Responsible Fishing Scheme (RFS) Standard

Crewed Vessel RFS Standard Final Version 7
Responsible Fishing Scheme (RFS) Background

The Responsible Fishing Scheme (RFS) was developed by Seafish to improve operational standards in the UK catching sector.

The initial RFS programme was launched in 2006 and was designed to allow Skippers of RFS certified vessels to demonstrate their compliance with good practice and hence to access markets which third party assured responsible practice.

The initial RFS was a Publicly Available Specification (PAS) from the British Standards Institution (BSi) to show compliant vessels were independently audited and certified to validate high standards in: fishing practices, vessel criteria, crew competence, and environmental considerations.

Existing RFS Feedback

As the initial RFS standard has not been amended since 2006, Seafish initiated a review process to encapsulate the feedback of the seafood sector and the following sector summary was compiled:

- **Fishermen**: offers no premium, bureaucratic hassle; scheme lacks visibility and/or resource
- **Food service**: positive; needs revising and proper marketing
- **Primary processors**: like vessel audits and supply chain reassurance
- **Secondary processors**: committed to MSC; RFS served purpose though maybe need for regional role; key question is financing
- **Retailers**: useful but needs improving with better governance; social/ethical; international scope
- **NGOs**: environmental aspects need to be robust and work alongside other environmental standards like MSC

The Revised RFS

Seafish as a result of this feedback instigated a full redevelopment of the RFS to ensure that it addressed the requirements of the seafood supply chain.

- Major UK supermarkets have made commitments to use the RFS as part of their sourcing policy as long as the standard is fit for purpose and is up to date
- Traceability concerns within the food supply chain are paramount since recent instances e.g. horsemeat cross-contamination; Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fish landings within the European Economic Area (EEA)
- Potential implications of Common Fishery Policy reforms within the EEA and the impact these may have on the UK fleet
• Markets are looking at increasing promotion of local provenance to maintain the importance of seafood within the national and international supply chain
• Supply chain liability risk and the increasing perceived issues of social/ethical requirements for the catching sector of the UK Seafood Industry
• Imminent EEA labelling regulations re: country of origin will be enhanced by a more rigorous RFS scheme and standard
• The developed RFS scheme will be one of Seafish’s key work programmes in the new Corporate Plan (2015-17)

**Overall Revised RFS Objective**

“The Responsible Fishing Scheme will promote a responsible fishing industry assuring good practice from sea to quayside and contribute to its long term viability”

Underpinning this commitment will be the following 5 core values:

1. Crew Safety, health and welfare
2. Crew Training/professional development
3. The legality of the vessel applicant
4. Enhancing Seafood quality and provenance
5. Care for the environment

**Revised RFS Market Position**

The RFS scheme will remain vessel focused: - to encourage fishermen to adopt responsible behaviour and improvement giving real credibility.

The RFS Scheme has two standards: one for Crewed vessels and one for Single handed vessels. Each standard has a set of clauses designed to establish if an applicant fishing vessel is a true reflection of these core values, hence ensuring that certified vessels are behaving in compliance with industry codes of good practice and/or relevant laws and regulations.

The existing RFS standard suffered from a lack of visibility and marketing., The new scheme will be actively promoted throughout the industry and supply chain.

Primary focus for the Scheme is the UK fishing industry but, as a fully ISO 17065 Accredited Programme, it will potentially also be a due diligence tool for international use.

ISO 17065 Accreditation specifies requirements to ensure that the certification standards, certification bodies, and certification systems are managed in a consistent and reliable manner thereby facilitating their acceptance on a national and international basis and so furthering international co-operation and trade.
Key Pillars of ISO 17065

- Governance of Standards and Systems.
- Organisational Integrity
- Management / Technical Competence.
- Assessor Competence.
- Impartiality, Independence, Integrity.

The RFS Governance Mechanism

Proper governance is essential to meet ISO 17065 requirements which will ensure that the new RFS standards are firmly positioned to deliver the key objectives of the scheme.

RFS Governance Structure

The RFS Standards Owner is the Seafish Board which is made up from nominated representatives appointed by DEFRA to promote and develop the Seafood Industry within all parts of the UK.
The Responsible Fishing Scheme’s strategy direction and objectives were agreed by an independent RFS Oversight Board that was made up of representatives from each key supply chain sector within the Seafood Industry.

Each of the RFS Standard’s development was conducted by three working groups that were comprised of sector specific experts to design and develop the expected level of performance criteria that each potential vessel applicant applying for certification to the Scheme would have to attain, if they are to be in compliance with the requirements of the appropriate RFS Standard.

From the three working groups the RFS Standard’s Technical Committee was created and tasked to ensure that all the technical compliance indicators and RFS Compliance Support Guides produced for this certification scheme will meet the strategic objectives of the Scheme and are in compliance with ISO 17065 Accreditation requirements.

To maintain integrity each member of the Working Group, the Technical Committee, and the Oversight Board, was vetted to ensure that they had the correct credentials and were asked to sign and agree conditions of engagement that are documented in specific Terms of Reference which are available for public review. In addition, each serving member has signed a Confidentiality Agreement to protect the Intellectual Property of the Responsible Fishing Scheme.

