



**Notes on the Responsible Fishing Port Scheme Oversight Board meeting Friend’s House, London 10/07/17**

<b>Attendees</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Sector</b>
Martyn Boyers	Grimsby Port + Chair of British Ports Association Fishing Ports Group (BPAFPG) + Chair of Oversight Board	Port
Jonathan Shepherd	Seafish Board	Seafish Board
Michaela Archer	Seafish	
Sam Peacock	RS Standards Ltd.	Consultant
Marcus Jacklin	Seafish	
Mike Mitchell	Young’s Seafood	Processing
Celia MacKenzie	Whitehaven Port	Port
Leah Buckley	MSC	NGO
<b>Apologies</b>		
Peter Bromley	Sutton Harbour	Port
Matt Bailey	Brixham Market – Technical Manager	Fish Agent
Dave Bartlett	Brixham Port Authority	Port
Lars Barker (EHO)	Environmental Health Office (Torbay Council)	Regulator
Lesley Fairhurst	Waitrose	Retail

**1.0 Welcome, introduction and apologies**

Martyn Boyers (Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked M. Jacklin and S. Peacock for their work to date. Attendance was lower than the previous meeting; however, those unable to attend have been involved closely (as Technical Committee members) in the development of the Standard and Code of Practice (CoP). The need to replace the retailer representative was highlighted due to departure of current member, so currently seeking another Waitrose representative.

Martyn Boyers explained that the Responsible Fishing Port Scheme (RFPS) initiative originated from the British Ports Association Fishing Ports Group (BPAFPG) and that the scheme needed to align with the Responsible Fishing Scheme (RFS). He explained there have been some challenges in developing the RFPS but nothing insurmountable. The BPAFPG are working on a project investigating the diversity of fishing ports, which links well to the RFPS port categories. He explained that the Port Client Group is also another unique challenge due to nature of the direct employees and third party operators.

**2.0 Mission for the day**

The purpose of the meeting was to inform OB members on progress to date, secure OB approval of the CoP and Standard as adequate versions to move forward to formal pilot trials, and discuss next steps.

### **3.0 Progress to date**

M Jacklin provided an overview of activities since last initial OB meeting (Jan 2016) which had considered the scope and approach to the development of RFPS. It was highlighted that most requirements discussed at that OB meeting are reflected in the draft CoP and Standard and that the standard's development aligned with the mission statement agreed last year. Most issues identified at the last OB meeting have been addressed in the development of the Scheme.

The development of the CoP and draft Standard had been achieved through extensive collaboration with the Technical Committee (TC) which comprises a large group of technical experts, including regulatory input (eg Environmental Health, Food standards Scotland, Marine Scotland Defra and MCA). Following completion of draft documentation, site visits were made to several ports to assess the feasibility of the standard, including Brixham, Peterhead, Kinlochbervie, Fraserburgh, Lerwick, Scalloway. The site visits identified that the level of general requirements in the CoP and Standard were achievable, and that the duration of assessment (1.5 days) was acceptable. Some concerns about scope were identified; eg potential non-compliant members and composition of Client Group; however, ports were comfortable in their ability to ensure members complied with the scheme. Some clauses that were claimed to cause concern (eg, footbaths, door closures) were reviewed by the TC who agreed to retain the clauses pending findings of the pilot audits.

#### **Discussion**

- The OB considered the development process adequate and would put the standard in a good position for public consultation.
- The OB was reassured that the 5 modules scoped out at the initial OB meeting had been retained.
- Questions around the port site visits queried whether comments from port visits to date had been addressed. The OB were advised that environmental controls had been removed from the standard to be incorporated into the pre-application process and that the requirements for recycling (particularly net recycling which was considered difficult and cost prohibitive) had been removed.
- The OB were advised that visits to date have been fact finding, informal discussions. The planned formal pilot audits would identify all the issues and areas that need addressing.
- The OB was advised that many prerequisites exist and that these would be part of the pre application requirement in order to minimise cost and reduce audit time. The TC will further define all of these.
- The OB agreed that a logo was needed, which would be a Seafish standard brand. The cost issue was around longer term protection and copyright rather than the production of a logo.

**ACTION – Seafish to develop a Seafish logo for RFPS using standard Seafish branding.**

### **4.0 OB comments on development of Standard and CoP**

After outlining progress to date, M Jacklin summarised the next stages in the work schedule which showed further opportunities for the OB and others to comment on both the CoP and Standard. OB

members were advised they were being requested to approve the Standard and CoP as suitable to take forward for pilot trials. It was explained that the documents would remain on KnowFish site for further input.

