



THE VMS-SMALL WORKING GROUP TO ADDRESS THE VMS DATA GAP AND TO IMPROVE THE NUMBER OF VESSELS REPORTING TO THE COMMISSION VMS

Submission by the WCPFC Secretariat

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Introduction

1. In response to CCMs concerns and issues raised at TCC15 regarding the efficiency of the Commission VMS, the Commission at WCPFC16 agreed to establish the VMS-Small Working Group (VMS-SWG) to address the VMS data gap and to improve the number of vessels reporting to the Commission VMS for consideration by TCC16 (TCC15 Summary Report paragraph 211). The Commission also agreed that the SWG would be co-Chaired by Australia (Mr Viv Fernandes) and the United States (Mr Terry Boone).
2. This paper has been prepared by the Secretariat to provide members of the VMS-SWG with an overview of the background to the Commission VMS and the current status of associated IT tools for CCMs use when accessing or viewing WCPFC VMS data. The paper also documents the Secretariat current work activities to address the VMS data gap with the objective to improve the number of vessels reporting to the Commission VMS.

Overview Background to the Commission VMS

3. As a standing and mandatory requirement in the WCPO, 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. There are around 3,700 vessels that are considered activated to report to the Commission VMS. Since 2009 the Commission has had an association with the FFA and the Pacific VMS to receive Commission VMS services. The Pacific VMS ensured the FFA VMS and Commission VMS operate as two separate and distinct entities to protect the integrity of the WCPFC VMS data. The approved structure of the Commission VMS system allows vessels to report to the WCPFC through two ways: directly to the Commission VMS, or to the WCPFC through the FFA VMS. In 2020, the Commissions core budget includes funding for the Commission VMS in the order of \$470.046.
4. Article 24(8) of the Convention obliges each Member of the Commission to require its fishing vessels that fish for highly migratory stocks on the high seas of the Convention Area to use an ALC/MTU which meets agreed WCPFC Standards, Specifications and Procedures, while in these areas. To implement this requirement, the Commission has adopted [CMM 2014-02 Conservation and Management Measure for the Commission Vessel Monitoring System](#), a set of [Standards, Specifications and](#)

[Procedures \(SSPs\)](#) which were initially approved in 2008 (WCPFC5) and that were most recently modified in 2019 (WCPFC15), and an updated set of [Standard Operating Procedures \(SOPs\)](#) were approved in 2018 (WCPFC15).

5. Additionally, in 2012 (WCPFC9) the Commission adopted a [Statement of Purpose and Principles for the Commission VMS](#). The stated purpose of the Commission VMS is:
“to cost-effectively monitor the activities of fishing vessels authorized by flag States to fish for highly migratory fish species in the Convention Area in areas beyond jurisdiction of the Flag State. Data collected by the Commission VMS will be securely stored and used by the Commission and its Members, Cooperating Non-Members, and Participating Territories (CCMs) to achieve compliance with Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs), fisheries scientific analysis and sound fisheries management decision-making in the Convention Area.”
6. The Commission VMS primarily covers high seas waters of the Convention Area. WCPFC9 agreed to a decision related to the application of the Commission VMS solely to waters under the jurisdiction of Members and to complement and support Members’ national VMS. Since the “Flick the Switch” proposal was approved at WCPFC9 eleven CCMs - have provided letters of notification for the Commission VMS to cover their EEZ. A list can be found at <https://www.wcpfc.int/vessel-monitoring-system>

Accessing the WCPFC VMS Data or Related Reports

7. The main way for authorized CCM users to access WCPFC VMS data is by logging into the WCPFC Trackwell VMS system. The WCPFC also arranges for the WCPFC Trackwell VMS system to regularly send to specified email address/es txt files containing the WCPFC VMS data that they are permitted to view in Trackwell. The Secretariat and at least one CCM uses *Application Programming Interface* (API) to source WCPFC VMS data from WCPFC Trackwell VMS system.
8. Flag CCMs have access to their flagged vessels through WCPFC Trackwell VMS. In addition, Authorised MCS entities of other CCMs may request to access certain WCPFC VMS data through non-public domain data requests pursuant to paragraphs 19 -25 of the *2009 Rules and Procedures for the Protection, Access to, and Dissemination of High Seas Non-Public Domain Data and Information Compiled by the Commission for the Purpose of Monitoring, Control or Surveillance (MCS) Activities and the Access to and Dissemination of High Seas VMS Data for Scientific Purposes* (Data RaP 2009). The WCPFC also provides certain reports that are accessible by all authorized CCM users through the CCM portal on the WCPFC website. **Table 1** (next page) provides a summary of the key features of these tools.

