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CHOSAINT
IASCAIGH MHARA

SEA-FISHERIES
PROTECTION
AUTHORITY

Press Release

Issued by the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority's Press Office

19th March 2025

Fish Buyer Pleads Guilty to Fisheries Offences

Offences include Failure to Weigh Fish at Landing and Failure to Retain a Transport Document

A Director of Ocean Dragon Ltd., which is a fish buyer from Clogherhead, Co. Louth, pleaded guilty on behalf of the company at Drogheda District Court on the 18th of March 2025, to charges of failing to weigh catches of razor clams offloaded by licensed fishing vessels at Balbriggan port, Co. Dublin, on the 7th of February 2024. Following a surveillance operation conducted by Sea-Fisheries Protection Officers of the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA), a transport vehicle was inspected and a catch of razor clams to the monetary value of approximately €7,800 was found. The buyer did not have a permit to weigh catch after transport from the place of landing. The driver with the company did not have a transport document, which is required to accompany the fishery products that are transported away from the point of landing.

The Court convicted the company and imposed a fine of €1,000 for failure to have a transport document and a further fine of €1,000 for failing to weigh fishery products at the point of landing. The Court further ordered the payment of €2,000 by means of charitable donation. The matter was adjourned to allow the payment of the charitable donation.

Paschal Hayes, Executive Chairperson of the SFPA commented:

“I note the seriousness attached to these non-compliances by the Court, which emphasises the importance of carrying a transport document where required and to weigh catch on landing, unless an operator has a permit to weigh catch after transport from the point of landing. The data on weight of catches at landing is key to the accurate assessment of quota uptake, which ensures stocks are not overfished and fishing is sustainable into the future. The requirement to weigh and record catch at landing in these circumstances, in addition to the completion and possession of a transport document, are key tools to ensure the traceability of fish products which is important from a consumer health perspective and for combatting unreported fish

products entering the consumer market. I commend our Officers involved in this case for their thorough investigation.”

Ends

Further Information

About the SFPA

The Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) is the independent statutory body responsible for the regulation of the sea-fisheries and the sea-food production sectors. It promotes compliance with the EU Common Fisheries Policy, sea-fisheries law and food safety law relating to fish and fish products, verifies compliance and, where necessary, enforces it. Its mandate covers all fishing vessels operating within Ireland’s 200-mile limit, over 2,000 Irish registered fishing vessels wherever they operate, and all seafood produced in Ireland’s seafood processing companies. The SFPA operates through a network of regional port offices situated at Ireland’s main fishery harbours. For further information visit: www.sfpa.ie