



Vacancy

COMPLIANCE MANAGER

Applications are invited for the professional level post of Compliance Manager at the Secretariat for the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), based in Kolonia, Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia.

The Secretariat is seeking an experienced and highly motivated professional to lead and manage its compliance programme, ensuring that monitoring, control, and surveillance (MCS) systems and compliance evaluations are credible, transparent, and effective in supporting the Commission's objectives and Member needs. The Compliance Manager will provide strategic and operational leadership in implementing the Commission's Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs), oversee the Compliance and MCS team, and support Members, Cooperating Non-Members, and Participating Territories (CCMs) in meeting their reporting and compliance obligations.

The position includes managing the annual Compliance Monitoring Scheme (CMS), translating monitoring data into strategic analysis to inform Member decisions, anticipating emerging compliance challenges, and ensuring the integrity and interoperability of compliance-related data and systems. The Compliance Manager will oversee compliance-related IT systems, lead initiatives to streamline processes, and assist in strengthening Members' reporting and compliance capabilities.

The role reports directly to the Executive Director and forms part of the Secretariat's senior leadership team. The Compliance Manager will work closely with senior staff to ensure integration across the Secretariat, coordinate with regional and international partners—including SPC, FFA, PNA, and other tuna RFMOs—and provide technical and policy advice to the Technical and Compliance Committee (TCC) in support of Commission decision-making.

The Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) was established following the entry into force, in June 2004, of the Convention on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean. The Commission currently has 27 Members, seven Participating Territories, and eight Cooperating Non-Members. Additional information is available at www.wcpfc.int.

Applicants should have a tertiary or advanced degree in fisheries management, marine policy, natural resource management, or a related field, with extensive experience in fisheries compliance, MCS, or international fisheries management. Demonstrated leadership and supervisory experience, as well as strong knowledge of the WCPFC's CMMs, Compliance Monitoring Scheme, and the fisheries interests of CCMs, are required. Applicants should also possess excellent analytical, communication, and stakeholder engagement skills, and the ability to work diplomatically and impartially across a diverse range of stakeholders.

The Terms of Reference (TOR) for the position can be found at <https://www.wcpfc.int/vacancies-opportunities>. Applications should include a cover letter, resume and contact details of three referees, and be submitted by email to Mr Aaron Nighswander, Finance and Administration Manager, at Aaron.Nighswander@wcpfc.int by **17 December 2025**.

For related information and queries visit our website at www.wcpfc.int. The successful applicant will be expected to take up the position in February 2026.



DUTY STATEMENT | COMPLIANCE MANAGER (CM)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Role purpose

Lead and manage the Secretariat's compliance programme to ensure that monitoring, control, and surveillance (MCS) systems and compliance evaluations are credible, transparent, and effective in supporting the Commission's objectives and Member needs. The role provides strategic and operational leadership in implementing the Commission's conservation and management measures (CMMs), and in monitoring and promoting compliance in accordance with the WCPFC Convention and Commission decisions.

The Compliance Manager ensures the effective integration of technical and operational MCS functions—including the Vessel Monitoring System, Regional Observer Programme, High Seas Boarding and Inspection Scheme, and other cooperative compliance tools—so that outcomes are fair, risk-informed, and aligned with Commission priorities. The position also supports and advises the Technical and Compliance Committee (TCC) in fulfilling its mandate under Article 14 of the Convention, providing sound technical and policy advice to facilitate informed decision-making by Members on compliance, enforcement, and data verification matters.

2. Position in the organization

The Compliance Manager reports directly to the Executive Director and is part of the Secretariat's senior leadership team. The position oversees a multidisciplinary team of technical and operational specialists, working through a Deputy Compliance Manager and a Fisheries Management and Compliance Adviser to ensure coordinated and effective delivery of the compliance programme. As a member of the senior leadership group alongside the heads of science, ICT, and corporate and operations, the Compliance Manager contributes to the collective management of the Secretariat, fostering collaboration and strategic alignment across all programme areas.