Table 1: Tools that WCPFC presently provides to CCMs to access WCPFC VMS data

| WCPFC VMS data | WCPFC Trackwell VMS system ¹ https://wcpfc.trackwell.com/ | WCPFC Website online tools |
|--|--|--|
| Access by Authorised MCS entities of all CCMs | Authorised MCS entities of Members with an approved WCPFC non-public domain data request for an MCS activity (Data RaP 2009 ²) may view relevant WCPFC VMS data through their WCPFC Trackwell login. | VMS reporting status solution https://www.wcpfc.int/ccm/wcpfc-vms-report as per WCPFC12 decision EHSP-SMA Live List https://www.wcpfc.int/eastern-high-seas-pocket as per CMM 2016-02 para 5 |
| Access by Flag CCMs only | Authorised MCS entities of CCMs can view through their WCPFC Trackwell login the relevant data for their flagged vessels throughout waters covered by the Commission VMS | |
| Access by Coastal CCMs only | Authorised MCS entities of CCMs may request as a WCPFC non-public domain data request (Data RaP 2009) to view on an ongoing basis through their WCPFC Trackwell login the relevant data for all vessels reporting to the Commission VMS in the 100nm high seas buffer around their EEZ/s. As per WCPFC9 decision authorised MCS entities of CCMs may <u>request coverage by the Commission VMS of their national waters</u> under Article 24(8) decision, and once enabled can view through their WCPFC Trackwell login the relevant data for all vessels reporting to the Commission VMS when within their EEZ/s | |

VMS Transmission Report for flag CCMs (WCPFC14 Task)

9. A VMS reporting status solution is presently live and available to all authorized users of CCMs at this link: <https://www.wcpfc.int/ccm/wcpfc-vms-report>.
10. In 2018 the Secretariat was tasked by WCPFC14 to deliver in a web-based exportable matrix additional functionality in its "Commission VMS reporting status tool" and provides CCMs with each of their vessel's daily VMS-reporting status (how many position reports are transmitted by each vessel on each date) and determine and display a generic vessel status ("in port" or "at sea", for example).

¹ Some CCMs have requested that WCPFC arrange for WCPFC Trackwell VMS system to regularly send to specified email address/es txt files containing the WCPFC VMS data that they are permitted to view in Trackwell. The Secretariat and at least one CCM uses APIs to source WCPFC VMS data from WCPFC Trackwell VMS system.

² 2009 Rules and Procedures for the Protection, Access to, and Dissemination of High Seas Non-Public Domain Data and Information Compiled by the Commission for the Purpose of Monitoring, Control or Surveillance (MCS) Activities and the Access to and Dissemination of High Seas VMS Data for Scientific Purposes (Data RaP 2009)

11. Since 2018 the Secretariat has, as a preliminary response to the WCPFC14 task, manually generated MS Excel files as monthly reports that are periodically posted through each CCMs portal on the WCPFC website. These annual summary information from these monthly files has been a source of information that is used by the Technical and Compliance Committee when considering the draft Compliance Monitoring Report. The Secretariat had also advised TCC participants annually that work to develop an automated solution for the WCPFC14 task was in progress.
12. By the end of March 2020, the Secretariat expects to complete the delivery for all flag CCMs of an automated solution in response to the WCPFC14 task, as a VMS transmission report. The VMS transmission report will be delivered to relevant CCMs through their CCM portal, and will provide CCMs with a daily snap-shot of whether each vessel on the Record of Fishing Vessels is expected to be meeting its Commission VMS requirements through the FFA VMS (based on FFA Good Standing List) or if not whether WCPFC has completed the necessary steps to activate the vessels MTU to report to the Commission VMS, and if so provide a generic vessel status for each of their vessels and a daily VMS-reporting status (how many position reports are transmitted by each vessel each day for the past 14 days). The report is automatically updated once a day for each of their vessels on the Record of Fishing Vessels, and CCMs will be able to export the 14-day report. CCMs will be advised by Circular once this is available on the WCPFC website.
13. The automated VMS transmission report involved collaborative work over an extended period of time and required the development of new WCPFC IT infrastructure to support its delivery as an automated solution. The development was led by the Secretariat with support from WCPFC IT contractors, Eighty Options and Taz-E. The Secretariat is also grateful to the FFA Secretariat and to WCPFC Trackwell for their assistance in working with the WCPFC to establish *Application Programming Interface* (API) that allow FFA Good Standing data and other WCPFC VMS data-related APIs, to be available for the new automated solution.

