



**Isle of Man**  
Government

*Reiltys Ellan Vannin*

## Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture

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### **Guidance Note 3: Vessel Monitoring System (VMS)**

This Guidance Note explains the requirements of the Sea Fisheries (Vessel Monitoring System) Regulation 2015 but is not a definitive statement of Isle of Man law. The Regulation can be found at [www.gov.im/defa](http://www.gov.im/defa) and further guidance can be obtained from DEFA – see contact details above.

A "British fishing vessel", for the purposes of the Guidance Note, is defined as: a fishing boat which is registered in the Isle of Man under the Merchant Shipping (Registration of Fishing Vessels) Regulations 1991 or in the United Kingdom or Channel Islands under equivalent legislation, and which holds a valid UK commercial fishing licence.

#### **1. Requirement for a Vessel Monitoring System (VMS)**

All British fishing vessels, regardless of size or port of origin, fishing for King and Queen Scallops in the Isle of Man's territorial waters, must have on board an approved operational Vessel Monitoring System which can relay information to a Fisheries Monitoring Centre.

In addition, all British fishing vessels of 12m overall length and above must have on board an operational Vessel Monitoring System, regardless of species targeted.

#### **2. Data to be sent by VMS**

Please see requirements set out in Appendix 1.

#### **3. Checking your VMS before you leave port**

You should check your VMS unit as follows:

**VMS+:** antenna power light is on (static red light); connection box power light is on (static green light). Select "at sea" mode (Blue light OFF). N.B. "In port" should be selected on your return to port (Blue light ON).

**Mini C unit:** battery box power light is on (static green light).

If these checks fail, please take action as detailed below.

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#### 4. Technical failure of a VMS

**(a) IOM licenced and registered fishing vessels** – skippers/masters should complete these actions:

##### **Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm**

1. Report the failure to AST on 01493 441485; [customer.service@ast-uk.com](mailto:customer.service@ast-uk.com) or report online at <http://customerservice.satcomms.com> You should obtain a ticket number which you must provide to DEFA – this may take up to 2 hours if you report online or by email.
2. Notify DEFA of problem – contact details as above.
3. Report every 4 hours to UK Fisheries Monitoring Centre on 0131 271 9700 or via 01624 686593 (calls charged at local rate) and provide the information listed in Appendix 1.

##### **Other times including weekends and Bank Holidays**

1. Report to UK Fisheries Monitoring Centre on 0131 271 9700 or via 01624 686593 (calls charged at local rate) and provide the information listed in Appendix 1.
2. On the first available working day, notify AST and DEFA as above.

The **AST Helpline** is currently available 8am to midnight, Monday to Friday including Bank Holidays and 8am to 4.30pm at weekends. From 15 May, it will be available 8am to midnight, 7 days a week including Bank Holidays. A 24/7 Helpline is planned from 1 June 2016.

**DEFA may then give authority to leave port provided that these steps have been followed.** Authority to leave port will initially be for 5 working days during which you must work with AST to identify and resolve any problems. Any extension to the authority to leave port will depend on this. If you leave port without authority, you may be liable to prosecution.

**(b) Other vessels** - skippers/masters should complete these actions:

1. Report problems to AST as above.
2. Report to the UK Fisheries Monitoring Centre as required by your Fisheries Authority (FA).

If you fish in the Isle of Man territorial waters without an operational VMS and you do not have authority to leave port from your FA, you may be liable to prosecution.

#### 5. Fishing outside of the Isle of Man territorial waters

DEFA can authorise masters of Isle of Man Registered and licenced vessels to fish without a functioning VMS unit outside of the Island's territorial waters. However, the procedure detailed above must be followed. Failure to do this may result in prosecution if boarded by Enforcement Officers from a UK Fishing Authority and you do not have authorisation to leave port.

#### 6. Contact for further information

If you have any queries regarding Vessel Monitoring System requirements in the Isle of Man territorial waters, please contact DEFA on 01624 685837.

## Appendix 1

### Requirements for a VMS fitted to a British fishing vessel

#### 1 Data to be sent by VMS

A VMS installed on a British fishing vessel must automatically send to an FMC the following information —

- (a) the fishing vessel's identification;
- (b) the most recent geographical position of the fishing vessel;
- (c) the date and time of transmission; and
- (d) the fishing vessel's course and speed at the time of the transmission.

#### 2 Master's obligations in relation to operation of VMS

The master must ensure that —

- (a) data sent or to be sent by the VMS is not altered;
- (b) antenna connected to the VMS unit is not obstructed, disconnected or blocked;
- (c) power supply to the VMS is not interrupted;
- (d) the VMS unit is not removed from the fishing boat; and
- (e) the VMS, or its power supply, is not interfered with or otherwise rendered inoperative.