



SFPA

AN tUDARÁS UM CHOSAINT IASCAIGH MHARA
SEA-FISHERIES PROTECTION AUTHORITY

Code of Conduct for Fishing Vessel Inspections

The Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) is responsible for the efficient and effective enforcement of EU and National sea fisheries and food safety Legislation. This work is done by Sea Fisheries Protection Officers (SFPO) of the SFPA.

The SFPA will always endeavour to undertake these Inspections in a fair and consistent manner and with consideration towards the needs of fishermen.

Notwithstanding the powers available to a SFPO under the 2006 Sea-Fisheries and Maritime Jurisdiction Act this guide sets out the procedures that will normally apply during an Inspection.

- ▶ Inspections will verify compliance with the requirements of sea fisheries and seafood safety law and inspections will take place either by day or night.
- ▶ All SFPO's will carry identification cards and will introduce themselves to the master or person in charge when arriving onboard. SFPO's will carry out Inspections in a professional and courteous manner.
- ▶ Safety is paramount to our staff during inspections and the SFPA recognises that Inspections are being carried out in a maritime working environment. SFPOs are trained to recognise the risks that apply onboard a working fishing vessel and acknowledge their responsibilities in providing for their own safety. Masters must provide all reasonable assistance to ensure the safety of the Sea Fisheries Protection Officers and the safe operation of the vessel during inspections.
- ▶ Masters of fishing vessels should expect a full inspection of their vessel which will include but is not limited to the following:

Documentation

- Logbook
- Sea Fishing Boat Licence
- Registration Documents
- Authorisation Documents
- Capacity Plan
- Fishing crew documentation
- VMS and other mandatory electronic equipment

Fish and Hold

- Assessment
- Comparison with Logbook
- Check Sizes
- Check weights
- Food Hygiene

Fishing Gear

- Mesh Size
- Attachments
- Twine Thickness
- Stowing and Lashing
(as appropriate)

Other parts of a fishing vessel may also be inspected as part of a routine inspection. In such cases the inspection process will be carried out in a manner that that gives due consideration to the sensitivities associated with accommodation and other living areas.

- ▶ Inspections in port and of premises may involve checks on any fish landings. In some cases, and to check compliance with quotas, boxes will be counted and may require to be weighed. In doing so, it may also be necessary to examine the contents of boxes to check on the species contained therein. SFPA recognises the importance of maintenance of the cold chain as a key food safety issue. Every effort will be made to minimise any disruption and adverse effects on product quality.
- ▶ Compliance with requests from SFPO's and assistance from the masters will ensure that the Inspections are carried out as efficiently and effectively as possible.
- ▶ On completion of the Inspection the SFPO will inform the master of the initial outcome of the Inspection and will stamp and sign the relevant logbook page to record the fact an Inspection has taken place. Where a full monitor of the landing takes place this will be recorded adjacent to the Stamp in the logbook. Masters will be advised on completion of the initial inspection and prior to commencement of landing that they are to be subject to a full monitor inspection.
- ▶ All SFPO's are obliged to investigate any suspected irregularities and will do so in a fair, professional and impartial manner.
- ▶ SFPA Staff may provide advice and information on fisheries legislation where appropriate.
- ▶ In addition to the routine checking of mesh sizes as may be carried out during an inspection the SFPA will also carry out Mesh Size checks on fishing gear if requested by the Master of the fishing vessel.

If Fishermen have any concerns at anytime during an Inspection they should raise them with the Inspecting Officers. Any outstanding issues on completion of the Inspection should be raised with the local SFPA office. Alternatively a skipper or crewman may pursue such issues through the SFPA complaints procedure.

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MISSION STATEMENT

“To apply sea fisheries conservation legislation and seafood safety legislation fairly and consistently in accordance with the provisions of the Sea-Fisheries and Maritime Jurisdiction Act 2006, and to promote compliance with the law cooperatively with sea-fisheries and seafood sectors and other relevant interests, with the overall objective of ensuring that the marine fish and shellfish resources from the waters in Ireland’s EEZ are exploited legally and consumed safely for the long term benefit of all.”



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