All property rights, which include the standard, codes of good practice and the interpretation documentation, are solely owned by the RFS Standard Holder, Seafish.

**The Responsible Fishing Scheme**

The RFS has been set out in five (5) values and developed into five Core Principles that will enhance the long term viability of the UK Fishing Fleet, along with the impact of their successful engagement with vessel applicants.

*Core Principle 1.* Safety, health and welfare (Reduce accidents, injuries & fatalities; promote decent working conditions, respect & integrity)

*Core Principle 2.* Training and professional development (Improve skills, knowledge and understanding; raise standards and open up new opportunities)

*Core Principle 3.* The vessel and its mission (Demonstrate due diligence and compliance)

*Core Principle 4.* Treating fish as food (Focus on supply of safe, high quality, wholesome product with known provenance)

*Core Principle 5.* Care for the environment (Behave responsibly, respecting the environment)

Each RFS Standard is therefore divided as a document into these 5 Core Principles. It is recognised that each Standard will need to be reviewed and this will be conducted at regular intervals under the leadership of the Oversight Board by the elected Technical Committee to ensure that the RFS Standard is fit for purpose and is still meeting its primary objective.
“The Responsible Fishing Scheme will promote a responsible fishing industry assuring good practice from sea to quayside and contribute to its long term viability”

The RFS recognises that the UK fishing fleet is comprised of a wide range of vessel types and gear combinations. It follows there is a need to provide an assessment framework by which all vessels can be differentiated, in order to provide a clear understanding of their compliance to the clauses required for certification. The RFS has two vessel standards: one for Crewed vessels and one specifically designed for Single Handed operated vessels.

The RFS Standard Assessment and Certification requirements will be in full compliance with ISO 17065 and all applicant vessels that wish to gain certification to one of the standards will be assessed and certified by a fully Accredited Certification Body that has been approved by the RFS Oversight Board.

Vessel applicants of the RFS will commit to working alongside Seafish and other agencies in improving the understanding of data limited and non-quota species. This will contribute to improved sustainable management of the resource and support the long term viability of the industry.

The RFS Certification Process

The assessment of a vessel applicant will follow the certification process highlighted below and will be in full compliance with ISO 17065 accreditation requirements which will ensure that it is impartial, credible and transparent and will include a pre-assessment of policies and an on board vessel audit.

The vessel plus the skipper shall be the unit of certification for both RFS standards within the scheme. If a vessel should change its skipper or vice-versa the following options shall apply:
• New Skipper with no RFS experience on an existing RFS certified vessel - the vessel’s new skipper will need to be made fully aware and will need to commit to all the requirements of the RFS. The certification body should instigate a new vessel on site audit to ensure compliance.

• New Skipper with RFS experience on an existing certified vessel - the vessel’s new skipper will need to sign all the prerequisite commitments and this shall be held on the vessel’s applicant certification file. The certification body will not need to conduct an extra vessel audit to continue the certification status of the vessel applicant.

• Skipper with RFS experience on a new vessel - the certification body will instigate a new application for the new vessel and skipper. The RFS awareness phase of the certification process will be minimal and could even be removed so that the new vessel applicant can go straight into the certification audit.

• Skipper with no RFS experience on new vessel - the skipper will need to be made fully aware of the RFS and review their status of compliance before they will be assessed and possibly certified to the RFS Standard.

• Skippers who are employed by an owner to operate on a single handed vessel will deemed to be an employed fisherman and will have to comply with the Crewed Vessel RFS standard, if this vessel applicant is to be certified to the RFS.

Existing Industry Standards

The RFS recognises that some industry specific standards for welfare, safety and fishing practices already exist. It is the intention of the scheme is not to add an increasing audit burden on the applicant vessel, but to acknowledge what has already been achieved. To this end, areas that are already assessed as part of another programme will be taken into account by the scheme’s Certification Body. If they are deemed to be an equivalence to the requirements of the RFS standards they will therefore not be assessed again as a requirement for RFS certification.

Each RFS Standard Scope

The documented RFS Standards, together with the relevant Industry Compliance Support Guides that will underpin the responsible credentials of the vessel applicant, will apply to all vessels that seek certification to one of the RFS Standards. The RFS has been split into the following components;

• The RFS Standard Clauses for the Crewed Standard and the Single Handed Standard
• The RFS Compliance Support Guides
• The RFS Definitions
• The RFS Standard Auditor Interpretation Document
A- RFS Standard Clauses

Each vessel will be expected to meet the requirements of the Crewed or Single Handed RFS Standards and the relevant specific RFS Compliance Support Guides.

Each Standard introduces the key principles of the RFS and the associated Assessment programme.

