

PIROBS3.05C – Perform observer duties

Functional area Observer operations

Prerequisites None required

Descriptor

This unit covers the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge necessary for a person to observe, record and report a vessel's fishing operations and compliance with licensing conditions; obtain data and take samples from catch for fisheries managers and scientists to use in making sustainable management decisions; and report and record observations and monitoring activities.

Elements

1. Apply knowledge of fisheries monitoring and management within the Western & Central Pacific Ocean

2. Use and maintain equipment and recording tools used by a fisheries observer

3. Operate and maintain communication equipment

4. Observe, monitor and document fishing activities

Performance criteria

- 1.1 Understand to a level expected of an observer the main regional conventions and agreements relevant to fisheries in the Western & Central Pacific Ocean
- 1.2 Understand to a level expected of an observer the function of the major regional fisheries organisations administering fisheries observer programmes
- 1.3 Understand and apply knowledge of the role of an observer in fisheries management when undertaking observer duties

- 2.1 Calibrate where necessary equipment used to gather fishing related information and data
- 2.2 Conduct regular maintenance of equipment to ensure effective operation
- 2.3 Store equipment securely and safely
- 2.4 Check that all recording tools are the current versions

- 3.1 Communicate effectively with the observer programme provider using a range of communication equipment
- 3.2 Maintain personal communication equipment

- 4.1 Identify correctly fish and marine species using established species identification processes based on anatomical features
- 4.2 Verify and record catch by species composition, location, volumetrics and measurements in accordance with agreed protocols
- 4.3 Recognise and record species of special interest and any catch mitigation and handling methods of these species employed by the vessel
- 4.4 Identify and record vessel configuration, fishing gear, fish finding equipment, fishing operations and their use and change over time
- 4.5 Collect and document information pertaining to compliance with fishing regulations
- 4.6 Observe and document other vessel and aircraft sightings and activities

- 4.7 Observe and document all interactions between host vessel and any other vessel
- 4.8 Observe and document pollution and environmental issues
- 4.9 Sample catch in accordance with pre-determined biological sampling protocols
- 4.10 Record and report relevant details of the landing of any tagged species

- 5. Record and report observations and monitoring activities**
- 5.1 Keep a daily record of relevant activities, events and information in an observer trip journal
 - 5.2 Complete a Observer Trip Report
 - 5.3 Complete a Vessel Trip Monitoring Summary of incidents and report critical incidents to relevant officers following recognised protocols
 - 5.4 Participate in official debriefing and reporting of completed trips on fishing vessels
 - 5.5 Participate in any investigative or legal proceedings as required

Evidence guide

Each unit of competency has an evidence guide that relates directly to the performance criteria. Its purpose is to guide assessment of the unit in the workplace and/or training program. The following components provide information to assist this purpose.

Required knowledge

The essential knowledge and understanding a person needs to perform work to the required standard include:

- Regional fisheries conventions and agreements in the Western & Central Pacific Ocean
- Major regional fisheries organisations in the Western & Central Pacific Ocean
- Information pertaining to compliance with fishing regulations
- WCPFC Conservation & Management Measures (CMM) relevant to observer duties
- Equipment and recording tools used by observers
- Fish and marine species common to the Western & Central Pacific Ocean
- Main species of special interest and catch mitigation and handling methods of these species
- Vessel configuration, fishing gear, fish finding equipment and fishing methods common to the Western & Central Pacific Ocean
- International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL 73/78) and how it applies to the prevention of pollution and safety on a fishing vessel
- Protocols, procedures and purpose of regional port sampling programmes
- Biological sampling protocols
- Reporting protocols used by observers in the Western & Central Pacific Ocean

Required skills

The essential skills a person needs to perform work to the required standard include:

- Using and maintaining equipment and recording tools used by observers
- Identifying fish and marine species common to the Western & Central Pacific Ocean
- Estimating accurately weight of catch and species composition
- Using correct size measurement protocols for different species
- Recognising species of special interest and catch mitigation and handling methods of these species
- Identifying a vessel's configuration, fishing gear, fish finding equipment and fishing methodology
- Assessing pollution and environmental issues and lost and abandoned gear
- Collecting biological samples from selected species
- Recovering, recording and storing tags
- Documenting accurately all information, data and compliance pertaining to a vessel's fishing operations
- Maintaining a daily journal of activities and completing a vessel trip report and an observer trip report

Literacy skills used for:

- Interpreting species identification tools and relevant manuals and regulations
- Documenting fishing activities and completing trip reports
- Comprehending information that identifies a vessel's electronic equipment

Numeracy skills used for:

- Estimating volumetrics and measurements

Technology skills used for:

- Electronic collection, recording and reporting

Critical aspects of competence

Assessment must confirm the ability to:

- Use and maintain equipment and recording tools used by observers
- Observe, monitor and document fishing activities and licence compliance
- Collect catch data including estimating catch by species and size measurements using species and biological sampling techniques and protocols
- Record and report observations and monitoring activities

Assessment must confirm knowledge of:

- Fisheries monitoring and management practices in the Western & Central Pacific Ocean
- Equipment and recording tools used by a fisheries observer
- Observation, monitoring, documenting and reporting procedures required of observers

Context of assessment

Assessment it is likely to be undertaken in a simulated workplace environment but every effort should be made to ensure the simulated assessment is as realistic as possible

Method of assessment

The following assessment methods are suggested:

- Practical exercises involving the observation of the candidate undertaking observing, monitoring, collecting, documenting and reporting activities
- Written or oral short answer questions to assess underpinning knowledge
- Examples of records, reports and other documentation completed by the candidate
- Third-party reports, including reports from observer programme coordinators and observer programme trainers

Interdependent assessment of units

This unit can be assessed in conjunction with other units relating to observer duties

Resources required for assessment

Resources may include:

- Regional conventions and agreements documentation relevant to fisheries in the Western & Central Pacific Ocean
- Equipment and recording tools used by observers
- Fish and marine species identification tools
- Copies of blank forms, log books and trip report documentation used by observers
- Examples of completed forms and log books used by observers while at sea
- Examples of an observer's completed daily journal, observer trip report and vessel trip report
- Selected species for sampling activities