3. Key functions & responsibilities

The Compliance Manager leads and manages the Secretariat's work on monitoring, control, and surveillance (MCS), compliance, and enforcement in support of the Commission's objectives under the WCPFC Convention. The role provides high-level technical, analytical, and policy support to the Technical and Compliance Committee (TCC) and the Commission,

ensuring that conservation and management measures (CMMs) are implemented effectively, transparently, and fairly across Members, Cooperating Non-Members, and Participating Territories (CCMs).

A. Program leadership (coordination & management)

- Plan and oversee Secretariat delivery of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) outputs, including MCS and data collection activities, budgets, and timelines approved by the Commission.
- Coordinate monitoring and data collection programs (e.g., VMS, ER/EM, transshipment, HSBI/port State information flows), ensuring data integrity, confidentiality, and interoperability, including through the Commission's information management system, online reporting tools, and electronic reporting systems.
- Maintain simple, documented SOPs for core processes (alerts, triage, investigation, Member notifications, case closure, learning).
- Serve as the Secretariat's lead support to the Commission's Technical and Compliance Committee (TCC).
- Liaise and facilitate coordination with the WCPFC Scientific Services Provider on data collection activities and with the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency in the provision of vessel monitoring system (VMS) data through the WCPFC Pacific VMS.

B. Compliance Monitoring Scheme (CMS) administration

- Manage the annual CMS cycle end-to-end: guidance to Members, intake/validation, Secretariat papers, meeting support, and follow-up tracking.
- Ensure the CMS is risk-aware, consistent, and transparent; propose Member-led improvements (e.g., clearer definitions, reduced duplication), while respecting Commission direction.

C. Evidence-led strategy, future planning, and simplification

- Turn monitoring data into strategic briefs that inform Members' discussions on options, trade-offs, and impacts.
- Anticipate emerging challenges (ER/EM scale-up and interoperability, high-seas transshipment transparency, climate-driven shifts, BBNJ interfaces, evolving IUU tactics) and engage with Members on feasible options to ensure Member preparedness and risk-focused responses.
- Evaluate and communicate compliance results to support CMM development and/or revision to improve clarity, enforceability, and fairness.
- Consistent with Commission direction, identify duplicative or low-value reporting, quantify burden/benefit, and present streamlining options that maintain data integrity and confidence where risk is considered by Members to be higher.
- For any proposal, include implementation readiness: roles, required data fields, validation rules, confidentiality, and usability considerations.

D. Member support & capacity

- Offer targeted assistance informed by common inconsistencies and reporting challenges.
- Promote approaches that reduce burden and strengthen quality reporting.

E. Partnerships & alignment

- Work closely with SPC, FFA, PNA, other tuna RFMOs, and port/flag Members to align indicators, identifiers, and evidence standards that support Member deliberations.
- Coordinate with the Scientific Committee on indicators/thresholds where compliance intersects with management outcomes.

F. Product ownership of compliance IT systems (guidance, not coding)

- Act as business owner for compliance-related IT and databases (e.g., CMS platforms, data intake/validation, case management, dashboards).
- Lead requirements gathering with Members and users; define success criteria for ease of use, accessibility, data quality, and fit-for-purpose outputs.
- Set priorities and acceptance criteria; oversee vendor/internal developer delivery; ensure systems reflect Commission decisions and Member expectations.
- Ensure sound data governance (security, confidentiality, audit trails, permissions) and interoperability (IDs, schemas, APIs) across systems.

