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CHOSAINT
IASCAIGH MHARA

SEA-FISHERIES
PROTECTION
AUTHORITY

Press Release

Issued by the Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority's Press Office
20th February 2025

Master of German Registered Fishing Vessel Charged with Seven Fisheries Offences in Cork District Court

The Sea-Fisheries protection Authority (SFPA) confirms that seven charges under sea-fisheries law have been brought against the master of the German registered pelagic fishing trawler, the MFV, *Helen Mary*. The Master of the fishing vessel was brought before Cork District Court this morning, the 20th February, where the Book of Evidence was served on him. The Director of Public Prosecutions directed that charges relating to suspected offences of illegal equipment use, a non-compliant boarding ladder, and non-compliant plans in relation to the vessel be prosecuted on indictment in the Circuit Court. A summary charge of failing to comply with a direction of a Sea-Fisheries Protection Officer of the SFPA was also brought against the vessel master. The master was released on bail to appear before Cork Circuit Criminal Court on the 28th of April 2025. The Court ordered that the vessel be released on the payment of a bond of €425,000.

On Sunday 16th February, Officers onboard the European Fisheries Control Agency's (EFCA's) Offshore Patrol Vessel, under a Joint Deployment Plan, detected suspected infringements of European fisheries legislation involving the *Helen Mary* in the Irish Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The Joint Deployment Plans (JDP) framework provides the legal basis where the relationships of joint deployment of inspections assets/inspectors are set and are applicable to all assets of the concerned Member States and EFCA. When operating in EU waters, the EFCA inspectors always have Union Inspectors from Members States onboard and they are the leading inspectors.

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