

Vessel tracking guidelines – Draft for consultation

Version: 1

1 Introduction

These guidelines have been developed to assist commercial and charter fishers who are required to install and maintain a vessel tracking unit on their boat/s.

2 Scope

The guidelines and scenarios listed in this document are primarily directed to operators in the line, net and crab fisheries which are required to have vessel tracking units by the end of 2018.

Detailed guidelines for other fisheries, including harvest and charter, will be developed at a later stage before they are due to have vessel tracking units by 2020.

3 Requirements for vessel tracking on boats

3.1 General requirement

The general requirement is for all commercial fishing boats (including primary and tender boats) and charter fishing boats to have a vessel tracking unit installed and operational.

3.2 Using a tender boat as a primary boat

If a tender boat is used as a substitute primary boat to undertake commercial activities, the tender boat acting as the primary must have a vessel tracking unit installed and operational. For the period that the tender boat is acting as the substitute primary, the primary boat cannot be used for any activity.

Example: A primary boat is left in a berth at a marina while a tender boat, carrying the commercial fishing boat licence card, goes to sea and undertakes fishing operations.

In this case, only the tender boat which is acting as the primary, is required to have a vessel tracking unit.

3.3 Using a primary commercial fishing boat for activities other than commercial fishing

If a primary commercial fishing boat is only being used for a private or non-commercial or non-charter fishing activities, the boat is required to have a vessel tracking unit installed and operational during the trip.

If a tender boat is only being used for private or non-commercial activities, the tender boat is not required to have a vessel tracking unit installed. However, if a tender boat commences a trip as part of a commercial fishing operation, the tender boat must have a vessel tracking unit installed and operational for the duration of the trip.

Example: A primary boat is taken out for the day to be used for recreational purposes. It must still have an operational vessel tracking unit during this trip.

Example: A tender boat that is usually used to assist in a net operation leaves port to commence a recreational fishing trip. This tender boat does not need a vessel tracking unit during this trip.

3.4 Using a non-powered boat

If a commercial fishing boat is not powered and is not a primary boat and is used for commercial or charter fishing, the boat is not required to have a vessel tracking unit installed.

Example: A non-powered (no motor or engine) net tender boat used to hold nets during a netting operation does not need a vessel tracking unit.

3.5 Using a boat to only store fisheries resources

If a boat is only used to store fisheries resources and is **not powered**, the boat does not require a vessel tracking unit installed.

Example: A skid boat used to temporarily store product in a tunnel net operation.

If a boat is only used to store fisheries resources and is **powered**, the boat must have a vessel tracking unit installed and operational in accordance with the *Vessel Tracking Policy*.

Example: A primary boat in a line operation that is not fishing but is used to store product during the fishing trip.

3.6 Inactive boats and storing boats for extended periods

If a primary boat or tender boat is inactive or stored for an extended period and is not being used for commercial, non-commercial or charter fishing operations, then there is no requirement to have a vessel tracking unit installed and operational.

Example: If a boat is stored in a shed for 3 months in the off season. There is no requirement to have an operational vessel tracking unit while it is being stored.

Example: If a boat is stored in a shed between day fishing trips. There is no requirement to have an operational vessel tracking unit while the boat is not being used for fishing operations.

Note: A vessel tracking unit may be deactivated and then reactivated if the unit is not going to be used for an extended period of time, however operators should check with the provider about the costs associated with deactivating and reactivating the unit.

Note: The key point is that the boat cannot leave port or be at sea without an operational vessel tracking unit.

4 Moving vessel tracking units between boats

4.1 Moving a vessel tracking unit between a primary and tender boat

If an approved unit is able to be moved between boats while remaining compliant with the installation and maintenance standards then a vessel tracking unit may be moved between commercial fishing boats operating under the same commercial fishing boat licence.

4.2 Moving a vessel tracking unit between commercial fishing boat licences

If an approved unit is able to be moved while remaining compliant with the installation and maintenance standards then a vessel tracking unit may be moved between commercial fishing boat licences held by the same authority holder.

4.3 Temporary transfer of a commercial fishing boat licence

If a commercial fishing boat licence is temporarily transferred, it is the responsibility of the temporary holder of the commercial fishing boat licence to have a vessel tracking unit installed and operational as per the *Vessel Tracking Policy*.

Example: A Commercial Fishing Boat Licence (CFBL) is temporarily transferred and the transfer is registered through Fisheries Queensland. There are three scenarios which may occur.

1. *The licence is transferred and the permanent CFBL holder also allows the temporary holder to use their boat and gear. The vessel tracking unit that is installed on the boat and is owned by the permanent CFBL holder may remain with the boat for the temporary holder to use.*
2. *The temporary holder of the CFBL may purchase and register their own vessel tracking unit to be used on the permanent CFBL holder's boat.*
3. *The temporary holder of the CFBL uses their own boat and must purchase and register their own vessel tracking unit to ensure compliance with the Vessel Tracking Policy.*

4.4 Notifying Fisheries Queensland of a movement of a vessel tracking unit

All movements of vessel tracking units must be reported to Fisheries Queensland by lodging a notice via FishNet prior to commencing fishing operations or moving the boat.

The licence holder or the person in control of the fishing operation must provide details about the unit being moved, which boat it is being moved from and which boat it is being moved to. The licence holder or the person in control of the fishing operation must receive confirmation the transfer of the unit has been registered and the unit is operational prior to operating the boat. Confirmation of the transfer may come in the form of an email, text message or notice.

