5 of 6 local government representatives, 2 of 2 NGO representatives, and 16 of 18 IFCA general members.

87 respondents from all stakeholder groups in Citizen Space and Qualtrics were asked whether their IFCA's enforcement policy clearly explained enforcement decisions. 44 of this 87 agreed or stated that their IFCA's enforcement policy was clear, 16 indicated that it was not. The remaining 27 stated they were unsure or provided a neutral answer.

Multiple respondents felt that their Authority placed too much emphasis on enforcement. Fishers from several districts felt that an emphasis on enforcement was affecting their wellbeing and causing increased stress. Several fishers felt that enforcement activities had increased in frequency, since the end of pandemic restrictions.

Coordination

IFCA's use various forums and methods through which they plan and coordinate their enforcement activities, using a consistent approach where possible, but also tailoring that for regional differences where necessary. Data that informs activity trigger levels is monitored and discussed to assess potential management responses, and best practice on targeted actions is provided by alignment with the National Intelligence Model, which outlines best practice for targeted law enforcement and is used by several other agencies.

IFCA's stated that it does this in part by setting out a method for managing enforcement activity, alongside benchmarked objectives and tactical activities, ensuring that the available resources are not unintentionally directed toward one fishery or area. Key seasonal fisheries can be targeted through specific Operation Orders, and spatial intelligence can be reviewed by Tasking and Coordination Groups (TCGs). These groups also identify compliance and engagement priorities, informed through intelligence gathering and regular briefings to support good decision making.

Alongside partnership working and data sharing through the Association of IFCA's (AIFCA), other shared forums include the National Inshore Marine Enforcement Group (NIMEG) and MMO Tactical Coordination Group (TCG), where national best practice for

compliance and enforcement is developed and shared with IFCA's, MMO and other agencies. Other agencies involved in patrols were presented as the Police, Local Authorities, Environment Agency, Natural England and the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority, allowing for the building and sharing of experience.

IFCA's also have memorandums of understanding with the MMO for the chartering of IFCA vessels for enforcement activities and joint patrols, cross warranting to share duties, and input data from boarding and inspections to MMO's national Monitoring Control and Surveillance System (MCSS).

With a sample of 23 respondents, 13 felt that their IFCA considered how neighbouring IFCA's and other marine regulators approached enforcement when undertaking activities themselves. In quayside conversations, fishers working across district boundaries reflected that gaining clarity on byelaws could be an issue, and felt that enforcement, licencing and inspections for cross-boundary fishing activities could be better co-ordinated. In one district, some fishers commented that there was an imbalance in the way regulations were enforced for some and not others across gear types, species, and vessels.

Inspections and enforcement decisions

IFCA's aim to achieve compliance through education, advice and guidance wherever possible. Where this has been unsuccessful IFCA's will use appropriate and proportionate action, which includes enforcement if necessary.

Examples of the kind of data monitored includes changes to fishing methods and patterns, compliance levels within key fisheries, intelligence reports and data collected during enforcement activities. It also includes effort distribution within protected areas, ensuring that no significant increase in effort takes place and possibly negatively affects the conservation objectives of the designated features within that area. In terms of business-as-usual risk management, many IFCA's use an adaptive risk management process, with risk assessments continually reviewed and included within enforcement strategies. Enforcement officers will also routinely inspect fishing equipment and fishing vessels ashore or at sea to ensure compliance with relevant legislation (Table 14 and 15). The data shows that IFCA's collate statistics in different ways. Chief Officers reported that the Covid-19 pandemic restricted their ability to monitor compliance in 2020 and 2021 and high fuel prices put pressure on revenue budgets when trying to maintain enforcement presence. IFCA's reported that monitoring continued using shore-based operations and remote monitoring of activities via Automatic Identification System (AIS) and Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) systems. At least one IFCA reported mechanical issues with their offshore asset.

Table 14. Number of sea-based activities associated with monitoring and compliance in each IFCA district

IFCA	Sea-based activity	No. of occurrences 18/19	No. of occurrences 19/20	No. of occurrences 20/21	No. of occurrences 21/22
Cornwall	Sea patrols	71	49	4	52
	Boardings/inspections	156	88	3	70
Isles of Scilly	Sea patrols	No data			
	Boardings/inspections	No data			
Devon and Severn	Sea patrols	70	38	3	49
	Boardings/inspections	18	89	0	34
Southern	Sea patrols	89	97	83	71
	Boardings/inspections	260	287	21	70
Sussex	Sea patrols	80	69	92	59
	Boardings/inspections	80	28	5	9
Kent and Essex	Sea patrols	174	140	134	165
	Boardings/inspections	287	124	194	325
Eastern	Sea patrols	96	100	102	118
	Boardings/inspections	61	58	57	45
North Eastern	Sea patrols	136	126	64	13
	Boardings/inspections	317	69	0	0
Northumberland	Sea patrols	118	117	82	97
	Boardings/inspections	295	166	47	76
North Western	Sea patrols	74	71	51	54
	Boardings/inspections	85	496	683	578