Each Standard sets out the general responsible requirements as determined and agreed by the Scheme’s Oversight Board:

Each RFS Standard generally deals with:

1. Safety, health and welfare (Reduce accidents, injuries & fatalities; promote decent working conditions, respect & integrity)
   - Health and Safety is a paramount concern and is core to the RFS
   - Demonstrate commitment to generating a culture of integrity and respect (e.g. no forced labour)
   - RFS Compliance Support Guides (CSG) are to be established drawing on other relevant safety management and ethical and welfare initiatives

2. Training and professional development (Improve skills, knowledge and understanding; raise standards and open up new opportunities)
   - Covers accessible training for the key priority areas, especially on safety
   - Professional development focused on improvement (innovation; efficiency; value)
   - Learn from other standards (complement not duplicate experience, e.g. oil & gas)
   - Cooperate with management authorities so that RFS becomes a channel of influence

3. The vessel and its mission (Demonstrate due diligence and compliance)
   - Statement detailing vessel’s mission (e.g. fishing area; catch focus; gear type etc.)
   - The vessel and its gear are in compliance with current legislation
   - Is it all legal with the right documentation in place?
   - Fully co-operates with Voluntary Agreements in existence in the fishery

4. Treating fish as food (Focus on supply of safe, high quality, wholesome product with known provenance)
   - Care of catch: hygienic handling and storage at appropriate temperatures
   - Fully traceable from catch to quayside
   - Responsible capture and landing of live products
• Committed to maintaining the value of the catch

5. Care for the environment (Behave responsibly, respecting the environment)

• Responsible practice (managing litter; wildlife interaction records, etc.)
• Supporting fishery science (e.g. observers; science partnerships)
• Tie-in with other voluntary schemes

B- The RFS Compliance Support Guides (CSG)

These guides deal with specific key requirements relating to a specific sector and have been designed to be upgraded as required to reflect good industry practice and changes in national and international legislation.

The guides will aim to deal directly with requirements relating to specific industry hotspots and will actively encourage better practice. The following RFS Compliance Support Guides will underpin the RFS standards and have been split into two categories either catching sector specific which relate to recommended practices that are required for the catching and handling of seafood or the universal guides which are recommended practices for all vessel applicants.

Catching Sector Specific CSGs

• Demersal species.
• Pelagic species.
• Shellfish species
  ➢ Crustaceans
  ➢ Bivalves and Gastropods
  ➢ Nephrops
  ➢ Scallops

Universal CSGs

• Health and Safety CSG for skippers and crews.
• Ethical and Welfare CSG for crews which incorporates the Code of Practice for the Employment on Non EEA Fishing Crews

Generic CSG

• Food Safety and Hygiene standards for on board food production and storage.
• Labelling and Traceability requirements
• Care for the Environmental
• Support in the development of vessel based HACCP studies.

C- The RFS Definitions

Vessel Applicant: A vessel and skipper that will formally apply to meet the RFS Standard through the formal application form. If a skipper leaves a vessel the newly appointed skipper will need to reapply for RFS certification.

Certified Applicant: An applicant vessel and skipper that will formally be certified by the Certification Body as meeting the RFS Standard.

Employed Fishermen: An employed fishermen is defined as a crew member who has been employed by the vessel owner under a contract of service to crew their vessel and they have the statutory rights of an employed mariner under national legislation.

Share Fishermen: A share fisherman is self-employed and has been classified by the UK HM Revenue and Customs as who -

- is not employed under a contract of service;
- is skipper or a crew-member of a British fishing boat manned by more than one person; or
- used to work on a British fishing boat but is now too old or infirm and is working ashore in Great Britain making and mending gear or doing any other work for a British fishing boat; and
- gets all or part of their pay by sharing the profits or gross earnings of the fishing boat.

The Standard: The list of requirements that the applicant will need to meet to claim certification to the Standard and/or use the certified claim.

Single Handed Vessels: These vessels are defined as fishing vessels that are operated by only one fisher and will be assessed to the Single Handed Vessel RFS Standard. All other vessels that are operated by a skipper with one or more crew will be assessed to the Crewed Vessel RFS Standard.

RFS CSG: Industry agreed codes of practice that the applicant vessel will need to comply with.

Certified Claim: A claim made by a certified applicant vessel approved for use and licensed by the Standards Owner.

Identification Number: A certificate number issued to each certified applicant vessel.
D- The RFS Standard specific Auditor Interpretation Document.

This document defines what will be expected of the vessel applicant under each of the RFS Criteria. It will also define, with “attainment” definitions, what will be required for a vessel applicant and what will need to be achieved if they are to be in compliance with each RFS Standard.

Where required, each of the RFS criteria will have additional GUIDANCE NOTES provided. These are designed to give greater interpretation of the Standard criteria, and how it is implemented. If applicable, guidance has been given on how the criteria should be complied with depending on the relative size and scale of the vessel’s operation.

The Fishermen’s Mission and the RFS

The Fishermen’s Mission supports the RFS and routinely offers a confidential liaison/sanctuary service for any aggrieved/abused crew members with the UK industry. This organisation will enable concerned stakeholders to report any concerns relating to the RFS standard or on certified RFS vessel applicants back to the RFS Standards holder in a confidential manner.

