

Year Round Vessel Management Plans

Fleet Notice – May 2007

Dear Vessel Operator,

As you will recall, last year we advised that the 2007 squid fishery VMPs would eventually be enhanced and expanded to cover the full year. Please see attached the new VMP template for all factory trawlers to use to manage interactions with seabirds for year round fishing activities. Offal management is the primary way to reduce overall seabird interactions. Nothing has occurred either on the water or ashore to suggest anything different.

The main addition to this VMP is acknowledging and documenting procedures such that your vessel is able to run an effective Offal Control Program when targeting finfish.

It is acknowledged that various types of vessels are going to have greater difficulties and constraints during heavy fishing and subsequent high processing volumes. The important feature of VMPs is that individual vessels recognise and consistently implement the best practice that their vessel design allows for. Vessels of similar type or equivalent class should be almost identical in their abilities. Where vessels are forced to discharge offal during peak processing and hence increase the risk, it is expected that this will be managed as an exception, that additional mitigation precautions may be taken during that period, and that the vessel will revert to batching to lessen risk as soon as technical capacities allow. Your VMP should document these processes.

It is critical that offal control holding capacity and batching interval times are well understood and documented within the VMP. This allows the vessel master to acknowledge the processing or daily green weight volume that will trigger the vessel to revert to continuous discharging and therefore understand when risk is increased.

MFish Observers will audit performance to VMPs, so you need to have procedures that are real, achievable and understood.

It is important from a management perspective that individual operators or vessels do not change the VMP away from this standard template. The general body and text is not to be changed without approval from DWG. Any comments or improvements are welcome and this document will be reviewed annually. This has been written as “best practice” procedures and is achievable by all. We would prefer to alter reporting forms etc in September 2007 after review.

Do not revise or upgrade your existing VMP template, you must use the template attached.

The tables are included for you to alter, so as to specify the VMP to suit your vessel(s). The VMP template is colour coded so you can easily delete sections that don't apply to your vessel (e.g. the fishmeal plant sections if you are an H&G vessel). I am here to help, so just give me a call if you need some information or advice to complete this template. After discussion with MFish our agreed target is for vessel operators to have this VMP completed by the end of June 2007 and a copy returned to the DWG.

Regards

John Cleal

Seabird Liaison Officer

Key for filling out VMP to suit each vessel:

- Only change the tables. Choose from the options available or write your own to match the style of the ones provided in the tables.
- Anything that is not in a table is current standard best practice and not to be changed.
- *Anything written in red are instructions for you and can be deleted when you have followed the instructions*

Colour coding is as below:

Is specific to vessels with **fishmeal plants** only (ie can be deleted if vessel does not have a meal plant)

Is specific to vessels with **mincers** only (ie can be deleted if vessel does not have a mincer)

Need to personalize to your vessels specific **offal holding** management and capacities (all vessels)

Contingency Planning

- Ensure you have well developed contingency plans.
- These plans must spell out what procedures and equipment will be available if your main offal control or mitigation program fails, either due to processing plant failure (i.e. Meal plant goes down), or general equipment breakdowns (i.e. mincers/hashers/augers/conveyors)

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- Please leave the version number as it is and just fill in the information below:
 - Company name
 - Vessel name
 - Created by (VMP author i.e. your name)
 - Date revised