



VMS Reporting Requirement Guidelines¹

22 April 2015

Paper prepared by Secretariat

This document has been prepared at the request of one Member. It provides a set of guidelines on WCPFC VMS requirements, noting that these are contained in a range of CMMs. Commission member, Cooperating Non-Member and vessel operators are encouraged to review the Convention, CMM 2014-02 *Commission Vessel Monitoring System*, VMS Standards Specifications and Procedures (VMS SSPs) and other relevant decisions of the WCPFC for the specific WCPFC VMS requirements. It should be noted that there may be additional VMS requirements which apply to vessels as a condition of license, and if in doubt the licensing national authority should be contacted for clarification.

WCPFC VMS requirements

All fishing vessels which fish for highly migratory fish stocks beyond their national waters in the WCPF Convention Area are required to carry a fully operational MTU/ALC that complies with the full range of minimum standards set out in Annex 1 of CMM-2014-02.

Vessel Activation

All vessels authorized to operate in the WCPFC Convention area are required to provide a Vessel Tracking Agreement Form (VTAF) to enable activation and automatic tracking of the vessel through WCPFC VMS. VTAFs of vessels already reporting to FFA VMS will not be activated and may not need to be provided, but where received are held on file by WCPFC in case the vessel needs to have the ALC activated to report to WCPFC VMS system (should the vessel no longer report to the FFA VMS system).

ALC/MTU Reporting

The approved structure of the WCPFC VMS system allows vessels to report to the WCPFC through two ways: i) directly to the WCPFC VMS, or ii) to the WCPFC through the FFA VMS. In respect of the latter, it is recognized that there may be additional requirements for VMS reporting which arise from FFA requirements and national VMS requirements that are relevant. Noting these considerations, in general WCPFC VMS reporting requirements are as follows:

¹ Version 2: 22 April 2015 includes updated references to CMMs, including CMM 2014-02 which replaces CMM 2011-02.

Version 1: 21 February 2014 is a revised version of document WCPFC-TCC9-2013-IP09 prepared by the Secretariat, to take into account comments received from CCMs during TCC9 and updated decisions from WCPFC10.

- Default reporting rate is 4 hours while in the Convention Area (6 position reports per day) while inside the WCPFC Convention Area.
- Vessels that exit the Convention area report once a day (*TCC8 decision*).
- During FAD closure periods, purse seine vessels operating between 20°N and 20°S will report at ½ hour interval while inside the WCPFC Convention Area. (*WCPFC10 decision- CMM 2013-01 requirement, WCPFC11 decision – CMM 2014-01 requirement*)
- CCMs that included their national waters as part of the Commission VMS may require higher reporting rate when a vessels enters its waters. (*WCPFC9 decision*)
- Where WCPFC receives copies of the position reports, for example from FFA VMS system in areas covered by the WCPFC VMS, the reporting rate is set by the primary account holder.

Manual Reporting

In the case of ALC failure or malfunction, vessel position reports shall be provided by the vessel on a manual basis. It is the responsibility of a vessel's flag State CCM to ensure compliance with this requirement.

WCPFC9 and WCPFC10 Regular Sessions approved the amendment to the VMS SSPs, to apply from 1 March 2013 - 1 March 2015. WCPFC11 further extended these requirements to 1 March 2017:

In the event of non-reception of two consecutive, programmed high seas VMS positions, and where the Secretariat has exhausted all reasonable steps² to re-establish normal automatic reception of VMS positions the Secretariat will notify the flag State CCM who shall then direct the vessel Master to begin manual reporting. During this period the vessel shall be required to report its position manually to the Secretariat every 6 hours. If automatic reporting to the Commission VMS has not been reestablished within 30 days of the commencement of manual reporting the flag state CCM shall order the vessel to cease fishing, stow all fishing gear and return immediately to port. The vessel may recommence fishing on the high seas only when the ALC/MTU has been confirmed as operational by the Secretariat following the flag State CCM informing the Secretariat that the vessel's automatic reporting complies with the regulations established in this SSP.

In exceptional circumstances,³ the flag State CCM may extend the manual reporting period for an additional consecutive 15 days during which time the vessel will continue to report its position manually every 4 hours to the Secretariat while on the high seas.

² The flag State CCM, in coordination with the Secretariat and through communication with the vessel master as appropriate, will endeavour to re-establish normal automatic reception of VMS positions. If such efforts reveal that the vessel is successfully reporting to the flag State CCM's VMS or a sub-regional VMS (indicating that the vessel's VMS hardware is functional), the Secretariat, in coordination with the flag State CCM will take additional steps to re-establish automatic reporting to the Commission VMS.

³ Exceptional circumstances includes such events as satellite malfunction unrelated to MTU/ALC and mechanical failure of fishing vessel that reduces the ability of the fishing vessel to return to port within 30 days.

WCPFC9 also agreed to a standard format for manual position reporting in the event of ALC/MTU Malfunction or Failure:

- 1 WIN
- 2 Vessel Name
- 3 Date: dd/mm/yy
- 4 Time: 24 hour format HH:MM (UTC)
- 5 Latitude – DD-MM-SS (N/S)
- 6 Longitude – DDD-MM-SS (E/W)
- 7 Activity (Fishing/Searching/Transit/Transshipping)

WCPFC10 decision (CMM 2013-01) states “Notwithstanding the VMS SSP, a purse seine vessel shall not operate under manual reporting during the FADs closure periods, but the vessel will not be directed to return to port until the Secretariat has exhausted all reasonable steps to re-establish normal automatic reporting of VMS positions in accordance with the VMS SSPs. The flag State shall be notified when VMS data is not received by the Secretariat at the interval specified in CMM 2011-02 and paragraph 36 (of CMM 2013-01). This provision is repeated in CMM 2014-01 paragraph 32.

Additional Information provided in consultation with FFA with respect to current FFA VMS reporting requirement

For vessels applying to be in Good Standing on the FFA Vessel Register, the FFA Vessel Registration requirements are in addition to any member requirements as part of the license condition and/or National legislation.

FFA VMS: ALC/MTU Reporting

- Vessels wishing to operate within the waters of FFA member countries must install and operate FFA Type Approved MTU.
- The operator of a foreign fishing vessel shall ensure that the ALC/MTU is switched on and must be reporting automatically, normally and consistently to the FFA VMS at all times during the period of validity of the FFA Vessel registration and/or fishing licence regardless of the location of the vessel..
- Default reporting rate for all vessel type excluding purse seine vessel is 4 hour (6 position report per day)
- Purse seine vessel reporting rate is 1 hour.
- Purse seine reporting rate during FAD closure period is ½ hour interval
- FFA members may have additional VMS reporting requirements as part of the license condition and/or National legislation.
- FFA members have specific data sharing arrangements between them so that VMS data for vessels on the FFA Vessel Register are visible to FFA members when they enter their EEZ regardless of whether that member actually licenses the vessel.