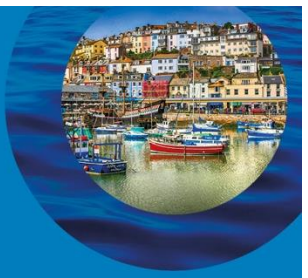
Marine Management Organisation

ONE STOP SHOP FOR VESSEL MONITORING SYSTEMS FOR UNDER-12M VESSELS



...ambitious for our seas and coasts

Contents

Cost considerations

MMO's 'type approval' process is intended to bring as many suppliers into the marketplace as possible so that there's a broad choice of devices that meet the technical specifications at a range of prices.

On transmission costs, MMO has specified the devices must use mobile phone signals to keep the costs down, rather than much more expensive satellite signals that over 12m vessels currently use. At the moment, we estimate the data costs will be a flat rate of about £120-£150 per year. This will be confirmed during the type approval process, along with the cost of warranties and other support services that are likely to differ between suppliers.

A grant towards the initial cost of buying and installing the device will be made – we will be able to say how much this will be further into the type approval process.

Contracts

There is such a diverse range of specifications for vessels in the under 12m fleet - for example in terms of powering and housing the devices - that vessel owners are best placed, with the right support from suppliers, to decide which device and service package suits them.

A single contract with one supplier would not provide the choice fishers have consistently told us they want.

Device malfunctions

We know fishers do not want to have to spend a lot of time checking if their device is working properly or to be prevented from fishing if their monitoring device malfunctions or flattens the vessel's batteries.

The technical specifications will require suppliers to provide reliable products that can work from a range of power options with minimal impact on a vessel's other electrics.

However, we have taken feedback on board and are adding additional requirements ensuring that suppliers provide evidence of how easy it is to check if the device is switched on, transmitting and the level of power remaining where it has its own power supply.

In terms of devices breaking down, we will develop processes to support fishers with legitimate technical problems. We'll engage with fishers over the summer and autumn on how these might work.

In our engagement with potential suppliers, we have already stressed what fishers have told us – that each supplier should provide a range of flexible warranties and repair-or-replace services.

Mobile blackspots

We know there are areas of English waters where it won't be possible to send a signal to demonstrate a vessel's location in real time. So, to pass our type approval process devices will have to be capable of storing a cache of data and then transmitting the stored information once the vessel returns to an area with strong signal. This will ensure that whilst it might not always be in real time, the devices will provide a continuous location history.

Privacy

The signals sent by each device can be seen only by MMO and legally authorised partners such as IFCAs, and devolved fisheries administrations should a vessel enter their waters.

Other fishers and the public cannot see fishers' locations and the data feed is protected by a secure system. MMO will only share the information with organisations that require it as part of regulating and managing the marine environment, and they will be governed by strict data sharing principles, regulations and agreements.

It is likely that MMO would share positional information with the coastguard in an emergency.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Why is it being introduced?

- Vessel monitoring is a tool that will enable a better understanding of scale, location and seasonality of fishing activity. This additional information combined with other fisheries data will aid our understanding of fishing and will allow us to respond more swiftly to any emerging issues.
- Coupled with the outputs from our fisheries assurance service we will be able to better target our risk-based, intelligence-led visits and inspections. In time, it may enable steps towards self-regulation for fishers who demonstrate a consistently high level of compliance.
- Data about the location, scale and seasonality of fishing effort from the majority of English fishers will give the industry powerful information they can use when presenting their case in for example, planning consents for marine development, fisheries management or resolution of gear conflict issues with other marine users.
- Vessel monitoring could increase safety for smaller vessel operators as it could provide timely and accurate detail to inform search and rescue efforts if necessary.

- It will enable more precise delineation between fishing grounds and protected areas meaning a better balance between keeping fishing grounds open and protecting sensitive marine habitats and species can be established.
- It will enable improved control of non-English vessels in English waters as the current requirement is for all under-12m vessels to carry a vessel monitoring device.

Who does it apply to?

The policy will apply to all under-12m fishing vessels transiting or fishing in England's water, regardless of where they're registered.

Where will it apply?

Throughout England's Exclusive Economic Zone.

What are the timescales?

The plan is for further engagement with fishers and suppliers over the coming months, with the intention of having a list of approved devices for fishers to choose from towards the end of 2021. The expectation is that installation of devices could start before the end of 2021 and that most vessels will have to have their device fitted during 2022.

Why do fishers have to pay?

Fishers will not have to pay the full cost - MMO will contribute towards the initial costs. The amount of contribution will be determined during the type approval process. There will be a range of approved devices at differing prices for fishers to choose to match their own needs and budgets.

Would an app on a mobile phone not be a cheaper solution?

The feasibility of a mobile phone-based app was considered, but the evidence demonstrated that an app would not meet the technical requirements of consistently and accurately reporting the location, heading and speed of fishing vessels. From the technology currently available only a hardware device can satisfy the technical objectives of the project to deliver a clearer picture of all fishing activity in England's seas.

Why can't MMO use the data from the under-10m catch app?

The positional information fishers supply via the catch app is needed to support understanding of where fishers are catching which species of fish. However, it does not provide a precise track of each fishing trip and does not provide the real-time positional data, which is the key objective of vessel monitoring in order to develop a clearer picture of all fishing activity in England's seas. Data from the catch app can be combined with vessel monitoring data to provide a much more accurate understanding of all fishing activity.

How can I access my own vessel monitoring information?

Currently fishers who have vessel monitoring devices can request their own Vessel Monitoring System data using a Subject Access Request. MMO is examining ways to make it simpler for fishers to get the tracking information for their own vessels.