Table 15. Number of land-based activities associated with monitoring and compliance in each IFCA district

IFCA	Land-based activity	No. of occurrences 18/19	No. of occurrences 19/20	No. of occurrences 20/21	No. of occurrences 21/22
Cornwall	Patrols on land	348	227	206	104
	Inspections	137	93	120	45
Isles of Scilly	Patrols on land	No data			
	Inspections	No data			
Devon and Severn	Patrols on land	33	36	2	23
	Inspections	5	45	21	9
Southern	Patrols on land	159	117	160	116
	Inspections	394	297	185	262
Sussex	Patrols on land	78	54	108	73
	Inspections	109	77	120	54
Kent and Essex	Patrols on land	162	171	309	268
	Inspections	499	246	331	249
Eastern	Patrols on land	421	378	476	388
	Inspections	1249	1179	1497	1039
North Eastern	Patrols on land	Daily			
	Inspections	339	378	232	174
Northumberland	Patrols on land	310	310	118	154
	Inspections	604	429	117	180
North Western	Patrols on land	935	1074	1142	1212
	Inspections	2453	5959	5873	2737

Of 67 respondents across Qualtrics and Citizen Space, 25 felt that their IFCA Officers had undertaken inspections fairly, with 14 indicating they either 'Disagree[d]' or 'Strongly Disagree[d]' with this statement. 8 of 67 indicated a neutral stance, and 20 indicated they had 'No Opinion' on the matter.

Across specific stakeholder groups, 5 of 13 inshore commercial fishers who responded felt that their IFCA Officers had carried out inspections fairly, with 4 indicating they either 'Disagree[ing]' or 'Strongly Disagree[ing]' with this statement. 3 of the 13 indicated a neutral stance, and 1 indicated that they had 'No Opinion'. Among 6 responses from anglers, 3 agreed inspections were carried out fairly, 1 expressed a neutral stance, and 2 disagreed.

There is a substantial difference between inshore fishers and all respondents regarding perception of the IFCAs explaining their enforcement decisions clearly. For inshore fishers, 3 of 11 felt that IFCAs explained their enforcement decisions.

Sanctions outlined include written warnings, cautions, fixed administrative penalties (Table 16), and ultimately prosecution in courts, with the decision to prosecute being informed by legal advice, and tests of evidence and public interest. IFCAs may receive a full or partial award of costs from court cases (Table 17).

Of 93 respondents across Qualtrics and Citizen Space, 37 agreed that "IFCAs gathered relevant and timely evidence to support enforcement actions", while 22 felt that they did not. There were some differences by stakeholder group. 5 of 6 of local authority members, 12 of 17 IFCA general members, and 4 of 6 anglers agreed that IFCAs gathered relevant and timely evidence for enforcement. Only 2 of 13 inshore commercial fishers agreed this was the case, while 5 indicated they disagreed, and 6 were unsure. Among the public, 10 of 23 disagreed, 8 agreed, and 5 held no opinion. 5 of 18 NGO representatives felt IFCAs did not collect timely evidence, 6 stated that they did, and 7 had no opinion.

Table 16. Annual totals of Fixed Administrative Penalties (FAPs) issued by IFCA

IFCA	Total of FAPs received 18/19 (£'s)	Total of FAPs received 19/20 (£'s)	Total of FAPs received 20/21 (£'s)	Total of FAPs received 21/22 (£'s)
Cornwall	5,250	6,750	0	500
Isles of Scilly	0	0	0	0
Devon and Severn	5,750	9,250	6,900	9,744
Southern	3,000	4,500	0	1,000
Sussex		500	0	1,750
Kent and Essex	1500	4,500	0	2,000
Eastern	0	0	1,250	1,250
North Eastern	7,500	5,500	17,950	1,750
Northumberland	3,000	3,000	2,250	2,250
North Western	Data not available			

Table 17. Total costs recovered from IFCA prosecutions decided in court

IFCA	Total recovered from court costs (£'s) 18/19	Total recovered from court costs (£'s) 19/20	Total recovered from court costs (£'s) 20/21	Total recovered from court costs (£'s) 21/22
Cornwall	11,318	7,505	592	9,349
Isles of Scilly	0	0	2,000	0
Devon and Severn	9,389	9,148	20,550	2,118
Southern	3,500	3,000	2,000	2,000
Sussex	7,959	770	4,986	196
Kent and Essex	496	6,539	0	0
Eastern	6,845	3,639	0	798
North Eastern	-11,765**	5,408	1,598	1,170
Northumberland	3,920	5,095	412	1,475
North Western	Data not available			