#### Discussion

- Some OB members highlighted difficulties accessing the 'knowfish' platform. They agreed to undertake a second attempt to leave comments which were stated as being relatively minor.
- A major issue concerned inclusivity for small ports which are seen as very territorial and that inclusivity was important to them. The practicality of the phased approach was agreed but the need for small ports to feel included and a clear communications message was highlighted to prevent a perceived barrier to trade developing. The idea of a possible 'register of interest' for small ports was suggested as a way of incorporating small ports into the 'system'.
- The group acknowledged that small operations represent low risk and suggested that some small operations, eg jetties, might not qualify as a port; however, the intention is to cover everyone but recognise challenges.

**Decision: OB was comfortable progressing with current working versions of the CoP and Standard, subject to modification in light of comments to be provided directly or via knowfish.**

**ACTION: RS Standards to determine whether KnowFish has technical issues preventing people using it.**

#### **5.0 Scope of Standard**

##### **a) Unit of certification (UoC)**

M Jacklin presented the current definition of the Unit of Certification (Port Client Group) with a view to securing OB approval. The definition had been derived after much consideration and debate and comprises the Port Authorities and Fish Agents, together with individuals/organisations within their direct control.

#### Discussion

- Discussions highlighted the need for a clear rationale behind every member of the PCG and that they have a clear role within the port. The OB agreed the need for an adequate explanation within the text of the documents so that essential members would not be able to argue themselves out of compliance with the UoC. It was suggested that this could form part of the MoU using an appropriate set of words to ensure that necessary members would not be able to claim they were exempt.
- There was discussion around the issue of non-conforming partners (eg a fish agent). The OB was advised that essential members would not be able to opt out and that ports were comfortable with their ability to ensure compliance of essential members. It was suggested that if people didn't comply then they wouldn't be able to work within the port operations.
- The need to ensure no disparity between responsibilities and the PCGs in different ports was highlighted as essential.

- It was suggested that a letter of compliance and a list of the PCG members should form part of the Standard; as such information can be audited. Discussions questioned whether registered buyers and sellers should be included.
- There was discussion of the wider issue around EU regulation and what will happen in the future. The OB agreed the situation was unknown, acknowledging the potential for change. The OB agreed to retain keeping in line with current regulatory requirements.
- The requirement of including associated labour providers; eg, agencies providing staff, within the PCG was discussed. It was suggested that this could be addressed by ensuring the agency had completed their 'due diligence' on the people they employ. This needs to be robust, and the OB agreed unanimously.

**Decision: The group agreed with the current definition of the Unit of Certification subject to comments above and clarification of required membership.**

#### **b) Port categories**

The group were advised of the four categories agreed by the TC, which relate to the nature of their operations and are based on risk. Other options, based on landings value or detailed characteristics, were presented.

The group were also advised of the phased approach taken whereby the current standard focusses on larger ports which are considered higher risk and account for most of the domestic landings (20 auction ports land 65% of landings). It was suggested that once the scheme had been adopted successfully by larger ports, the smaller ports would be incorporated.

#### Discussion

- While no category option was considered perfect, the OB considered the current categorisations as the most appropriate, while recognising that some ports might not fit easily within a single category. It was agreed that the current categories represented characteristics of a port that could be assessed.
- The option based on size of landings was seen as inappropriate as considerations were not based on risk, and the option based on detailed characteristics was seen as too complex.
- Discussions identified no other options for categorisation; however, it was suggested that other ideas might emerge from the pilot audit process. In the context of certification, the risk of illegal landings being channelled through non certified ports was highlighted (especially through the small port categories 1 and 2). The need for inclusivity of small ports was highlighted, especially in the context of the initiative being a 'rolling programme' that will include small ports during the next Corporate Plan 2018-2021.
- Discussion considered that the categorisation should relate to risk management and ensure that this is made clear in the text of the documentation (Code of Practice and Standard), and that the explanation should be very explicit as to why we have different categories and how they relate to risk.

- All OB members agreed with the phased approach in context of earlier discussion points, resourcing and risk management (reacting to risk) in that categories representing highest risk should be accommodated first.

**Decision: The Group agreed with the four categories as proposed currently. The Group agreed also with the phased approach whereby the standard for larger ports (category 3 and 4) should be developed first.**

### c) Small ports

Following agreement of the port categories, it was proposed that the four categories could not be covered by a single standard due to the different activities carried out within each port category. Activities carried out at category 1 and 2 ports (small ports) are considered simple and low risk, whereas activities carried out at large ports (cat 3 and 4 ) are numerous and complex, and represent high risk. Accordingly, it was proposed that small ports should be covered by a separate standard.