Current Activities of the Secretariat to Address the VMS Data Gap and Improving the Number of Vessels Reporting to the Commission VMS

14. The Secretariat has several responsibilities under the VMS SSPs that are relevant to the mandate of the VMS-SWG. The succeeding paragraphs will provide overviews of the approaches taken by the Secretariat WCPFC VMS team in implementing those responsibilities and outlining any current issues. Those responsibilities may be categorized as follows:
 - i. Administer the WCPFC Approved MTU/ALC list (VMS SSPs Section 7.3.7)
 - ii. Administer SLAs and contracts (VMS SSPs Section 7.3.3)
 - iii. Administer the MTU Register (VMS SSPs Section 2.8)
 - iv. Monitoring vessel reporting and identifying MTUs that are not-reporting (VMS SSPs Section 5)
 - v. Other issues

i) Administer the WCPFC Approved MTU/ALC list (VMS SSPs Section 7.3.7)

15. The Secretariat administers the list of WCPFC Approved MTU/ALCs, and this is publicly published at <https://www.wcpfc.int/doc/wcpfc-approved-list-current>
16. At the date of this paper, the revisions approved by the Commission in December 2018 to Section 2.7 of the SSPs, that allow for intersessional approval of new MTU/ALCs have been implemented for just over twelve months. To date, two MTU/ALCs have been considered through the new approval process:
- The SKYMATE m1600 MTU/ALC was included on the WCPFC Approved MTU List effective 11 September 2019 (WCPFC Circular 2019/44); and
 - The SRT VMS-100 MTU/ALC's inclusion on the WCPFC Approved MTU List was deferred and will be considered at TCC16 (WCPFC Circular 2020/11).

Current issues

17. There are two current issues related to the administering of the WCPFC Approved MTU/ALC list. Firstly, the Secretariat continues to monitor and provide annual updates to TCC on the phase-out by 1 January 2023 of certain Argos MTU/ALC units (FVT, MAR GE, MAR GE V2, and MAR GE V3) (WCPFC14 Summary Report paragraph 424). Secondly, due to delays in WCPFC Trackwell in receiving necessary technical information from the MTU/ALC manufacturer, a VMS Gateway is still in the progress of being developed between ORBCOMM/Skywave for ORBCOMM ST6100 and Skywave IDP-690 services.

ii) Administer Service Level Agreements (SLA) and Contracts (VMS SSPs Section 7.3.3)

18. There are several agreements and contracts that the Secretariat maintains to facilitate the necessary arrangements for the Commission VMS. The agreements and contracts for the Commission VMS services may be grouped as follows:

a) Service Level Agreement with FFA

Paragraph 7.3.3 of the SSPs requires, in part, the Secretariat to develop and manage a SLA with the FFA for provision of VMS services. This SLA was signed by the Secretariats of the WCPFC and FFA in early December 2008, and the Commission VMS became operational in April 2009. VMS service is provided through the SLA with FFA and since 30 June 2016, the service provider has been TrackWell.

b) Contracts with Mobile Communications Service Providers

Paragraph 7.3.5 of the SSPs requires the WCPFC Secretariat to enter into, and to maintain, direct contracts with mobile communications service providers for the provision of position (and other) data from the MTUs/ALCs that are activated to report directly to the Commission VMS. For this purpose, the WCPFC Secretariat has contracts with:

- SpeedCast (formerly Satcomms Australia) – for Inmarsat C, D+ and Faria watchdog Iridium services;
- Collecte Localisation Satellites (CLS) – for Argos and Halios/Iridium services; and
- Vizada – an operational agreement for Inmarsat C DNID management.

Current issues

19. There are two current issues related to administering of contracts with Mobile Communication Service Providers. Firstly, although VMS Gateways are established with WCPFC Trackwell, to date the Secretariat has not established Contracts with the following four Mobile Communications Service Providers:

- MetOcean – for iTrac10101B (I Trac II) services;
- Rom Communications – for RomTrax Wifi services;
- SASCO – for BB3 and BB5 services; and
- SkyMate Inc. – for SkyMate I1500 and m1600 services.

