

Vessel Tracking Guideline – Net, Line and Crab Fisheries

Version: 2

1 Introduction

This guideline has been developed to advise authority holders and commercial fishers on how to install and maintain a vessel tracking unit on their boat/s. This guideline commences on the 1 January 2019.

2 Scope

This guideline and scenarios listed in this document are directed to operators in the line, net and crab fisheries which are required to have vessel tracking units from 1 January 2019.

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

All existing requirements for vessel tracking for trawl under the *Fisheries Regulation 2008* and the *Fisheries (East Coast Trawl) Management Plan 2010* remain current. The intention is to transition all fisheries, including trawl, to operate under this guideline over time, subject to regulatory amendments.

3 Requirements for vessel tracking on boats

3.1 General requirement

All commercial fishing boats (including primary and tender boats) are required to have a vessel tracking unit installed and operational at the commencement of a trip and for the duration of a trip unless otherwise specified in this guideline.

*Note: If a Commercial Fishing Boat Licence (CFBL) does not have a boat registered against it (that is the licence is in **no boat** status), there is no requirement to have a vessel tracking unit.*

3.2 Registering of approved tracking units

When an authority holder purchases an approved vessel tracking unit, the authority holder must register the unit on FishNet or by using the Commercial Fishing Application which will be available from late 2018 (for more details see the *Vessel Tracking Installation and Maintenance Standard*). If an authority holder has difficulties registering a vessel tracking unit, they can contact the DAF Customer Service Centre on 13 25 23 during business hours.

3.3 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.

3.4 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 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.

3.5 Using a non-powered boat

If a commercial fishing boat is not powered (no propulsion or is propelled by an engine of less than 3kW) and is not a primary boat and is used for commercial 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.

3.6 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 trip.

3.7 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 or non-commercial 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 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 if this is available and the costs associated with deactivating and reactivating the unit.

Note: The key requirement 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 *Vessel Tracking Installation and Maintenance Standard* 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 *Vessel Tracking Installation and Maintenance Standard* 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 two 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 and use that unit on their own boat.*

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

All movements of vessel tracking units between boats must be reported to Fisheries Queensland by registering the unit against the correct boat using FishNet or the Commercial Fishing Application prior to commencing fishing operations or moving the boat. If an authority holder has difficulties registering a vessel tracking unit, they can contact the DAF Customer Service Centre on 13 25 23 during business hours.

The authority holder must provide details about the unit being moved, which boat it is being moved from and which boat it is being moved to. The authority holder 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 will be shown in FishNet and the Commercial Fishing Application.

5 Ways of ensuring the vessel tracking unit is operational

The authority 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 Receiving a text message

A text message will be sent to the mobile number listed in My Contact details in FishNet (Secure) when the boat moves to advise the vessel tracking unit is working correctly. In addition, if the vessel is at sea, a text message will be sent daily to confirm the unit is still working.

5.2 Using the vessel tracking website

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

6 Vessel tracking unit failures

6.1 Vessel tracking unit failures during a trip

If a vessel tracking unit on the primary boat malfunctions during a trip, the person in control of the operation must **manually report** the position of the primary boat **every four hours** while it is undertaking **fishing or moving** by calling the Automated Integrated Voice Response (AIVR) system or by using a Commercial Fishing Application which will be available from late 2018. See section 6.3 for using the AIVR and section 6.4 for using the Commercial Fishing Application.

The person in control of the operation must also cause the boat to travel to a port area within five (5) days of the day the malfunction is identified or, if the Chief Executive allows a longer period, the longer period. The application for an extension of time to travel to a port can be made verbally (07 3211 9111) or by email (vmsmail@daf.qld.gov.au). A reasonable excuse as to why the boat cannot meet the five (5) day return to port requirement must be provided to the Chief Executive when applying for an extension.

If a vessel tracking unit on a tender boat malfunctions during a trip, the tender boat must remain attached to the primary boat and must not take any fisheries resources for the remainder of the 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 these guidelines and with the Vessel Tracking Policy if units are moved between boats.