** Negative value due to non-recovery costs and accounting purposes arising from previous year

Training

IFCAs highlighted the extensive training undertaken by IFCA officers at cost to the IFCAs (Table 18), delivered through various means such as national specialists and systems, national IFCA training courses, locally sourced bespoke suppliers. Mentoring and development from senior officers was also highlighted, including from those who have held previous careers in enforcement agencies, such as the police.

One IFCA outlined a standardised training programme developed in partnership with the MMO which allows officers to demonstrate their professional credentials, and another stated that officers operating drones undertake rigorous training courses to achieve a Civil Aviation Authority drone pilot qualification.

Stakeholders in many districts commented that they had positive relationships with local fishery officers and representatives from IFCAs who come to ports and harbours, who they often viewed as fair and professional. However, many reflected that their relationship with the administration and more senior representatives of their IFCA was challenging or strained.

Fishers in quayside conversations commented on the volume of IFCA employees in their regions that had backgrounds as police officers or military personnel. They felt that this background contributed to their IFCA's particularly strong emphasis on enforcement; as a result, some reflected that they did not feel trusted by their authority. One fisher commented that inspections and interactions with their IFCA have been more combative since 2018.

Table 18. Number of warranted officers by IFCA and training costs for all staff

IFCA	Training costs (£' s) 18/19	No. warranted officers 18/19	Training costs (£' s) 19/20	No. warranted officers 19/20	Training costs (£' s) 20/21	No. warranted officers 20/21	Training costs (£' s) 21/22	No. warranted officers 21/22
Cornwall	9,391	6	6,984	6	12,385	6	17,207	6
Isles of Scilly	4,000	2	4,000	2	4,000	2	3,000	2
Devon and Severn	9,302	4	8,617	4	9,665	4	10,277	4
Southern	5,443	5	7,902	8	1,536	9	3,951	8
Sussex	6,045	8	16,654	8	7,587	8	15,219	8
Kent and Essex	21,003	13	18,099	13	10,004	11	7,370	13
Eastern	*n/a	11	*n/a	14	19,105	14	18,100	11
North Eastern	24,840	14	17,689	14	13,653	12	24,388	12
Northumber-land	23,196	10	10,714	10	7,284	10	14,264	10
North Western	*n/a	13	*n/a	13	*n/a	13	*n/a	13

Several respondents stated that they would like to see an increase in enforcement staff hired who had a background in the fishing industry. Commenting in both Qualtrics and as part of quayside conversations, some fishers felt that there was limited consideration or understanding of the reality of the fishing industry when undertaking or continuing with enforcement action by IFCAs.

EU Exit

During preparation and planning to leave the EU, IFCAs signed up to Memorandums of Understanding for the sharing of data and provision of vessels and officers should the need arise. IFCAs were also involved in scenario planning for patrols beyond the 12 nautical mile boundary to support the MMO's enforcement capabilities and supported with surveillance within the 12 nautical mile boundary, reporting back to the MMO to assist national monitoring of non-compliance of foreign vessels in UK waters.

Preparation for these operations included the provision of existing equipment and purchase of new equipment, review of processes and procedures, and redeployment of officers. Joint patrols were also tested through national coordination trials, with engagement taking place in part through the National Maritime Information Centre (NMIC).

IFCAs also highlighted that they contributed and advised cross-government working groups in matters surrounding the UK fishing industry, including imports and exports of local products.

Most fishers in all districts asked felt that EU Exit had not substantially impacted the way that IFCAs interact with them or operate. However, some were concerned about increased activity outside 6nm and felt this was affecting the management of inshore stocks in their district. Others suggested that it was too early to say whether there may be longer-term impacts. A minority attributed EU Exit to enforcement activities increasing in frequency and intensity and were concerned about the ability of IFCAs to operate more independently when creating fisheries byelaws.

Innovation

To support their ability to undertake this range of control and enforcement activity, IFCAs evidenced adoption and utilisation of a range of new and emerging technologies over this reporting period. The emerging use of drones was a common theme, with a range of uses identified such as feeding into survey and enforcement workstreams and working as a deterrent by providing evidence not otherwise available.

The advancement of camera technology was also highlighted, with the ability to capture underwater images and video surveys. Some IFCAs were also supporting Defra's remote electronic monitoring trials, including cameras and gear tracking technology on board scallop vessels in one example.

