

IOTC DFAD Register launch: buoys already active

22/01/2026

Overview

IOTC Resolution 24/02 mandates, in its paragraph 11, that

“CPCs shall register buoys deployed before the entry into force of the DFAD Register and still active on the 1 January 2026 when the DFAD Register enters into force.”

This document describes how Buoy Owners will be able to report in the Register their buoys already deployed before the Register launch and still active (hereafter collectively named “backlog buoys”).

DFAD Register launch timeline

As a reminder, the global timeline for the launch of the DFAD Register is as follows:

- On 19/01, the Pilot application was closed.
- On Monday 2 February, the Register will officially open, for a “mandatory testing period” that will last until 31/05/2026. During the “mandatory testing phase”, CPCs and Buoy Owners (“BOs”) are encouraged to report feedback to the Secretariat. At the end of the phase, a summary feedback report will be produced, for discussion by CPCs.
- After launch, BOs will be able to report the activation of their currently active buoys (see below).
- On 01/06/2026, the DFAD Register will fully enter its production phase.

How to report buoys already deployed

Resolution 24/02 mandates that activation of a buoy at sea on a DFAD or log be reported within 24 hours of its activation. Of course, for “backlog buoys”, activation happened before the Register was available for reporting.

So a specific mechanism has been implemented to accommodate reporting of “backlog buoys”. The workflow for Buoy Owners is as follows:

- Step 1. For buoys on DFADs only: **register the DFADs on which the buoys are deployed** using the standard **Registration** Excel template, and obtain their Unique DFAD Identifiers (UDIs).
- Step 2. **Report Activation of the buoys** on the above registered DFADs (with the UDIs obtained at Step 1) or unregistered Logs, using the standard **Operations** Excel template.

In order to allow more time for reporting of backlog buoys and to take into account the delayed launch date (02/02/2026), the 01/01/2026 date mentioned in Resolution 24/02 has been extended to **15/02/2026**.

Any Activation reported with a date before 15/02/2026:

- will be allowed even if it predates the registration of the relevant DFAD (which in routine use is not allowed: a DFAD *must* be registered before being deployed with a buoy);
- will not be flagged as Late by the application.

For the Buoy Owners who would like so, the DFAD Register team can do Step 1 (registration of DFADs already deployed) on their behalf: simply email us a Registration template with the list of your DFADs already at sea and we will register them ahead of launch.

Feedback and support

As a reminder, the DFAD Register page on the IOTC website provides:

- The list of templates to be used for registering DFADs and reporting operations on DFADs and Logs (in English and French).
- Quick user manuals (In English) for Buoy Owners.

It is accessible at this address: <https://iotc.org/dfad-register>

For any feedback or support, please send an email to:

iotc-dfad@fao.org