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

6.2 Vessel tracking unit failures prior to the commencement of a trip

If a vessel tracking unit installed on a commercial fishing boat malfunctions prior to the commencement of a trip and is not being used to store fisheries resources, the authority holder and

person in control of the operation must ensure the boat has a vessel tracking unit installed and operational before commencing a trip.

6.3 Manually reporting and using the AIVR

Call the AIVR on 07 3017 0083. 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.

6.4 Manually reporting and using the Commercial Fishing Smart-phone Application

The Commercial Fishing Application can be downloaded from the Google Play or Apple store and will be available from late 2018. The Commercial Fishing Boat Licence number and security code will need to be programmed in to the application. The application must then be opened on a smart-phone that is on the boat that is required to manually report positions. The manual reporting section in the application will have a button that must be pressed to start recording locations while your vessel tracking unit is malfunctioning. Once manual reporting requirements have ceased, a button on the application can be pressed to end the application sending positions.

Note: You do not need mobile phone coverage to record the locations.

Note: When manual reporting through the application, positions will be sent at least every hour.

6.5 Requirement to give information about a person operating under an authority and communication mode

The authority holder is required to give the chief executive information about the person operating under the authority. The authority holder must nominate a prescribed person and the mode by which the chief executive or an inspector may communicate with the prescribed person at all times when the person is on the boat and acting under the authority.

The authority holder is required to give this information to the chief executive before the prescribed person conducts any activity authorised by the authority.

This information must be given and updated when a prescribed person changes by using the Commercial Fishing Application or using FishNet secure.

Examples of communication modes that may be nominated include mobile phone or satellite phone.

Appendix 1

AIVR – means the Automated Interactive Voice Response system.

Authority holder – in this document means a person that holds a commercial fishing boat licence (CFBL) 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, fishing boat or 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.

Commercial Fishing Application – means the smart-phone application developed by Fisheries Queensland that can be downloaded from the Apple Store or Google Play. The application may be used to manually report positions.

DAF – means the Queensland Government Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

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).

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

Line, net and crab fisheries – a commercial fishing boat licence with one or more of the following symbols written on it. Line Symbol – L1, L2, L3, L4 and L8; Net Symbol – N1, N2, N3, N4, N10, N11, N12, N13, K1, K2, K3, K4, K5, K6, K7 and K8 and Crab Symbol – C1, C2 and C3

Non-powered boat – a boat having no propulsion or is propelled by an engine of less than 3kW. (s26(2)(a)(i)) *Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Regulation 2016*.

Prescribed person or person in control of the operation – means the authority holder or person acting under the authority e.g. a licensed commercial fisher.

Pin number – means a four digit pin number assigned to an authority 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 commercial fishing.

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.

Trip – means the period

- From the time a commercial fishing boat leaves a location to undertake commercial fishing or non-commercial activities, to the time the commercial fishing boat ceases activities and returns to a location; or
- For seine operations, from the time a commercial fishing boat enters a beach or foreshore to undertake searching and or commercial fishing activities, to the time a commercial fishing boat ceases activities and leaves the beach or foreshore

For this definition, **location** means:

- Any place that a boat can be launched and retrieved;
- A private or commercial marina berth;
- A wharf;
- A registered or unregistered mooring within 0.5nm of the land; or
- Any other area within 0.5nm of the land

Vessel tracking – means the system used to monitor and track the positions of a vessel.

Vessel tracking unit – means a unit that sends locational positions via a telecommunications network and is listed as an approved unit in Section 2 of Vessel Tracking Installation and Maintenance Standard and is referred to as VMS equipment in fisheries legislation

Vessel Tracking Guideline – means this guideline.

Vessel Tracking Policy – means the vessel tracking policy for Queensland commercial fishing boats published by Fisheries Queensland.

Vessel Tracking Installation and Maintenance Standard - means the document referred to as the Vessel tracking Installation and Maintenance Standard in the *Fisheries Regulation 2008*, which is available for inspection on the department's website.

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