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Indian Ocean Tuna Commission
Commission des Thons de l'Océan Indien



OBSERVER PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT and OBSERVER LOGISTICAL COORDINATION WORKSHOP



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Precautionary actions

IOTC ROS OLC TR11.01

Category: Safety at sea

[IOTC ROS OLC TR11]



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Safety-at-sea procedures

- *To ensure the safety and security of observers appointed by the CPC a set of safety-at-sea procedures need to be researched and drafted. These should include procedures to guarantee that:*
 - **CPC laws protecting observer health and welfare are enforced;**
 - **Observers are trained in minimum health and safety training standards and are allocated with adequate safety equipment;**
 - **Observers are deployed on safe/seaworthy vessels;**
 - **An “Emergency Action Plan” (EAP), is in place;**
 - **Observers are aware of safety and welfare reports from previous deployments.**



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PRECAUTIONARY ACTIONS

1. CPC observer related fisheries legislation
2. Background checks on foreign vessels to take observers
3. Raising awareness with Search and Rescue institutions on NOP
4. Training observers on at-sea safety
5. Providing observers with personal lifesaving & safety equipment
6. Briefing observers on safety-at-sea procedures, etc.
7. Conducting Vessel Safety Check (VSC)
8. In-trip coordination



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1. CPC observer related fisheries legislation

CPC National Observer Programme must make the industry aware that the Government is prepared to take legal action should anything happen to the observers or should the observer not been provided with or afforded the stipulated conditions.

Observer related fisheries legislation forms the basis of:

- 1. Vessels Authorization to fish**
- 2. License conditions**
- 3. MoUs to be established with vessel owner/operators**
- 4. Observer Deployment Notifications to be sent to vessel owner/operator/agent and Captain**



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2. Vessel background check

CPC National Observer Programme is to conduct a thorough background check on foreign flagged vessels applying for fishing licenses that will result on observer deployment.

- 1. Clear the vessel of any traces that might associate it with IUU activities**
- 2. Confirm vessel foreign ownership (e.g. via RFMO platforms)**
- 3. Ascertain name and detail contacts of the enforcement authority of vessel Flag CPC.**



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3. Raising awareness with SAR institutions

CPC National Observer Programme is to raise awareness with national search and rescue (SAR) institutions:

- **On the importance of Observer safety and the role they are expected to play during an observer emergency situation.**

AND

- **To benefit from their guidance and assistance with the development and implementation of a NOP Emergency Action Plan;**



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4. Training observers on at-sea safety

CPC National Observer Programme is to adopt as a minimum at-sea-safety training standards as per defined in the IOTC ROS Standards [IOTC-2019-S23-10_Rev1[E] - Regional Observer Scheme standards. Pages 6 & 7 and page 15 to 32].

- **Personal Safety and Social Responsibilities (STCW compliant or equivalent)**
- **Personal Survival Techniques (STCW compliant or equivalent)**
- **Observer Health and Safety practices onboard a vessel**
 - Health issues that can be experienced onboard and personal first aid
 - Safe working practices onboard a vessel engaged in active fishing
 - Safety protocols (including pre-safety inspections and at-sea transfers), emergency communication and contact information.





5. Personal lifesaving and safety equipment

Vessels should be fully equipped with all the compulsory survival equipment; however, it is always advisable for CPC observer controlling authorities to issue observers with survival equipment adapted to the area and vessel they are to be working on.

- A two- way satellite communications device that will allow the observers to independently communicate with their supervisors
- Personal Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB)
- Personal Floatation Device (PFD)
- Strobe light / Signal mirror
- Personal First Aid Kit





5. Personal lifesaving and safety equipment

A list of recommended Health and Safety Equipment per fishing vessel/gear type and area of operation is provided in the IOTC ROS Standards [IOTC-2019-S23-10_Rev1[E] - Regional Observer Scheme standards. Page 38].

Fishing Gear Type	Equipment and Materials											
	Safety						Health					
	Two-way communication device	EPIRB	Immersion suit (temperate areas)	PFD	Strobe light	Signal mirror	Dry bag	Safety helmet	Deck working boots	Waterproof clothing (temperate areas)	Working gloves	Sun glasses
Longline	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Purse-seine	X	--	--	X	X	X	X	X	X	--	X	X
Pole & Line	X	--	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Gillnet	X	X	--	X	X	X	X	X	X	--	X	X





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6. Briefing observers on safety-at-sea procedures

Pre-sailing briefing sessions allows the Observer Coordinator to reassure the observers that they have support on shore and to refresh the observers on:

- **Survival techniques**
- **Health and safety procedures when working onboard**
- **Health and safety equipment**
- **Programme safety-at-sea procedures**
 - Reporting protocols, etc.
- **Emergency Action Plan (EAP) procedures**



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6. Briefing observers: *Health, Safety & EAP procedures*

Observer to be briefed on survival techniques and all safety-at-sea procedures that are in place to guarantee that observers are deployed on safe / seaworthy vessels, and that at-sea observer emergencies and reports on issues of safety (including instances of harassment, intimidation, or assault) are immediately and effectively handled.

- 1. Vessel Safety Check (VSC)**
- 2. Emergency Action Plan (EAP)**

Observers should have the right to consult safety and welfare reports from previous deployments (especially on refused assignments), including accountability report, with follow-up and actions taken to rectify problem.



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7. Conducting Vessel Safety Check (VSC)

A vessel pre-safety inspection is to be conducted by the Observer or NOP personnel to confirm that the vessel meets minimum safety requirements and possesses required safety equipment.

- Observers must be provided with:
 - **list of minimum safety requirements against which vessel safety conditions and equipment shall be surveyed**
 - **vessel safety check form containing a list of minimum safety requirements in line with those of the IOTC Commission**

Observers should have the right to refuse the boarding if the pre-safety inspection highlights that the vessel does not comply with expected standards





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8. In-trip coordination

Observers will routinely be required to send reports that are designed to cover inter alia safety aspects in terms of the EAP.

- **Deployment report**
- **Status report**

The protocols for communications between the Observer on a vessel and the NOP are to be specified in the MoU with vessel owner/operator.



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8. In-trip coordination: *Deployment report*

- **Safety related content:**
 - outcome of the pre-sea inspection
- **Submission deadline:** within 24-hours of boarding
- **Function:** confirm a secure means of communication with the observer

If a report is late, contact the vessel through the vessel operator. If a report is still not received, within a further 24-hours, assume that there is no means of formal communication with the vessel and make arrangements with Vessel operator to establish communications and / or request Observer immediate return.

Note: A breakdown in communication may also indicate a problem with the vessel and emergency search and rescue operations may have to be initiated.



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8. In-trip coordination: *Status report*

- **Safety related content:**
 - ensuring the observer is in good health
- **Submission deadline:** specific periods or fixed day of the week (*e.g.: 5-day report period or every 7-days*)
- **Function:** confirm a secure means of communication with the observer

If a report is not received by the due date, follow a similar procedure described under deployment report by contacting the vessel operator to contact the vessel

Note: If reports have been received regularly and suddenly stop, it may be concluded that there is a problem either with the observer's well-being or the vessel and appropriate action will have to be taken.





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THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION



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