4. Qualifications & experience

- **Education:** An advanced university degree in fisheries management, marine policy, natural resource management, or a closely related field is required. Equivalent qualifications in public administration, environmental law, or international relations with substantial experience in fisheries governance may also be considered. Academic grounding should provide a solid understanding of fisheries monitoring, control, and surveillance (MCS) systems, regional fisheries management organization (RFMO) structures, and the principles of compliance and enforcement under international law.
- **Proven program/project leader:** The Compliance Manager must have at least five to ten years of demonstrated experience managing complex, multi-stakeholder programmes or projects from planning through implementation and evaluation. This includes leading multiple, concurrent work streams within constrained timelines and budgets. The role demands strong organizational and analytical skills to ensure high-quality, timely, and coordinated Secretariat outputs that support Commission decision-making.
- **Stakeholder & Member management:** The position requires exceptional diplomatic and communication skills to engage constructively with Members, Cooperating Non-Members, and Participating Territories (CCMs), as well as regional and international partners. The Compliance Manager must be able to balance differing priorities, expectations, and capacities while maintaining the Secretariat's neutrality. Success in

this competency is demonstrated by the ability to build consensus, promote cooperative problem-solving, and develop shared understanding of practical and risk-informed compliance solutions.

- **Execution oversight:** A proven ability to oversee delivery against plans, manage risks and issues, and ensure accountability within clear procedural frameworks is essential. The Compliance Manager must be capable of establishing and enforcing standard operating procedures (SOPs), monitoring progress through data-driven metrics, and adapting course when necessary to ensure that programme outcomes are met. This competency reflects a disciplined approach to implementation, combining attention to detail with a strong sense of strategic direction.
- **Planning & adaptability:** The Compliance Manager must be able to develop realistic, outcome-oriented workplans and adjust priorities dynamically in response to evolving Commission directions, Member feedback, and external developments. This includes anticipating emerging compliance challenges, reallocating resources efficiently, and maintaining programme momentum despite shifting conditions. A balance of foresight and flexibility is key to sustaining Secretariat performance and responsiveness.

Team leadership: The role requires experience in leading multidisciplinary teams of technical and operational experts, including specialists in MCS, data analysis, ICT, and fisheries policy. The Compliance Manager is expected to set professional standards, mentor and develop staff, and integrate diverse work streams into coherent and policy-relevant outputs. Effective team leadership also includes promoting a culture of collaboration, accountability, and continuous improvement within the compliance division.

- **Technical literacy (oversight level):** The Compliance Manager should possess sufficient understanding of MCS tools and IT/database systems to provide informed oversight, define technical requirements, evaluate system performance, and guide subject matter experts. This includes familiarity with tools such as vessel monitoring systems (VMS), electronic reporting and monitoring systems (ER/EM), data validation platforms, and the Compliance Monitoring Scheme (CMS) platform. While not responsible for direct software development, the Compliance Manager must be able to communicate effectively with ICT professionals and external vendors to ensure that compliance-related systems are functional, secure, and aligned with Commission decisions.

5. Core competencies

- **Strategic thinking:** The Compliance Manager demonstrates the ability to think beyond immediate operational demands, connecting daily work to the broader objectives of the

Commission and the Convention. This involves anticipating emerging compliance and MCS challenges, interpreting complex policy and data contexts, and shaping Secretariat inputs that help Members consider long-term impacts, trade-offs, and implementation feasibility. Strategic thinking in this role means aligning Secretariat outputs with the Commission's priorities while maintaining awareness of regional dynamics, Member capacities, and the evolving global fisheries governance environment.