5 Ways of ensuring the vessel tracking unit is operational

The licence holder and the person in control of the fishing operation must ensure the vessel tracking unit installed on the commercial fishing boat is operational before undertaking a trip using a boat.

5.1 Using the vessel tracking website

The person in control of the fishing operation will be able to check if the vessel tracking unit is operational by logging onto the mapping website available as part of the airtime subscription.

5.2 Receiving a text message

The licence holder and the person in control of the fishing operation may opt in to receive a text message that will notify that the vessel tracking unit is operational.

6 Vessel tracking unit failures

6.1 Vessel tracking unit failures at sea

If a vessel tracking unit on the primary boat malfunctions whilst at sea, the person in control of the operation must manually report hourly positions of the primary boat while it is undertaking fishing or moving by calling the Automated Integrated Voice Response (AIVR) system and must cause the boat to travel to a port area within five (5) days of the day the malfunction is identified. See section 6.3 for using the AIVR.

If a vessel tracking unit on a tender boat malfunctions whilst at sea, the tender boat must remain attached to the primary boat and must not take any fisheries resources for the remainder of the fishing trip.

If the vessel tracking unit stops malfunctioning on a primary boat or tender boat (see section 5), the requirement to return to port and requirement to attach a tender boat to a primary boat stops applying and normal fishing operations may resume.

Note: Units may be moved between tender boats and primary boats under the same commercial fishing boat licence to assist with vessel tracking unit malfunctions at sea. The person in control of the operation must comply with section 4 of this guideline and with the Vessel Tracking Policy if units are moved between boats.

Example: In a line operation, the primary boat vessel tracking unit malfunctions. A vessel tracking unit may be moved from one of the tender vessels associated with the same operation, to the primary vessel. The tender boat without a functioning vessel tracking unit must remain attached to the primary for the remainder of the fishing trip but there would be no manual reporting requirement and the primary vessel would not have to return to port within five days.

Note: You can carry a deactivated spare unit that may be activated for use when another unit fails. Be aware that you may need to allow some time for the activation of a spare unit.

6.2 Vessel tracking unit failures in port

If a vessel tracking unit installed on a commercial fishing boat malfunctions while in port and is not being used to store fisheries resources, the licence holder and person in control of the operation must ensure the boat has a vessel tracking unit installed and operational before returning to sea to undertake commercial or non-commercial or charter fishing activities.

6.3 Manually reporting and using the AIVR

Manual reporting must be done through the AIVR system.

The AIVR will prompt for the licence number, the pin number and the current latitude and longitude of the boat. A transaction number will be provided once the manual position has successfully been given. The transaction number may be recorded for personal purposes.

Note: Fisheries Queensland is aware of mobile phone reception difficulties on fishing grounds and will be investigating other means of manual reporting to address these issues.

Appendix 1

AIVR – means the Automated Interactive Voice Response system.

Authority holder – means a person that holds a commercial fishing boat licence, a commercial harvest fishing licence or a charter fishing licence as defined under the *Fisheries Act 1994*.

Chief Executive – means the chief executive, or delegate, of Queensland Government Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Commercial fishing boat – means any mechanically driven or powered ship, boat or other vessel of any size or type that is ever used to take or store fish for trade or commerce.

Fisheries resources – includes fish as defined in section 5 of the *Fisheries Act 1994* and marine plants as defined in section 8 of the *Fisheries Act 1994*.

Fisheries Queensland – means the organisational unit within Queensland Government Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF).

Fishing trip (Trip) – means from the time a commercial fishing boat leaves a port to undertake commercial or a non-commercial or charter fishing activities, to the time the commercial fishing boat ceases these activities and returns to port.

FishNet – means the secure web based service provided to authority holders by DAF.

Installation and maintenance standards – means the vessel tracking installation and maintenance standards published by DAF and available on the DAF website.

Licence holder - means the holder of a Queensland Commercial Fishing Boat Licence (CFBL), Commercial Harvest Fishery Licence or Charter Fishing Licence.

Person in control of the operation – means the licensed commercial fisher operating under a commercial fishing boat licence or a listed nominee operating under a commercial harvest fishery licence or the person operating under a charter fishing licence.

Pin number – means a four digit pin number assigned to a licence holder for the purpose of using the AIVR.

Primary boat – means a boat identified as the primary boat on a commercial fishing boat licence or any boat used as the principle boat for a commercial harvest fishery licence or a charter fishing licence.

Take – for fisheries resources means catch, gather, kill or obtain from water or land; and attempt to catch, gather, kill or obtain from water or land; and land (from a boat or in another way), bring ashore or tranship.

Tender boat – means other than a primary boat, a boat that may be used under sections 246(1-4) of the *Fisheries Regulation 2008* or a boat that is actively used as a secondary boat to assist a primary boat for a charter or commercial harvest fishery operation.

Vessel tracking unit – means a unit that sends locational positions via a telecommunications network and is listed as an approved unit in the *Installation and maintenance standards* and is also known as a VMS.

Vessel tracking guidelines – means this guideline.

Vessel tracking policy – means the vessel tracking policy for Queensland commercial fishing boats published by DAF.

For further and complete definitions, please refer to the *Fisheries Act 1994* and *Fisheries Regulation 2008*

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