



IOTC REGIONAL OBSERVER SCHEME

BRIEFING AND DEBRIEFING PROCEDURES

Briefing procedures should include:

1. Providing the observer with travel itinerary and any necessary travel documents to enter the country and access the port where the vessel is docked. Including inter alia: contact name and number of vessel agents and owner.
2. Providing the observer with a communication protocol.
3. Instructing observer on specific data collection protocols and biological requirements for the trip and provide him/her with briefing notes;
4. Advising observer on reporting requirements.
5. Ensuring necessary health requirements/medications are met by the observer, issue safety equipment and work materials to fulfil observer tasks, including for the collection of biological samples.
6. Supplying current forms and workbooks in whatever format is used in the national programme, but ensuring that it complies with the ROS minimum data standards;
7. Verifying that the observer is prepared to travel and that he/she is in possession of all essential items required for a trip: passport, cash and/or credit card, mobile/cell phone, copy of the MoU (if any), copy of pre-sea safety check list and letter of introduction or order of mission.
8. If practical, briefing should include a placement meeting on board the vessels between the observer, the vessel captain and the briefer to ensure a common understanding of the duties of the observer and safe practices on board the vessel.
9. Providers may wish to have a briefing form that can be read out and given and/or signed by the captain and observer. Such briefing form should state observer status, roles and duties while onboard the vessel; Captain/Master and crew obligations towards the observer; as well as any existing penalties concerning attempts to bribing, threatening, intimidation, assault and/or sexual harassment of an observer.

De-briefing procedures should include:

1. Collecting all issued equipment from the observer.
2. Collecting all data, images, and reports from the observer.
3. Conducting a preliminary review of observer data, checking if it meets IOTC ROS data requirements and running routine error checks. This will provide an opportunity for the observer to discuss and explain missing, unusual or unexpected data.
4. Debriefing of critical incidents which should be reported immediately to the relevant authorities.
5. Observer providers should attempt to debrief all observer trips that they manage and build sufficient authorised debriefers among their observers to ensure debriefing is a quality routine of their observer operations (e.g. 1 debriefer: 5 observers).