This means technically that VMS transmissions can be received by WCPFC Trackwell, but the Secretariat presently does not have an arrangement to be charged for VMS airtime services from the relevant WCPFC Approved MTU/ALCs. To date any relevant charges for VMS activation and airtime from these MTU/ALCs have been covered by the relevant flag CCMs.

20. Secondly, on 2 March 2020, CCMs were advised of a technical issue between Collecte Localisation Satellites (CLS) and WCPFC Trackwell with the Gateway for Halios/Iridium services. This technical issue occurred on 12 February 2020, and prevented LEO, Thorium TST-100, CLS TRITON and CLS TRITON ADV MTU/ALCs from transmitting positions to the Commission VMS. (WCPFC Circular 2020/12) At the date of this paper the issue was still being worked on by CLS and WCPFC Trackwell.

iii) Administer the MTU Register (VMS SSPs Section 2.8)

21. Since June 2016 the Service Provider for the Commission VMS, through an SLA with FFA, has been TrackWell. As part of the specifications for the Commission VMS, the Secretariat stipulated that MTU activation would be administered by WCPFC and the WCPFC Trackwell System was required to source from WCPFC databases, relevant data from the Record of Fishing Vessels data and data from the MTU Register (MTU details including unique network identifiers for WCPFC-activated vessels) that are necessary for the Commission VMS.³

22. The Secretariat has for some time had a guideline Vessel Tracking Agreement Form (VTAF) to enable activation and automatic tracking of the vessel through the Commission VMS, by facilitating the submission of necessary vessel tracking data for each fishing vessel required to report to the Commission VMS. The Secretariat has also developed an internal MTU Update workflow process that is used by the WCPFC VMS staff to support their administering and maintenance of the WCPFC MTU Register. The use of a shared VMS team email address VMShelpdesk@wcpfc.int has assisted the Secretariat with ensuring the management of the workflow for MTU update requests. The WCPFC's MTU workflow process includes checks of the FFA Good Standing List by VMS staff: -

- a. If the vessel does not have Good Standing status with FFA at the time of the MTU update, and the next steps include MTU activation procedures based on the specific MTU, with a view to facilitating the vessel's MTU to be activated to report to the Commission VMS; and

³ In the Commission VMS services through Polestar, the Vessel Details from the Record of Fishing Vessels and MTU activation details from the Secretariat's MTU Register needed to be manually entered and maintained by the WCPFC VMS staff in the VMS software.

- b. If a vessel does have Good Standing with FFA at the time of the MTU update, WCPFC expects that the vessel will meet its Commission VMS requirements through the FFA VMS, and so the MTU update is filed in the MTU Register with a note that it is FFA-Active (WCPFC does not activate the MTU to report directly to WCPFC).

Current issues

23. There is one current issue related to the administering of the MTU Register. The Secretariat has recently noticed occasional VMS reporting anomalies whereby Inmarsat C MTUs may have been incorrectly matched to vessels within the Commission VMS. In February 2020, WCPFC Trackwell has been requested to i) increase the frequency of updates between WCPFC databases to greater than once per day, and ii) ensure that MTU Register data is being correctly interpreted by Trackwell in the Commission VMS, particularly for Inmarsat C MTUs. Additional updates on progress to address these issues will be provided in due course.

iv) Monitoring vessel reporting and identifying MTUs that are not-reporting (VMS SSPs Section 5)

24. There can be different reasons as to why a WCPFC Vessel is not reporting to the Commission VMS. The Secretariat continues to make best efforts to work through the various sets of circumstances and to resolve any technical issues based on four scenarios:

Scenario 1) Vessels where there is no active record in the MTU register and they do not have FFA Good Standing status

25. This is a straightforward issue, and the Secretariat simply requests that the Flag CCM provides the latest VTAF if the vessel is fishing or intends to fish in the Convention Area beyond the jurisdiction of the flag CCM. The current MSEXcel monthly report that are periodically posted by the Secretariat to the WCPFC website CCM portals, does advise Flag CCMs of their VTAF gaps for their vessels. The VMS reporting status solution available to all authorized CCMs users through the WCPFC website (as per WCPFC12 decision), does presently provide an indication of VTAF gaps (Active VTAF with WCPFC= YES).

