



Marine
Management
Organisation

Code of conduct:
Fishing vessel inspections
in harbour
(Marine Management Organisation
and Royal Navy)

...ambitious for our seas and coasts

Marine enforcement officers (MEOs)¹ have a duty to carry out inspections of fishing vessels in harbour or at the time of landing so as to monitor compliance with Fisheries Administration legislation. Inspections may be conducted at any time of the day or night. The Marine Management Organisation undertakes to inspect vessels in a fair and professional manner and to a high standard while being courteous and sensitive towards the needs of the fishing industry.

MEOs will identify themselves when meeting you to inspect your vessel. Our aim is to work constructively with businesses that are trying to comply with the law, and help them towards achieving compliance.

Inspection teams will try to minimise any delay which their inspection may cause to the landing of catches or to other activities in port. Your help with many aspects of the inspection and compliance with reasonable requests made by a MEO will mean that the time spent on board is kept to a minimum. Our officers will treat you with respect and courtesy and expect the same in return. Please ask the MEO at any time during an inspection if you are concerned with any of the procedures being followed.

Our inspectors will only board a vessel when they consider it safe to do so. They may require a master to assist by taking appropriate action with the berthing of the vessel and to provide a safe means of access, so as to enable the boarding to be undertaken safely.

Fishing vessel masters can expect a full inspection of fisheries related documentation, catch and fishing gear. A catch composition inspection on landing may take the form of a full box count and/or check weighing by species. If the catch is to be transported to another port, a vehicle inspection may also be undertaken by a MEO.

MEOs will exercise their enforcement powers fairly, without discrimination, and avoiding unreasonable interference with the landing of catches. However, they are obliged to investigate apparent offences and should do so in a fair, impartial and professional manner. Please note that it is not the MEO who then decides the resultant course of any legal action.

MEOs will work with the master to ensure that no action is taken that may compromise the safety of the crew during discharge. Inspection teams will have due regard to safety hazards on board fishing vessels and masters of fishing vessels should alert inspection teams to particular hazards.

On completion of an inspection a MEO will advise fishermen on fisheries regulations where appropriate. Please ask the MEO if you need advice at the end of the inspection.

The mutual courtesy and respect between the boarding team and the master and crew of the fishing vessel is an important factor in any inspection. The Marine

¹ Marine enforcement officers can be read as British sea fishery officer (BSFO) where applicable.

Management Organisation will ensure that its boarding teams act courteously and will investigate any complaints in a fair and professional manner. Masters who wish to complain about the conduct of an inspection should first contact their local district marine officer of the Marine Management Organisation.

Headquarters contact:

Head of Marine Compliance
Marine Management Organisation
Lancaster House
Hampshire Court
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE4 7YH
Email: ops@marinemanagement.org.uk
Tel +44(0) 191 376 2642
www.marinemanagement.org.uk
Inspections will consist of (but are not limited to):

Document checks

- Logbook
- Licence and variations and permits
- Fishroom plan
- Certificate of Registry

Fishroom

- Assessment of catch
- Comparison with logbook

Gear

Gear on deck conforms to appropriate mesh sizes and dimensions for fishing area and target species.

Onshore

- Box count
- Check weighing

Transportation of fish

Vehicle is carrying transport documents as required by the legislation.

.