AHWG ERS Implementation (07) 2019

Date: 8 October 2019
Time: 11.00 – 14.00 UTC
Location: Video Conference

REPORT

1. Opening of the Meeting
1.1 The Chair welcomed the participants, all Contracting Parties were represented apart from Iceland.

1.2 The Chair explained the main issues for the meeting to focus on were the ‘level playing field’ discussion and to ensure the implementation documents were finalised.

2. Appointment of the rapporteur
2.1 It was agreed that the Secretariat act as rapporteur.

3. Discussion and adoption of the Agenda
3.1 The Agenda was adopted as drafted, but noting that the Gear Characteristics item should be under agenda item 5.

4. Matters arising from the Level Playing Field principle
4.1 Timing of Catch (CAT) reports in the current system:
4.1 The Secretariat introduced document ERS-IMP 2019-07-06 which graphically illustrated times of transmission and reception of catch messages from Vessels/FMCs.

4.2 Details for circulating data for Inspectors
4.2 The Chair then introduced the discussion on the concept of a ‘level playing field’ agreed at the same time as adoption of Recommendation 19:2019 by the Commission. PECMAC 2 2019 had not been able to resolve how to interpret this concept. The ERS Implementation group had therefore been tasked to identify the technical key issues and resolve these if possible.
Otherwise it was to clarify the legal and technical options and consequences to advise the Annual Meeting accordingly for a decision.

4.3 The European Union presented its proposals for circulating ERS data to inspectors (document ERS-IMP 2019-07-07). The European Union explained it considered that some of the information in the Secretariat analysis on timing of messages could be useful to the level playing field discussions. Nevertheless it was no longer making any proposal on timing or aggregation of messages but wanted to focus on the data elements related to a level playing field.

4.4 Norway presented its analysis of which data elements from the Electronic Logbooks could be available to inspectors whilst respecting the level playing field (document ERS-IMP 2019-07-05).

4.5 In discussion, after a brief examination of some of the Header Data tables, the need to be able to compare directly with the existing NEAFC NAF data fields was raised. It was noted that in some cases data elements additional to the NAF ones were necessary to ensure the correct understanding of the new ERS system. For instance Flux had a possibility to correct data. It was therefore agreed that it would be useful to see where the additional data elements had been added beyond what was in the NAF data, with a justification for each addition.

4.6 ERS-IMP requested the Secretariat to prepare a table based on document ERS-IMP 2019-07-05 adding a new column with a mapping of as many as possible data elements to relevant NAF data fields. ERS-IMP agreed to examine this new document (including justifications for any elements not in NAF) and by correspondence aim to agree the final list of elements to be filtered and those to be available to inspectors.

4.7 The above document would be circulated for comments as soon as possible in order to all CP to comment and still meet the annual meeting deadline for resolution of the issues.

5. ERS Implementation Document

5.1 The Chair introduced ERS-IMP 2019-07-03, the ERS FLUX fishing Activities Implementation Document. This was to resolve final drafting in sections 11, 12, and 14, which was done in the meeting.

5.2 ERS-IMP agreed the changes to the ERS-IMP 2019-07-03 as the final version of the ERS FLUX fishing Activities Implementation Document V1.x. The Secretariat would circulate a final cleaned version to the CP as a revision. This document would also be submitted to the Annual Meeting for adoption.

5.3 The above changes included text on gear characteristics which meant the issues raised in document ERS 2019-07-08 Rev1 were resolved and no longer needed discussion.
6. **Criteria to assess whether the technical preparations are completed**

6.1 **List of basic tests**

No papers were presented under this item. Nevertheless Contracting Parties discussed their varying views on transmission times and acceptance times of messages from fishing vessels. The Chair noted that both transmission and acceptance timestamps had been agreed at the Annual Meeting so a new proposal would need to be tabled if changes were required. The EU expressed its view that the added value of an additional timestamp was very limited as there were no problems from the previous system where different parties have used the existing vessel transmission timestamp in different ways. At the same time the potential effort for adapting IT-systems to support the additional timestamp was considerable. The EU also noted its view that while using the “vessel transmission timestamp” to record FMC acceptance time, as currently done by the EU might not be entirely accurate (albeit both times should be very close to each other) it remained unclear whether interpreting the timestamp as the time of a transmission attempt, as done by some CPs, was correct, or whether the timestamp should not rather be interpreted as ‘successful transmission time’. It was noted that the issue may be raised at a future PECMAC meeting.

7. **NEAFC VMS Implementation document**

The Secretariat introduced document: ERS-IMP 2019-07-04, the draft FLUX Vessel Position Implementation Document, explaining the main feature of note was a new figure. Some errors in pagination/footnote formatting were also noted.

Subject to attending to the above formatting errors, ERS-IMP agreed that ERS-IMP 2019-07-04, the draft ERS FLUX Vessel Position Implementation Document should be submitted to the Annual Meeting for adoption. The Secretariat would circulate a final cleaned version to the Contracting Parties as a revision.

8. **Features and timeline for a Version2 Implementation of ERS**

Discussed at PECMAC.

9. **Report to Annual Meeting**

The Chair would report back to the Annual Meeting in November.

10. **Identifying issues to be referred to JAGDM if any**

None
11. **Next Meeting**

11. Unless needed, this would after the Annual Meeting.

12. **AoB**

12.1 The Russian Federation explained that it had not received access to the European Union FLUX portal, it was therefore not in a position to formulate an ultimate position on some of the issues raised by the ERS implementation. The European Union and the Russian Federation were corresponding bilaterally to enable such access.

12.2 The European Union provided ERS-IMP with a brief update on its work to produce a new version of FLUX TL with enhanced stability and greater data capacity (no release date yet agreed). It confirmed the current version could nevertheless cope with the 72 hour TODT.