Scenario 2) Vessels that have FFA Good Standing status but appear to have stopped reporting on Commission VMS

26. Vessels that have FFA Good Standing status are expected to be meeting WCPFC requirements by reporting to the Commission VMS through the FFA VMS. The FFA Secretariat through their administration of the FFA Regional Register is responsible for the activation of the MTU to report to the FFA VMS. As such the WCPFC Secretariat is not involved in the MTU activation process for vessels that are expected to be reporting to the Commission VMS through the FFA VMS. When the Secretariat receives information that a vessel that is in FFA Good Standing is alleged to not be correctly reporting to the Commission VMS, the Secretariat will redirect the relevant query to the FFA Secretariat.

Scenario 3) Vessels that have recently lost FFA Good Standing status and MTU activation to report to WCPFC is needed

27. The Secretariat undertakes manual checks of the FFA Good standing lists each time a Flag CCM provides an MTU update request. Up until recently, identifying a vessel that has recently lost FFA Good Standing status relied on Flag CCMs sending a VTAF to Commission VMS team that initiates the processing of an MTU update request. The Secretariat has also undertaken on an *ad hoc* basis, comparisons of FFA Good standing lists and the MTU register, and then followed up with Flag CCMs for any potential VTAF gaps. The current MSEXcel monthly reports that are periodically posted by the Secretariat to the WCPFC website CCM portals, does advise Flag CCMs of their VTAF gaps for their vessels which would consider vessels that have recently lost FFA Good Standing status. The VMS reporting status solution available to all authorized CCMs users through the WCPFC website (as per WCPFC12 decision), does presently provide an indication of VTAF gaps (Active VTAF with WCPFC= YES).

Scenario 4) Vessels with an active record in the MTU register but the vessel appears to have stopped reporting on Commission VMS

28. This is the more complex of the scenarios for Commission VMS reporting, and once this issue is identified by the Secretariat it involves trouble shooting by the Commission VMS team to identify the circumstances that led to non-reporting to Commission VMS, so that where needed, the necessary interventions can be made by the Secretariat and as appropriate in consultation with the flag CCM, to resume the vessels regular reporting to the Commission VMS.

29. The trouble shooting includes following steps:

- I. Check whether the vessel has FFA Good Standing Status?
 - If the vessel does, then the procedures at *Scenario 2)* are followed.
 - If not, the Secretariat will proceed to step II below.
- II. Check the recent VMS tracks and/or VMS transmission report for the vessel to ascertain whether the vessel:
 - Is presently transmitting to the Commission VMS, but the vessel is in an area that is not covered by the Commission VMS (this maybe waters outside the Convention Area or within the Convention Area but in an EEZ not covered by the Commission VMS); and/or
 - Appears to be in a Port and the vessel may have powered down the MTU.If it is one or other of these circumstances, the alleged non-reporting to the Commission VMS can be explained. If not, then proceed to step III below.
- III. Recheck the MTU activation for the vessel and explore if any technical interventions by the Secretariat can rectify the alleged non-reporting eg recheck that there wasn't a data entry error when completing the MTU update request, issue a manual polling command, and check with the relevant service provider of a technical issue that may affect the proper transmission

of data between the service provider and Trackwell. If regular reporting to Commission VMS is not restored, proceed to step **IV** below.

- IV.** Advise the Flag CCM and request that they resubmit the latest VTAF for the vessel. If the details match the current MTU register, the Flag CCM should be requested to submit an alternate VTAF for the vessel so as to complete VMS activation for the vessel. If all options to resume Commission VMS reporting fail, proceed to step **V** below.
- V.** Request that the Flag CCM put the vessel on manual position reporting until regular Commission VMS reporting is resumed. As per VMS SSPs 5.4 – 5.5, the flag CCM may decide not to require this because the vessel is reporting to its national VMS.