Aiding the health and safety of officers, as well as to enhance evidence gathering during operations, body-worn cameras were used during inspections and enforcement activities. These were increasingly utilised for a range of purposes, including working as a deterrent to reduce conflict and increase compliance. This was flagged as particularly useful for MPAs.

Case Study 9

Cornwall IFCA: Illegal razor clam fishing

From September 2018, nineteen suspects working on board eight fishing vessels were investigated for electrofishing for razor clams and other related offences in the Cornwall IFCA district. This continued throughout 2019 and 2020 and the ongoing investigations work and preparation for court trials dominated the work of the enforcement team. The impact of the pandemic on the Courts system added significant delays but there were a number of successful prosecutions carried out in 2021 and 2022 and the rest will be heard in 2023. This concerted enforcement activity has entirely removed this illegal fishing method from the IFCA district.

Case Study 10

Kent and Essex IFCA: Shellfish gathering joint agency “Operation Sealion”

As the UK entered its first lockdown, summer 2020 saw an upsurge in people hand gathering shellfish across the UK. While some reports were families out at the beach removing small amounts for personal use, other reports were of large groups of 10 or more people taking excessive quantities. Within the big groups there was concern that large volumes of shellfish that were not safe for consumption were being sold into the human food chain. A multiagency operation (Operation Sealion) was setup and KEIFCA officers worked closely with other agencies including patrols with local environmental health officers (EHOs) to determine whether hand-gathered shellfish was being collected for commercial sale, Gangmasters & Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) to identify modern slavery offences and Kent Police Rural Task Force.

Intelligence was gathered and shared to support other partnering agencies specifically regarding commercial shellfish harvesting from unclassified shellfish beds and protection of designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). KEIFCA conducted 40 dedicated shore patrols, inspected a total of 31 groups of gatherers and issued 24 verbal warnings for various offences such as removing shellfish below minimum size and removing cockles without a license or permit. Large quantities of unsafe shellfish were seized by environmental Health Officers on public health grounds.

Building on this joint agency success officers launched of an education and prevention campaign establishing signage on the Isle of Sheppey and advertisement of regulations via social media. In partnership with Swale BC, Kent Police and Natural England, 21 signs were proposed and secured around the Isle of Sheppey coastline.

Annex I: Levy Contributions

Table 19. Levy contributions from all local authorities within the membership of the IFCA's and associated New Burdens Funding provided by Defra to those local authorities that were assessed as incurring additional costs when the IFCA's were established in 2011.

IFCA	Levy-paying local authority member	Defra annual New Burdens Funding support grant to LAs that are members of IFCA's (£'s)	Total levy paid by local authority to IFCA budget				Total levy available to IFCA's across reference period
			18/19 (£'s)	19/20 (£'s)	20/21 (£'s)	21/22 (£'s)	
Cornwall	Cornwall Council	324,838	1,129,831	1,153,000	1,202,716	1,226,770	4,712,317
Devon and Severn (* demotes all Defra NBF not received by IFCA)	Bristol City Council	50,851*	41,448	40,906	41,810	41,810	165,974
	Devon County Council	21,832	345,453	340,932	348,466	348,466	1,383,317
	Gloucestershire County Council	122,428*	106,152	104,763	107,078	107,078	425,071
	North Somerset Council	42,574*	33,966	33,521	34,262	34,262	136,011
	Plymouth Council	0	34,479	34,028	34,780	34,780	138,067
	Somerset Council	133,952*	116,569	115,044	117,586	117,586	466,785
	South Gloucestershire Council	38,110*	29,931	29,539	30,192	30,192	119,854

IFCA	Levy-paying local authority member	Defra annual New Burdens Funding support grant to LAs that are members of IFCA's (£'s)	Total levy paid by local authority to IFCA budget				
			18/19 (£'s)	19/20 (£'s)	20/21 (£'s)	21/22 (£'s)	Total levy available to IFCA's across reference period
	Torbay Council	0	25,603	25,268	25,826	25,826	102,523
Eastern	Lincolnshire County Council	127,726	459,224	508,124	522,984	531,393	2,021,725
	Norfolk County Council	151,999	543,491	610,804	618,790	628,720	2,401,805
	Suffolk County Council	114,420	408,293	451,643	464,816	472,271	1,797,023
Kent and Essex	Essex County Council	178,400	383,600	383,600	390,057	390,057	1,547,314
	Kent County Council	137,900	383,600	383,600	390,057	390,057	1,547,314
	Medway Council	32,500	67,200	67,200	68,296	68,296	270,992
	Southend on Sea Council	0	21,500	21,500	21,891	21,891	86,782
	Thurrock Council	15,000	33,700	33,700	34,284	34,284	135,968
Sussex	Brighton and Hove Council		106,766	108,901	111,100	113,300	440,067
	East Sussex Council		406,250	414,375	422,700	431,200	1,674,525
	West Sussex Council		450,575	459,586	468,800	478,200	1,857,161