Legal References

Vessel Applicants must fully meet the legal obligations that are in place for the jurisdiction(s) where they operate to be considered for certification. Certification of a member does not place any liability on Seafish or any associated body involved in the development, implementation, auditing and issuing of certificates for this RFS brought about through failure of an Applicant to meet with their legal obligations.
Core Principle 1. Safety, health and welfare (Reduce accidents, injuries & fatalities; promote decent working conditions, respect & integrity)

- Health and Safety is a paramount concern and is core to the RFS
- Demonstrate commitment to culture of integrity and respect (e.g. no forced labour)
- RFS Compliance Support Guides (CSG) are to be established drawing on other relevant safety management and ethical and welfare initiatives

References

The specific performance indicators in this module of the standard will be based on internationally recognized universal standards, including:

- ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work of 1998 (in particular the eight core conventions of the ILO)
- The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action.
- ILO Work in Fishing Convention (ILO 188).
- The Merchant Shipping (accident, investigation and reporting) Regulations 2012.
- The Merchant Shipping (Seaman’s Wages and Accounts) (Fishing Vessels) Regulations 1972.
- The Merchant shipping and Fishing Vessel (Health and safety at work) regulations 1997
• Fishing vessels less than 15 metres in length are covered by the safety regulations explained in the MCA’s Merchant Shipping Notice (MSN) 1813 (F).
• MGN 501 large vessel safety and 502 small vessel safety.
• Fishing vessels from 15 metres to less than 24 metres in length must be built, maintained and operated according to the provisions of the code set out in the MCA document MSN 1770 (F).
• For vessels of 24 metres’ registered length and over, built after 1 January 1999, construction and operating standards are set out in the Fishing Vessels (EC Directive on Harmonised Safety Regime) Regulations 1999 - as amended in 2003 (‘the 2003 regulations’). These Regulations also apply Chapters VIII and X of the 1993 Torremolinos Protocol to all 24m and over fishing vessels, regardless of date of build. The 2003 regulations apply only to vessels built after January 2003. For vessels built before 1 January 1999, the Fishing Vessel (Safety Provisions) Rules 1975, as amended, still apply. It should be noted that Rules 16A, 20A, 54A, 54B, 65A, 65B, 72A, 125A, 125B and 125C also apply to new vessels.

The Labour Practices Indicators also draw upon the two instruments directly addressing the social responsibilities of business enterprises:

• The ILO Tripartite Declaration Concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy,
• The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises.

The scope of the audit will take into consideration all Labour agencies / temporary employment service providers that have a direct influence on the Vessel organisations, on the basis that the rights & responsibilities of workers provided through these channels are no less important than self-employed or employed fisherman and so the practices around their recruitment and management should be no different.
RFS Crewed Vessel Standard Criteria  Specific Performance Indicators

Health and Safety

1.1 The vessel applicant shall commit to providing a safe working environment for all crew employed or share fishermen by signing up to the Health and Safety CSG.

1.2 The vessel applicant shall have a signed Health and Safety Policy Statement under the Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Health and Safety at Work) Regulations 1997 or to an equivalent International Standard.

1.2.1 This H&S policy shall extend to cover all crew contracted to the vessel from external labour/recruitment agencies.

1.3 The vessel applicant’s fishing vessel, its machinery, gear and associated equipment shall be in compliance with current legislation for the intended purpose.

1.4 The vessel applicant shall provide evidence that it has current insurance for the vessel.

Vessel Safety

1.5 In the interest of safety the vessel applicant shall ensure that the design and outfitting of the vessel shall include, but is not limited to, the following:

1.5.1 The vessel shall be watertight and have weather tight integrity to comply with current legislation as applicable.

1.5.2 The vessel applicant shall have available stability information

1.5.3 The vessel’s crew accommodation and facilities shall be in compliance with the relevant MGN Safety requirements.

1.5.4 The vessel shall be LOLER and PUWER compliant.
Crew Safety

1.6 The vessel applicant shall have a documented procedure to manage the health and safety policy on board the vessel that shall include but is not limited to the following:

1.6.1 A detailed risk assessment shall have been conducted for the vessel covering all catching operations and shall include the crew boarding and disembarking requirements from the vessel.

1.6.1.1 The vessel applicant’s risk assessment shall cover all contractors and visitors, that board, their time on board and their disembarking from the vessel.

1.7 The vessel applicant shall log all crew accidents and any injuries incurred and shall conduct a risk analysis with written evidence to ascertain possible root causes.

1.7.1 The vessel applicant shall implement accident prevention measures that arise as a result of the accident analysis.

1.8 The vessel applicant shall conduct periodic self-assessment to ensure that the vessel continues to meet the requirements of the MCA.

1.8.1 The vessel applicant shall have an effective action plan on safety improvements, with specific timeframes, that is the result of periodic self-assessment or MCA safety inspection.

Safety Equipment

1.9 A vessel applicant’s dedicated safety equipment shall be accessible at all times when the vessel is crewed and operational.

1.9.1 The vessel applicant’s safety equipment shall be operational and be correctly maintained/serviced for its effective use.
1.10 The vessel applicant’s remote detection equipment, if vessel applicable, shall be positioned and maintained to maximise effective use e.g. Smoke, Carbon Monoxide (CO), fire, water etc.

1.11 All the identified hazardous machinery from the clause 1.6.1 risk assessment shall be fitted with applicable emergency cut off or stop buttons or guards that are operational and within reach of the operating crew.

1.12 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) shall be provided for all crew members (safety boots, hats, ear protectors, safety glasses etc.) and for visitors observing the vessel’s fishing operations.

1.13 The vessel applicant shall (in addition to LSA requirements) have a written commitment that all crew (and visitors) wear Personal Flotation Devices (PFD) when in areas of risk of falling overboard, but they shall always be worn when on open decks out at sea.

