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Commission des Thons de l'Océan Indien  
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# Reporting

*IOTC ROS SFO TR4*



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# Use of Journals

## *IOTC ROS SFO TR4.2*

Category: Reporting

*IOTC ROS SFO TR4*



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This module aims to familiarize trainees with Observer daily journal format and contents, as this will be used in their routine work.

The achieving of the standard is demonstrated by Observer capacity to:

- Commit to a daily routine of keeping a daily journal
- Determine events and activities worthy of recording



## What is a journal?

### General definition:

- A daily record of news and events of a personal nature



- As an observer, the same applies for your journal, however, it will focus on your experience onboard the vessel



All observers are expected to keep a journal with a detailed daily record of activities, events and information during their trip out at sea. The purpose of the journal is to provide both general information, and information about specific events that are not captured on the forms, or a better description than can be included on the forms. The journal is used by debriefers to verify information. As such, the journal is a very important document and record of the trip.

The journal is a freestyle document, giving observers freedom to describe the operation of the vessel and other oceanographic or social features of the trip. The journal should include personal observations and information relevant to the daily operation of the vessel, as well as more sensitive information. The journal is different from the trip report because it is a chronological record – that is, it is used to record events in a time sequence of hours and days. The trip report, on the other hand, is a summary of events under various subject headings.



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## Guidelines for a journal

1. Make an entry in the journal at least once every day
2. Entries should be readable, brief and concise
3. All pages should be marked by date
4. All entries should have a time reference
5. Each event should be separated by line spaces
6. All pages should have a page number



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While the journal is meant to be freestyle, there are some standards to follow:

### **Consistency**

You should make an entry in it **at least once every day**, from the day you board. You may also include your days travelling to the vessel if relevant. It is important to get into the habit of writing in your journal from the start, even if very little happens during the day. A daily weather report is one way of developing this habit.

### **Neatness**

Try to keep your handwriting clear and tidy – remember you are writing for someone else to read. When writing, keep your sentences clear and short to focus your descriptions on what is important. Your thought process should be logical and easy to follow for the readers of your journal. Separate your writing into subject paragraphs. Each event should be separated by line spaces into a paragraph. This makes it easier to read and find events. Use headings to identify important events. A heading is just a couple of words that describe the subject. Underline each heading and place it immediately above the start of the first paragraph about an event. Headings make it easier to find an event when reading the journal.

### **Standard Format**

To make sure that your journal is clear, you must include the following information:

- Date: The date and the day of the week;
- Time
- Page numbers



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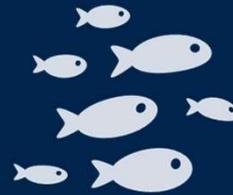
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## What should you record in your journal?

Operations / vessel activity:

- Departing port
- Steaming
- Preparation
- Fishing activity
- Transfer of goods
- Any other relevant information



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All journal entries should be made on the day they happen, and not on a later date. If more information is discovered later on, fill it in under the date that it was first discovered.



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## What should you record in your journal?

- **Incidents**
  - Make note of any incidents that occurred onboard
  - This will serve you at a later stage when you need to recall an event to your superiors or authorities
  - Be careful and concise when reporting these events
  - Be objective



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## What should you record in your journal?

### Environmental observation:

- Weather
- Seabird interactions
- Marine mammal observations
- Sea turtles observations
- Species identification
- Any other interactions



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## What should you record in your journal?

### Personal Health:

- Self-monitor
- Document when you feel unwell and when you improve



### Conversation:

- Record significant conversation with crew or officers
  - Can be to assist with your understanding of fishing operation
  - Can be regarding other fishing operations in the area





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## What should you record in your journal?

### Positive observations:



- Note performance of crew, for example releasing bycatch species with care or assisting with your duties
- Any other positive observations

### Negative observations:



- Attitude of crew
- Bycatch release
- Reporting

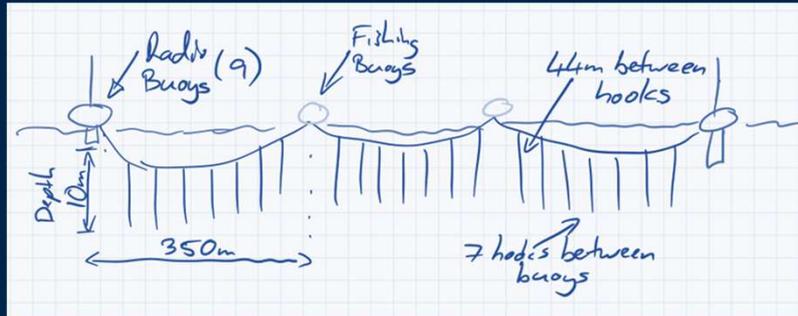


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## What should you record in your journal?

Gear / equipment schematics:



### ***Extra Detail, Relevant Diagrams and Illustrations***

If you can explain something better by drawing it – then do so, with a brief explanation of what it is, or what it is used for. When you are describing something, do not include too many unimportant details. These can make it difficult to find the important information and can be boring to read.



# What should you record in your journal?

## Special sections:

**Make a bold heading at the top of the first page of the part of your journal you plan to use for the special section. The heading should clearly state what the section is about.**

- Photos (data, time, number and short description of the film / photo)
- Biological sampling
- Quality of life onboard



Keep a few pages towards the back of the journal, so they don't get in the way of the normal daily notes, for writing about particular subjects. To create a 'special section', make a bold heading at the top of the first page of the part of your journal you plan to use for the special section. The heading should clearly state what the section is about. Examples:

- ➔ 'Photos' – for the list of photos you have taken while onboard;
- ➔ 'Quality of life onboard' – for notes about how good or bad life is onboard, including notes about food, accommodation, how the crew treat you, etc;
- ➔ 'Biological sampling' – for notes about any sampling issues onboard and anything else that you might think about.



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## Journal

- Record any questions you may have for your superiors so that you can put it forward upon your return.
- When returning from a trip we tend to want to go home and not spend time debriefing, journals are a way of streamlining the process and making sure there are no loose ends.



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## In Summary Journal

### Format

- Fixed format as instructed by your coordinator

### Timeline

- To be delivered to Coordinator upon disembarking

### Usage

- Basis for the debrief of the Observer
- Clarify any mistakes that were made on the form and changed after the day they were recorded
- Provide details of unusual events or incidents that occurred
- Provide comments on certain sections of the forms
- Cover detailed information when there is no space on the form;
- Provide details on photos taken



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# ANY QUESTIONS?



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