IFCA	Levy-paying local authority member	Defra annual New Burdens Funding support grant to LAs that are members of IFCA's (£'s)	Total levy paid by local authority to IFCA budget				
			18/19 (£'s)	19/20 (£'s)	20/21 (£'s)	21/22 (£'s)	Total levy available to IFCA's across reference period
Isles of Scilly	Isles of Scilly Council	109,723	123,723	126,723	126,723	126,723	503,892
North Eastern	Durham County Council	13,781	66,737	68,072	71,476	72,190	278,475
	East Riding of Yorkshire	54,898	266,709	272,044	285,646	288,503	1,112,902
	Hartlepool Borough Council	6,777	33,249	33,914	35,609	35,966	138,738
	Kingston upon Hull City Council	27,449	133,354	136,022	142,823	144,251	556,450
	North East Lincolnshire Council	27,449	133,354	136,022	142,823	144,251	556,450
	North Lincolnshire Council	13,781	66,737	68,072	71,476	72,190	278,475
	North Yorkshire County Council	54,898	266,710	272,044	285,646	288,503	1,112,903
	Redcar and Cleveland Council	6,777	33,249	33,914	35,609	35,966	138,738
	South Tyneside Council	13,781	66,737	68,072	71,476	72,190	278,475

IFCA	Levy-paying local authority member	Defra annual New Burdens Funding support grant to LAs that are members of IFCA's (£'s)	Total levy paid by local authority to IFCA budget				
			18/19 (£'s)	19/20 (£'s)	20/21 (£'s)	21/22 (£'s)	Total levy available to IFCA's across reference period
	Stockton on Tees Council	68,357	66,737	68,072	71,476	72,190	278,475
	Sunderland City Council	13,781	66,737	68,072	71,476	72,190	278,475
Northumberland	North Tyneside Borough Council	66,733	136,469	139,198	142,678	145,017	563,362
	Northumberland County Council	87,907	684,147	697,832	715,278	727,004	2,824,261
North Western	Blackpool Borough Council	0	21,205	21,629	22,062	22,503	87,399
	Cheshire West and Chester Council	89,131	93,817	95,693	97,607	99,559	386,675
	Cumbria County Council	0	526,144	536,666	547,400	558,348	2,168,558
	Halton Borough Council	30,585	28,531	29,101	29,683	30,277	117,592
	Lancashire County Council	201,857	425,901	434,419	443,108	451,970	1,755,398
	Liverpool City Council	54,096	54,748	55,843	56,960	58,099	225,649

IFCA	Levy-paying local authority member	Defra annual New Burdens Funding support grant to LAs that are members of IFCA's (£'s)	Total levy paid by local authority to IFCA budget				
			18/19 (£'s)	19/20 (£'s)	20/21 (£'s)	21/22 (£'s)	Total levy available to IFCA's across reference period
	Sefton Council	13,859	65,415	66,723	68,057	69,418	269,613
	Wirral Borough Council	17,259	69,399	70,786	72,202	73,646	286,034
Southern – 20/21 and 21/22	Dorset Council	99,785			195,667	195,667	391,334
	Hampshire	203,644			318,921	318,921	637,842
	Isle of Wight	13,663			113,280	113,280	226,520
	Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole	12,333			87968	87968	175,936
	Southampton	0			33,945	33,945	67,890
	Portsmouth	0			39,628	39,628	79,256
Part of Dorset County Council, Poole Council and Bournemouth Council became Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council in 20/21. Arrangement prior to 21/21 set out below							
Southern (18/19 and 19/20)	Dorset County Council	112,118	211,314	215,540			462,854

IFCA	Levy-paying local authority member	Defra annual New Burdens Funding support grant to LAs that are members of IFCA's (£'s)	Total levy paid by local authority to IFCA budget				Total levy available to IFCA's across reference period
			18/19 (£'s)	19/20 (£'s)	20/21 (£'s)	21/22 (£'s)	
Southern (18/19 and 19/20) cont.	Hampshire	203,644	306,537	312,668			619,205
	Isle of Wight	13,663	108,881	111,059			219,940
	Poole	0	33,689	34,363			68,052
	Bournemouth	0	27,618	28,171			55,789
	Southampton	0	32,627	33,279			65,906
	Portsmouth	0	38,089	38,851			76,940

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