#### Discussion

- The OB agreed that small ports need to be covered.
- The OB agreed the need for two separate standards and agreed that Standard 1 is called 'Large Ports Standard' and Standard 2 is called 'Small Ports Standard'. It was agreed that numbering should not be used as they could be perceived as rankings.
- The OB agreed the phased approach whereby the Small Port Standard will be developed during CP2018-21, after the large Port Standard has been developed.
- Discussions queried the need to address live holding facilities present at some ports, from an animal welfare perspective. The OB agreed the need for a separate module on live holding within Module 4 Care of the Catch. It was suggested that guidance should cross reference to Seafish Guidelines on live holding of crustacea and the guidelines for molluscs.
- In terms of reducing certification costs for small ports, it was suggested that the approach of group certification should be explored. This approach involves auditing a small representative sample of ports in order to enable all ports within the 'group' to be certified.
- The OB agreed the need for a carefully managed communications plan that addressed the inclusivity aspect of small ports. Positive points discussed to help facilitate communication included risk management/mitigation and prioritisation (large ports first), developing different standards that align with risk and are fit for purpose, reduced costs (group certification for small ports, and appropriate to develop the Small Port Standard later based on the learnings from developing the Large Port Standard. The OB was advised that a communication plan was being developed.

**Decision: The OB agreed the need for a separate standard for small ports and that it should be developed during Seafish Corporate Plan 2018-21, after the development of the Large Port Standard.**

## **6.0 Forward look at work plan**

M Jacklin outlined the next steps of the work plan - these included carrying out pilot audits (scheduled Sept/Oct 2017); TC and OB reviewing updated CoP and Standard (Nov 2017); a public consultation of the Standard (scheduled Dec 2017 –Jan 2018); and review and final approval of CoP and Standard (March 2018). The final task was to secure the application of a port wishing to be certified, by March 2018. (Sub-tasks; eg, development of auditor guidance and engagement of a Certification Body, weren't discussed as these formed part of the detailed project plan.)

### **Discussion**

- The potential audit costs of the scheme were discussed and it was highlighted that, as part of the pilot, the CB will propose costs which would be refined as the process develops. Currently, a large port is likely to take a day to a day and a half to audit.
- The OB was advised that two CBs had shown interest in carrying out pilot audits; Acoura and Bureauveritas. In response, Mike Mitchell declared an interest, being a Board Member of Acoura.

## **7.0 Accreditation**

The OB was advised that the option for accrediting the scheme had been scheduled during phase 2 of the project, during Seafish Corporate Plan 2018-21, subject to continued panel support for the scheme and adequate funding. However, it was explained that the estimated accreditation costs (£85k) were significantly greater than the financial resources available from Seafish.

### **Discussion**

- Initial discussion focused on whether the scheme should be accredited immediately after being certified. Several member cautioned against immediate accreditation, proposing that the scheme should be given time to mature 'bed-in' and address any issues prior to applying for accreditation (as had been considered for the RFS).
- It was suggested that while accreditation is preferred by the supply chain, is not an absolute requirement from the food manufacturers' perspective. Since the scheme is being built to enable accreditation, the focus should be to develop and implement a scheme and agree that accreditation should be looked at a much later date.
- In addition, flexibility to modify the standard would be much greater pre-accreditation, allowing greater scope for change whereas modifying an accredited standard is complex, difficult and expensive.
- The OB considered the accreditation costs (£85k) high, and were advised that there would be additional ongoing costs in administering the scheme, which would be passed on to the ports, increasing expense. RS Standards suggested that accreditation should be looked at a later date to determine if it were necessary. One option to manage costs is to have accreditation only for the large ports standard, so minimising costs for smaller ports.
- In terms of limited availability of funds, the OB suggested exploring options through EMFF. In addition, Seafood 2040 was referred to as a potential for umbrella EMFF funding for

wider 2040 developments to achieve the longer term vision which could include RFPS ports accreditation as an option.

**Action: Seafish to follow up with MMO on potential for EMFF funding for accreditation costs.**

**Action: Seafish to discuss potential for aligning RFPS accreditation to Seafood 2040.**

### **8.0 Next steps/final considerations**

- The OB is comfortable to approve the CoP and Standard subject to the discussions at today's meeting and further feedback they may have to provide.
- In context of this scheme raising awareness of major issues/risks, the OB agreed that the ports sector was an unknown sector with perceived risks. The OB agreed that this scheme addresses those concerns as the scheme is about GMP, which is good. The scheme covers the major potential issues that include; ethical trade and treatment of workers, including managing risk of modern slavery; traceability, especially around the potential for illegal landings; and chain of custody.
- In context of the landing obligation, the potential issue of fish <MCRS (which need to be kept separate) entering the human supply chain was discussed. The OB discussed whether there was role for ports helping to identify potential issues. One suggestion was for ports to cross refer to MMO in terms of separate storage/handling for <MCRS fish.

Following some discussion, it was agreed that this was outside the scope of this work, as enforcement action and monitoring was the MMO's role.

- The OB agreed that the CoP and Standard should be shared with Peter Andrews at BRC to ensure retailer coverage, and to inform Waitrose.