Current issues

30. There are a couple of issues related to monitoring vessel reporting to the Commission VMS. Firstly, the VMS reporting status solution that is provided to all authorized CCMs users through the WCPFC website (as per WCPFC12 decision) only provides an indication of whether WCPFC has an active VTAF record for a vessel (WCPFC=ACTIVE) and if the vessel is expected to be fulfilling its WCPFC reporting requirements though the FFA VMS (FFA Activation Party=YES). Currently this website solution does not provide more detailed information on VMS reporting status for the vessel. Secondly, the current MSEXcel monthly report that are manually generated by the Secretariat and periodically posted by the Secretariat to the WCPFC website CCM portals is not sufficiently frequent, to reliably provide a mechanism for flag CCMs to be informed so that they can actively address their VTAF gaps or VMS reporting issues. Finally, logging into WCPFC Trackwell VMS system has been noted by flag CCMs to be a cumbersome option for checking the Commission VMS reporting status of their flagged vessels.
31. The Secretariat expects that the new automated VMS Transmission Report that will soon be delivered to all Flag CCMs through the WCPFC website CCM portals, will provide a more current and user-friendly way for Flag CCMs to check whether their vessels with an active VTAF with WCPFC is duly reporting to the Commission VMS. In addition, through the new IT infrastructure developed to support the generation of the VMS Transmission report, the Secretariat is now better positioned on a routine basis to identify non-reporting (eg all vessels VMS Transmission Report with a status of STOP). The Secretariat plans to formalize an internal workflow that will ensure the list of vessels that are identified in the automated VMS Transmission Report with status of “STOP” are checked by the VMS team on a near-daily basis and where necessary take steps to follow-up and communicate with the concerned flag CCM so as to facilitate the resumption of regular reporting by the vessel to the Commission VMS.

v) Other issues

32. There are four additional issues that the Secretariat would like to highlight in this paper for consideration by the VMS-SWG. The issues are explained in the succeeding paragraphs.

a. Responding to AIS-based queries about VMS reporting by vessels

33. The Secretariat regularly receives queries during MCS Operations that request updates on Commission VMS reporting status for vessels based on Automatic Identification System (AIS). The issue is that presently the Secretariat does not have access to AIS-data, so is not able to advise which vessel is associated with a specific AIS identifier or terminal ID. Secondly, the Secretariat understands that name and call sign of vessels as recorded in the AIS system may not be a reliable source for identifying a vessel. The Secretariat makes best efforts to respond to such queries based on Record of Fishing Vessel names/call sign matches, but this does not seem to meet some CCMs expectations. The Secretariat requests that this is further considered through the VMS-SWG.

b. Expectations related to VMS review in the Compliance Monitoring Reporting

34. Some CCMs have indicated some discomfort with using 12 monthly MExcel monthly reports that are manually generated by the Secretariat, as a basis of TCC's consideration of the draft Compliance Monitoring Report. The Secretariat requests that this is further considered through the VMS-SWG and further guidance is provided to the Secretariat.

c. Using VMS to monitor high seas transshipment activities covered by CMM 2009-06 when this occurs outside the Convention Area

35. Currently, in accordance with the CMM 2009-06 *Regulation of Transshipment*, if vessels are transshipping outside the WCPF Convention Area, and some catches were taken from within the WCPF Convention Area including the overlap area with IATTC, then the vessels are expected to report to the Commission.

36. Presently the Commission VMS has rules in place that stem from a TCC8 decision to require a reduced polling rate for WCPFC vessels reporting outside the Convention Area. The way this is currently implemented in practice, for Inmarsat MTUs a reduce polling command is applied in a buffer around the WCPF Convention Area. However, for other types of MTUs or vessels reporting through the FFA VMS, there are quarantine rules applied that prevent the Secretariat from being able to view VMS positions outside the WCPF Convention Area. The Secretariat requests that this is further considered through the VMS-SWG

d. MTU audits – VMS SSPs section 2 Methods to ensure ALCs comply with WCPFC standards

37. Since 2011 a total of 1,998 vessels (including 370 temporary and now deleted vessels) have had their MTUs audited/inspected of which 1,332 vessels have been audited/inspected two or more times. In 2018 60 vessels MTUs were audited/inspected and in 2019 only 45 vessels MTUs were audited/inspected. CCMs should at least audit their flag vessels MTUs that have not been audited before this would likely improve the reporting of vessel. The Secretariat requests that this is further considered through the VMS-SWG.

Conclusion

38. The Secretariat looks forward to supporting the work of the VMS-SWG. The overview of the regulatory regime that support the operation of the Commission VMS provided in this paper hopefully provides a useful context for the work of the VMS-SWG. So as the description and explanation of the associated IT tools available to CCMs to accessing and viewing VMS data. The paper also documented the work of the Secretariat in its efforts to address the VMS data gap and enhance the efficiency of the Commission VMS by improving the number of vessels reporting to it. In that spirit, the Secretariat has also identified some pertinent issues in this paper relating to the operation of the VMS that will benefit from the expert consideration and guidance of the VMS-SWG. The Secretariat remains available to provide whatever assistance and support to the work of the VMS-SWG.
