



Compliance Information Sheet Misreporting (Trucking)

The Ministry of Fisheries Compliance Group has developed an operating model that emphasises the concept of “informed and assisted” to support the principles of enforcement. In practical terms this means that where possible the Ministry of Fisheries (MFish) will bring to the attention of industry matters that are of direct interest and concern to MFish.

The purpose of this information sheet is to bring to Industry’s attention the concern that the MFish Compliance Group continues to have with area misreporting (trucking), particularly between LIN5 and LIN6.

Historical examples have also occurred in relation to HAK, LIN, SWA, SBW and other species in other QMA’s. This information sheet will provide “informed and assisted” advice on some mitigation options for this concern.

There have been a number of investigations over the last three years into trucking between LIN5 and LIN6. It is clear to MFish that there have been instances where companies operated vessels that engaged in this illegal activity.

Considerations for Operators (Domestic and Charter Vessels)

If Permit Holders, Managers and Agents responsible for vessel operations wish to minimise their risk of investigation, we recommend that you review your current practice and procedures to ensure you have the following matters covered:

1. At the start of each fishing year (or at major crew rotation times) vessel officers and key crew should be fully briefed (with translators if necessary) on the legal requirements of the Fisheries Act and its supporting regulations on the potential consequences of non-compliance.
2. The Permit Holder should advise the amount of ACE allocated or available to the vessel, either by way of an annual catch plan or ideally on a trip-by-trip basis. Permit Holders should carefully monitor vessels’ catches against both ACE allocated and future ACE availability.
3. In order to monitor vessel performance Permit Holders should ensure they receive timely and accurate information to show the amount of each fish stock caught by QMA, ideally on a daily basis.
4. In order to ensure no “trucking” is occurring Permit Holders need to be vigilant with their monitoring when a vessel is fishing more than one QMA during a tow or trip.
5. Permit Holders need to ensure they instruct vessel officers on how to report if catch is taken in more than one QMA in a tow. For example how the catch is apportioned and what information is used or available to determine the accuracy of the reported catch figures.



6. If a vessel is frequently moving between QMAs during a trip, watch this situation carefully and seek explanations to verify the accuracy of catch information. Use information such as VMS data, historical catch profiles, personal knowledge, reported catch against actual effort and time in each QMA, to test the accuracy of the reported catch.

This list is not exhaustive but describes some of the management actions that you might consider. This is similar to the type of analysis that MFish Compliance would routinely undertake.

Implications for other fish stocks

The considerations above are often relevant to other fisheries, particularly when the following conditions are present:

- Where there are different TACCs set for species and one TACC is constraining effort in one QMA but not in the other.
- Where there is an ACE price or deemed value differential between fish stocks.

- Where one fish stock is “easily” caught but the other fish stock is generally more difficult to catch or historically there is a big difference in catch rates between the fish stocks.

It is important that as a responsible operator you monitor your vessel's activity in any fisheries where these conditions are present.

Contact a Fishery Officer or the Deepwater Group Ltd if further information or clarification is required.



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Disclaimer

Nothing in this information sheet should be read to preclude obligations for all current requirements. The purpose of this information sheet is to achieve informed and assisted compliance.