1.13.1 The vessel applicant shall provide enough PFDs for all crew members.

1.13.2 Every PFD shall be inspected, maintained and checked regularly to ensure they are functional.

Safety Maintenance

1.14. The vessel applicant shall have a plan to maintain all the associated equipment that is used as a direct part of the fishing operation.

1.14.1 The vessel applicant shall maintain records to ensure that all equipment used in the fishing operation has been maintained as required by the maintenance plan.

1.15 The vessel applicant shall have a specific engine propulsion maintenance plan in place.

1.15.1 The vessel applicant shall have records to ensure that the engine has been maintained in accordance with the maintenance plan.

1.16 The vessel applicant shall have a specific maintenance plan in place for the catch preservation equipment.
1.16.1 The vessel applicant shall have records to ensure that the catch preservation equipment has been maintained in accordance with the plan.

1.17 The vessel applicant shall have records to ensure that all the electrical systems on the vessel have been checked and maintained.

1.18 All areas used by the crew shall be structurally in good condition to minimise the risk of slips, trips and falls.

1.19 All areas used by the crew shall be kept to an acceptable level to comply with the Seafish CSG, especially the crew living accommodation and eating areas, if applicable.

**Crew Welfare and Integrity**

1.20 The vessel applicant shall commit to providing a Culture of Integrity and Respect for both employed and share (self-employed) fishermen by signing up to the Ethical and Welfare CSG.

1.20.1 A sign/poster/notice depicting the commitment of the vessel applicant to providing a Culture of Integrity and Respect shall be written in a common language that all the crew understand and be on display in a prominent place in the crew’s rest/accommodation area.

1.20.2 The vessel applicant shall have a policy and process in place to ensure that all crew members (both employed and share fishermen) are practically permitted freedom of movement on and off the vessel when it is in port. In particular, that all crew have access to recreational and welfare services.

1.21 The vessel applicant shall be in possession of all employed crew members contracts provided to the vessel by a Labour Provider.

1.22 The vessel applicant shall be in possession of all employed crew member contracts and an agreement statements for all share fishermen.
**Entitlement to Work**

1.23 The vessel applicant shall only employ or recruit crew with a legal right to work and with the correct certification, documentation/visa in the country they are employed or contracted in.

**Human Rights**

1.24 The vessel applicant shall have a publicly accessible Human Rights policy statement committing them to state that the decision of all the crew to join or leave their vessel is freely made by any employed or share crew member to mitigate the risk of forced or trafficked labour being employed or recruited.

1.24.1 The vessel applicant shall demonstrate by documented recruitment records or employment contracts that no forced, bonded, or involuntary prison labour is used on the vessel.

1.24.2 The vessel applicant shall commit in this policy that they shall respect the rights of any employed and share crew to be able to have “Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining” or have a policy is in place whereby at least one crew member shall be elected by the crew to represent them to the vessel applicant.

1.25 The vessel applicant shall be capable of verifying that no employed or share crew member shall be required to lodge “deposits” e.g. money or benefits in kind or their identity papers, with the skipper and all crew members are free to leave their employment after notice period, as stated in a contract of employment or self-employed fisherman agreement.

1.26 No crew under the age of 16 years old or child labour age as determined by national legislation shall be employed or recruited for work on a vessel applicant.

1.27 The vessel applicant shall conduct a risk assessment as part of clause 1.6.1 to verify that young crew members between the ages of 16 to 18 years old or any crew members that may be pregnant, are not working unsupervised in hazardous conditions or on hazardous machinery as defined in the vessel's health and safety risk assessment.
1.28 For all non EEA crew members, the vessel applicant shall adopt and sign up to the requirements as stated in the MGN 413 Code of Practice for Employment of Non EEA Fishing Crew or to an equivalent national policy.

Living Remuneration

1.29 The vessel applicant shall be able to verify how wages/share/pay/reward are paid and communicated to each type of crew member in the form of a signed contract of employment for employed fisherman or in an agreement with share fishermen.

1.29.1 The vessel applicant shall stipulate in an employed fisherman’s contract and in a share fisherman’s agreement that they shall not take deductions from a crew’s remuneration or share of the catch as a disciplinary measure, without the express agreement of the crew member concerned.

1.29.2 The vessel applicant shall ensure that all crew understand the information within the contract of employment or share agreement and it is in a language they understand prior to signing in the case of employed fishermen or agreeing to by share fishermen.

Working hours

1.30 The vessel applicant shall conduct a risk assessment as part of clause 1.6.1 to comply with the Seafish CSG on Health and Safety to ensure that:

1.30.1 It has sufficient crew to conduct the fishing operation effectively.
1.30.2 All the crew have a rest period allocated to them every 24 hours.

1.31 The vessel applicant shall have a signed commitment stating that all crew will be entitled to a period of rest related activity during every 24 hours of the fishing operation that will be in compliance with current national legislation.
Crew Discrimination

1.32 The vessel applicant shall have a policy to verify that there is no discrimination in hiring, termination or retirement of the crew based on race, caste, national origin, religion, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, sexual disease status, union membership or political affiliation.

1.32.1 The vessel applicant shall have in this policy that it is prohibited to bully, physically abuse, or discipline crew with the threat of mental, verbal and/or physical abuse, sexual or other harassment.