- **Outcome orientation:** The Compliance Manager focuses on delivering tangible, high-quality results that advance the Commission's goals, ensuring that processes remain practical, efficient, and fit for purpose. Outcome orientation combines disciplined execution with flexibility while maintaining focus on measurable deliverables such as timely delivery of meeting papers, accurate data analysis, and improved Member understanding. The role requires persistence in meeting deadlines and the ability to simplify complexity without losing technical accuracy, ensuring that Secretariat work produces credible and actionable outputs for Members.
- **Technical product leadership:** This competency reflects the ability to act as a business owner and steward for compliance-related information systems and digital tools, without direct programming responsibilities. It involves translating policy and user needs into technical requirements, guiding developers and vendors, and setting standards for usability, reliability, and interoperability. Technical product leadership ensures that systems like the Compliance Monitoring Scheme platform, data validation tools, and compliance dashboards are well-governed, secure, and aligned with Commission decisions, thereby strengthening transparency and trust in Secretariat processes.
- **Data literacy:** The role requires fluency in understanding, interpreting, and communicating data-driven insights. Data literacy enables the Compliance Manager to evaluate the completeness and accuracy of MCS and compliance datasets, identify trends or anomalies, and ensure analytical outputs are transparent and defensible. It also includes the ability to translate complex datasets into clear narratives that inform Members' discussions and decisions. This competency supports the integrity of evidence-based policy advice, ensuring that Secretariat analyses are both technically sound and accessible to non-specialist audiences.
- **Diplomacy & neutrality:** The Compliance Manager embodies the Secretariat's impartial role, maintaining professionalism and balance in all interactions with Members, subsidiary bodies, and partners. Diplomacy involves communicating sensitive or complex information in a constructive and culturally aware manner, fostering collaboration even amid differing Member perspectives. Neutrality requires strict adherence to fact-based analysis and even-handed treatment of all Members, ensuring that Secretariat advice

and actions are perceived as fair, transparent, and aligned with the Commission's collective interests as reflected in the Convention, Commission decisions, and conservation and management measures.

6. Working relationships

The Compliance Manager maintains strong and collaborative relationships across the Secretariat and with external partners to ensure the effective delivery of the Commission's compliance and monitoring functions. The role requires balancing technical leadership, strategic communication, and diplomacy in engaging with a diverse range of stakeholders at both operational and policy levels.

Internal relationships

Within the Secretariat, the Compliance Manager reports directly to the Executive Director and works as part of the senior leadership team alongside peers responsible for Science, ICT, and Corporate/Operations. Close coordination with program, IT, and data management staff is essential to ensure that monitoring, control, and surveillance (MCS) activities, compliance systems, and analytical outputs are integrated, accurate, and aligned with Commission priorities. The Compliance Manager collaborates with corporate services on budgeting, procurement, and human resource planning to ensure that compliance programme objectives are supported by adequate and sustainable resources.

External relationships

Externally, the Compliance Manager serves as one of the Secretariat's key liaison points with the Commission Chair and Vice-Chair, the Chairs of the Technical and Compliance Committee (TCC) and Scientific Committee (SC), and Member delegates. The role requires continuous engagement with regional organizations, particularly the Pacific Community's Oceanic Fisheries Programme (SPC-OFP), the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), and the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA), to ensure alignment and interoperability of monitoring and compliance systems. The Compliance Manager also interacts with other tuna Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) to share best practices and strengthen cross-regional cooperation on compliance matters.

Engagement with port and flag State authorities, observers, and relevant industry representatives is conducted as appropriate, to promote transparency, consistency, and practical implementation of the Commission's conservation and management measures (CMMs).

7. Practicalities

Duty station and travel

The Compliance Manager position is based at the headquarters of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) in Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia. The role requires regular participation in meetings of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies, including the Technical and Compliance Committee (TCC), the Scientific Committee (SC), and other intersessional meetings, as well as travel to regional partner engagements and relevant international events. Travel obligations may include coordination missions, capacity-building workshops, and interagency consultations with organizations such as the Pacific Community (SPC), the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), and other tuna RFMOs. Travel frequency varies annually, depending on the Commission calendar and the scope of compliance work, but is integral to maintaining effective regional and global cooperation.

Contract and performance

The position is offered as a fixed-term appointment consistent with the employment framework of the WCPFC Secretariat. Contract renewal is subject to the continuing needs of the organization, satisfactory performance, and funding availability. The Compliance Manager's annual performance is formally reviewed by the Executive Director against agreed deliverables and competency indicators, including leadership effectiveness, programme delivery, stakeholder engagement, and adherence to Secretariat values. The role demands a high degree of accountability, adaptability, and sustained professional development to ensure that Secretariat compliance functions remain relevant, efficient, and aligned with Commission priorities.