Life on board

1.33 The vessel applicant shall ensure the functionality and comfort of the spaces utilised by the crew as fit for purpose and includes reference to, but is not limited to, the following:

1.33.1 Vessel applicable: there shall be designated areas where the crew can smoke or where they cannot smoke.

1.33.2 Vessel applicable: there shall be suitable living quarters that are equipped to ensure they are conducive to good habitation requirements.

1.33.3 Vessel applicable: there shall be suitable sanitation and washing facilities made available to all members of the crew.

1.33.4 Vessel applicable: All crew that are designated cooks for the vessel shall comply with the minimum requirements of the Seafish CSG for handling and preparing food safely whilst on board.

1.34 All crew shall sign a declaration and be prohibited from using alcohol and or illegal drugs whilst on duty on board the vessel.
Core Principle 2. Training and professional development (Improve skills, knowledge and understanding; raise standards and open up new opportunities)

- Covers accessible training for the key priority areas, especially on Safety
- Professional development focused on improvement (innovation; efficiency; value)
- Learn from other standards (complement not duplicate experience, e.g. oil & gas)
- Cooperate with management authorities so that RFS becomes a channel of influence

References

The specific performance indicators in this module of the standard will be based on internationally recognized universal standards, including:

- MGN411
- Maritime and Coastguard Agency A guide to safe working practices and emergency procedures for fishermen
- IMO Code of Safety for fishing vessels parts A & B
- SOLAS Chapter 5
- STCW-F
- IMO Training and certification of fishing vessel personnel

RFS Crewed Vessel Standard Criteria  Specific Performance Indicators

Induction Training

2.1 The vessel applicant shall commit by signing a policy statement to ensure that all new members of the crew are given appropriate induction training as stipulated within the Seafish Health and Safety CSG
Mandatory Safety Training

2.2. The vessel applicant shall ensure that (on every trip) all crew have current certification in place to meet the statutory requirements for Mandatory Safety Training which shall include the following:

2.2.1 Basic Sea Survival

2.2.2 Basic Fire Fighting & Prevention

2.2.3 Basic First Aid

2.2.4 Basic Health & Safety

2.2.5 Safety Awareness

Additional Training

2.3 The skipper and crew shall undertake additional training. At least one crew member on the vessel applicant shall be trained in each of the following:

2.3.1 Fishing vessel stability

2.3.2 Navigation / Bridge Watch keeping (level appropriate to size of vessel and area of operation)

2.3.3 Marine engineering / Engine room Watch keeping (level appropriate to engine power and area of operation)

2.3.4 GMDSS Radio Operation (level appropriate to the radio equipment carried and area of operation)
Environmental and Ethical Training

2.4 Vessel applicant’s skipper and/or crew shall actively commit to participating in training or industry initiatives designed to enhance the management of the environment and/or resource/ product creation /crew safety and welfare by signing up to an environmental and ethical training policy.

Care of the Catch Training

2.5 Vessel applicant’s skipper and/or crew shall actively commit to attend training initiatives that will enhance the preservation of the catch to maintain freshness and quality by signing up to a “Treat Fish as Food” training policy.

Training Drills

2.6 The Vessel applicant shall deliver on-board training to each crew member, in the form of monthly drills, and shall have safety procedures specific to their vessel available that shall cover the following activities:

2.6.1 Muster Station Procedures

2.6.2 Anchor Procedures

2.6.3 Abandon ship requirements

2.6.4 Fire drill practices

2.6.5 Man overboard exercises
Record-keeping

2.7 The vessel applicant shall maintain the safety training records in the form of a logbook for all crew members, including the skipper, to cover:

2.7.1 Induction Training of New Crew members

2.7.2 Mandatory Safety training

2.7.3 Additional Safety training

2.7.4 Monthly drills conducted

2.7.5 Training for additional Environmental issues.

2.7.6 Training for additional Ethical issues.

2.7.7 Training for Care of the Catch e.g. Hygiene, catch processing and temperature stowage requirements

2.8 Maintain an up to date record of all their crew with correct contact details that cover but are not limited to the following:

• Employed or Share Fishermen Status

• Next of kin

• Medical conditions/medication

• Emergency contact details
Core Principle 3. The vessel and its mission (Demonstrate due diligence; seek to apply best practice)

- Statement detailing vessel’s mission (e.g. fishing area; catch focus; gear type etc.)
- The vessel and its gear are in compliance with current legislation
- Is it all legal with the right documentation in place?
- Fully co-operates with Voluntary Agreements in existence in the fishery.

References

The specific performance indicators in this module of the standard will be based on all relevant national and EU legislation as well as subsidiary and connect legislation in relation to fisheries and the environment and amendments thereto, including:

- Local, Regional or National level byelaws & statutory instruments/orders - secondary enacting legislation

RFS Crewed Vessel Standard Criteria Specific Performance Indicators

3.1 The vessel applicant shall have a compliance policy that commits it to operate legally within the relevant EU, Local, National and International Fishery Management measures legislation.

3.2 The vessel applicant shall maintain the relevant documentation to operate legally within the fishery.
3.3. Where there are voluntary agreements in place within the fishery or for the species concerned, the vessel applicant shall have a compliant policy committing to comply with these relevant agreements in place.

**Core Principle 4. Treating fish as food (Focus on supply of safe, high quality, wholesome product with known provenance)**

- Care of catch: hygienic handling and storage
- Fully traceable from catch to quayside
- Responsible capture and landing of live products
- Confirm commitment to maintaining the value of the catch

High Quality Product, traceability and proof of provenance are the cornerstones of an assurance to buyers and consumers that products are responsibly sourced from a Certified RFS Vessel

**References**

The specific performance indicators in this module of the standard will be based on internationally recognized universal standards, including:

- General Principles and the general prescriptions of foodstuff legislation and setting out procedures in relation to food safety EC No 178/2002
RFS Crewed Vessel Standard Criteria  Specific Performance Indicators

Care of the Catch

4.1 The vessel applicant shall commit to a policy stating their adherence to:

4.1.1 the Food Hygiene CSG for cleaning, and disinfection of all areas in the vessel, for use in fish storage and processing areas and

4.1.2 temperature control of the catch cold chain as stated in the fishing specific sector RFS Compliance Support Guides to maintain the catch quality and

4.1.3 compliance with the appropriate sector HACCP study as prescribed in the HACCP CSG and

4.1.4 implementation of best catch handling practices on board to optimise the quality and freshness of the landed catch and

4.1.5 commitment to continuous improvement by acting on any enquiries, complaints, and any incidents associated with the vessel’s activities, practices, and seafood products that are landed.

Food Hygiene

4.2 The vessel applicant shall implement and be in compliance with the industry accepted CSG for the good operating practices for the maintenance of a hygienic vessel.

4.3 The vessel applicant shall implement and comply with the COSHH requirements for the storage and utilisation of cleaning and disinfection chemicals used on board as stated in the HACCP CSG.
4.4 The vessel applicant shall ensure that all crew are trained and are aware of how to clean effectively all surfaces, tools and processing machinery that come into direct contact with the catch to comply with the Industry accepted CSG.

4.5 The vessel applicant shall ensure at the point of landing that the catch is kept at a temperature which is in compliance with the relevant Sector Species CSG.

4.6 The vessel applicant shall review the Cleaning, COSHH, HACCP, Stowage temperature documentation and procedures on an annual basis, to ensure compliance to the most up-to-date RFS CSG.

4.7 All areas of non-compliance resulting from the annual review of the Cleaning, COSHH, HACCP and Stowage temperature documentation shall be recorded with time frames highlighted as to when these areas will be corrected and what actions were taken.

4.8 All equipment used to monitor temperature compliance, if present, shall be in an operational state and be subject to regular maintenance

4.8.1 Temperature recording devices shall have annual calibration checks conducted.

Fish Handing

4.9 The landed catch shall be submitted to the preservation and segregation practices that comply with the relevant CSG for each sector species.

4.10 The vessel applicant shall instigate a documented monitoring regime to record any issues that deviate from the relevant CSG for each sector species

4.10.1 Where deviations to the relevant CSG arise the corrective actions instigated to maintaining the quality of the landed seafood product shall be recorded.

Vessel Construction

4.11 The vessel’s construction shall allow for the minimisation of contamination risks to the catch by the adoption of, but not limited to, the following requirements:
4.11.1 The layout of fish handling areas shall be constructed and designed to prevent the contamination of the catch from e.g. fuel, non-food safe lubricants, bilge water, sewage, harbour seawater, smoke, foreign bodies and food or any other contamination sources.

4.11.2 The catch handling areas shall be constructed to facilitate effective cleaning and maintenance of cleaning in accordance with the sector specific CSG.

4.11.3 The structural design of the vessel, if applicable, shall minimise the risk of adverse temperature fluctuations created by the engine, from affecting the temperature of the stored catch.

4.11.4 All vessel surfaces and processing equipment coming into direct contact with the catch shall be made from, easy to clean, durable, and non-toxic material.

4.11.5 All vessel surfaces and processing equipment coming into direct contact with the catch shall be maintained in a clean condition in accordance with the sector specific CSG.

**Traceability**

4.12. The vessel applicant shall have the capability to be able to supply the following information for their catch at the point of landing:

4.12.1 Date of capture to within a tolerance of 48 hours

4.12.2 Species name and declared quantity in box, batch or tank

4.12.3 Area of capture

4.12.4 Fishing method
Continuous Improvement

4.13 The vessel applicant shall record or log any enquiries, complaints, and any incidents associated with the vessel's activities, practices, and seafood products that are landed.

Core Principle 5. Care for the environment (Behave responsibly, respecting the environment)

- Responsible practice (managing litter; wildlife interaction records, etc.)
- Supporting fishery science (e.g. observers; science partnerships)
- Tie-in with other voluntary schemes

This core principle is not designed to replicate existing standards that are currently used to assess the environmental impact of the fishery on their ecosystem. The RFS standard will support and help to influence all fisheries that RFS certified vessels operate within, by ensuring that they operate in a responsible manner. Certified RFS vessels will assist in the gathering of biological data of a particular fish stock that can be used to generate a better view on how a stock is performing, which will hopefully lead to improvements to fishery management practices that will mitigate the environmental impact on the ecosystem in which the RFS vessels operate.

References

The specific performance indicators in this module of the standard will be based on internationally recognized universal standards, including:

- 1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries
• 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, the 1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreement,
• The Greenhouse Gas Protocol (GHG Protocol)
• AIPCE-CEP Principles for Environmentally Responsible Fish Sourcing,
• FAO Private Standards and Certification in Fisheries and Aquaculture and
• FAO Product Certification and Eco-labelling for Fisheries Sustainability
• All relevant environmental legislation, including those referenced in Core Principle 3

RFS Crewed Vessel Standard Criteria  Specific Performance Indicators

Waste Management
5.1 The vessel applicant shall adopt and commit to a Waste and Pollution Management plan/policy specific to their operational requirements, which shall include, but is not limited to, the following:

5.1.1 The disposal of any inorganic rubbish generated by the vessel at sea is prohibited. All solid waste shall be collected and returned to port, to be recycled, where possible.

5.1.2 The vessel applicant shall have a procedure on how it will dispose through recycling, where possible, any waste material generated from its activities both at sea and whilst in port.

5.1.3 The vessel applicant shall either participate in waste collection programmes where in operation, or have a commitment policy to the collection of waste during the course of their fishing operation where safe and possible to do so.
5.1.4 The vessel shall ensure that it has the capabilities to handle and store, if safe to do so, recovered waste material for the duration of the fishing trip until it can be correctly disposed of when back in port.

**Vessel Maintenance**

5.2 Management of waste associated with vessel maintenance shall be controlled by the vessel applicant by adherence to the following criteria:

5.2.1 The vessel applicant shall ensure that during engine maintenance and during its operation there is an oil retention system in place, to avoid any pollution of the surrounding environment.

5.2.2 All vessel refitting and cleaning operations shall be documented to ensure that they are in compliance with their port standards.

5.2.3 The vessel applicant shall only utilise products for use in cleaning operations that are not harmful to the marine environment.

5.2.4 The vessel applicant shall only use Anti-Fouling agents that are permitted for use within the marine environment.

**Engine Management**

5.3. The vessel applicant shall, wherever possible, adopt and commit to a plan to improve fuel efficiency for their method of fishing.

5.3.1 The vessel applicant shall, if applicable, have measures in place to be able to demonstrate methods of how to maintain optimum engine performance.
Recovery of lost fishing gear

5.4 The vessel applicant shall have a procedure on how it will recover lost fishing gear that shall include, but is not limited to, the following:

5.4.1 The vessel applicant shall have access to, appropriate equipment to assist in the recovery of lost fishing gear.

5.4.2 The vessel applicant shall record the last known position of lost gear and inform the relevant authorities where appropriate.

5.4.3 The vessel applicant shall commit within a procedure to the recovery and salvage of lost fishing gear from other vessel operators and to recycle damaged or found fishing gear, where appropriate and is practically possible.

Scientific engagement

5.5 The vessel applicant shall have a policy that commits them to co-operate with scientists in the acquisition and sharing of resource knowledge that will include, but is not limited to, the following:

5.5.1 The vessel applicant shall commit to participating in fishery data collection programmes by agencies or government research bodies relevant to the fishery, or non-target fish species, when requested.

5.5.2 If requested, the vessel applicant shall, where possible and safe, co-operate and participate in observer programmes by agencies or government research bodies.

5.5.3 The vessel applicant shall record and document all types of interactions including the deaths of threatened, endangered or protected species and other non-target species that are encountered in the course of their fishing activities.
5.5.4. The vessel applicant shall commit that at all times during the fishing operations it shall take appropriate steps to minimise harm to, and accidental capture of, such species referred to in 5.5.3.
## APPENDIX 1 Acronym Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Long name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIPCE - CEP</td>
<td>European Union Fish Processors and Traders Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>CFP</td>
<td>Common Fisheries Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>COSHH</td>
<td>Control of Substances Hazardous to Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>EEA</td>
<td>European Economic Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EEC</td>
<td>European Economic Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations</td>
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<td>GHG</td>
<td>Green House Gas Protocol</td>
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<td>GMDSS</td>
<td>Global Maritime Distress and Safety System</td>
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<td>CSG</td>
<td>RFS Compliance Support Guide</td>
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<tr>
<td>HACCP</td>
<td>Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point</td>
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<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMO</td>
<td>International Maritime Organization</td>
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<td>ISO</td>
<td>International Organization for Standardization</td>
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<tr>
<td>LOLER</td>
<td>Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations</td>
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<tr>
<td>LSA</td>
<td>Life Saving Appliance</td>
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<tr>
<td>MCA</td>
<td>Maritime and Coastguard Agency</td>
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<td>MGN</td>
<td>Marine Guidance Note</td>
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<td>MSC</td>
<td>Marine Stewardship Council</td>
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<td>MSN</td>
<td>Merchant Shipping Notice</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
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<td>OSH</td>
<td>Occupational Safety and Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>PFD</td>
<td>Personal Floatation Device</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPE</td>
<td>Personal Protective Equipment</td>
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<tr>
<td>PUWER</td>
<td>Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOLAS</td>
<td>Safety of Life At Sea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STCW</td>
<td>Standards of Training Certification and Watch keeping</td>
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