

Responsible Fishing Ports Standard: Strategic Development Plan: Large Ports

This document summarises key areas identified to date, for potential future inclusion in the Responsible Fishing Ports Scheme Standard for large ports. It will continue to be revised and updated in line with additional suggestions.

1.0 Introduction

The Responsible Fishing Ports Scheme (RFPS) Standard has been designed to be a flexible initiative able to accommodate future changes in the requirements of the seafood supply chain. The Standard will be reviewed at regular intervals by the Oversight Board (OB) to ensure it remains fit for purpose and continues to meet its primary objective. Proposed change to the standard will need to progress through the rigorous process determined by the governance structure of the RFPS, which includes ratification by the OB.

During the development of the RFPS, members of the OB acknowledged the need, initially, for the requirements of the standard not to be excessively onerous to the point of being a barrier to adoption by industry, whilst recognising the need to work towards continuous improvement in the ports sector, by strengthening the standard in future versions.

The OB members agreed the RFPS Standard should be accompanied by a strategic development plan (SDP) that would outline options for the strategic development of the standard, and detail technical requirements for potential inclusion in future versions. The OB is responsible for the SDP to ensure it remains current and fit-for-purpose, and will determine all aspects of the strategic and technical content and timelines associated with proposed changes to the standard.

This SDP has been approved by the OB and is publicly available to inform and focus debate on the standard's future development.

2.0 Strategic development options

Strategic options for the future development of the standard are detailed below. They evolved from discussions with a variety of stakeholders during the development of the scheme (2015-2018), including the OB as well as stakeholders not engaged directly in the development of the scheme.

Strategic options	Current situation	Future considerations
Supply chain 'continuity' (Connectivity)	The RFPS is a stand-alone scheme aimed at individual ports. In terms of scope, the scheme applies from when fish land on the quay to when fish leaves port.	While the scheme recognises upstream (RFS) and downstream chains of custody, there may be a requirement for the RFPS to link more closely with 'adjoining' schemes in order to provide greater transparency and help contribute to a 'seamless' set of standards in the supply chain.
International context	The current scope of the RFPS is limited to the UK ports sector.	Future requirements may highlight the need to consider widening the scope to include an International dimension.

Accreditation.	The RFPS is a certified scheme; however, it has been designed to be able to be accredited.	Future requirements may highlight the need for accreditation to provide a greater level of assurance. <i>Accreditation costs are estimated at £85k. Issues to further consider include the payment and administration of an accredited scheme.</i>
Traceability		Strengthen traceability requirements.
Standard equivalency	Not recognised within standard	Incorporate consideration of 'equivalencies' within the standard to reduce duplication. (The alternative is to retain existing requirements that might be considered to negate the need for other standard/audit)

3.0 Potential technical requirements

Potential technical requirements are considerations for possible inclusion in future versions of the standard. They fall into two main categories; requirements considered in need of potential strengthening and excluded requirements (e.g. additional modules) which have been considered but not included in the initial version of the standard.

3.1 Requirements for potentially strengthening certain clauses within standard

Specific requirements comprise:

- Clauses that are currently included in the current version of the Standard but which may need to be strengthened in future versions.

Requirement for strengthening	Suggested additional requirements
Worker welfare – third parties	Strengthen worker welfare requirements– by extending to include third party labour providers. Suggestions include an extension of 'supplier agreements' to third party peripheral activities by requesting; for example, evidence of 'good working practices'.
Grading	Revisit grading requirements following Brexit and in context of development of 2040 vision initiative.
Weighing	Revisit weighing requirements following Brexit and in context of development of 2040 vision initiative.

3.2 Excluded requirements

Excluded requirements include:

- Long-term goals identified during the development process as areas to strengthen the standard but considered appropriate for future consideration when the standard had been adopted by industry - they include wide areas of work, such as the discreet modules detailed in early drafts of the Code of Practice or identified during OB discussions.
- Requirements considered during the development process but excluded from the first version (due to non-consensus agreement between members of the OB about their initial inclusion), though acknowledged as requiring further consideration
- Proposals received from the public consultation but not included in the first version of the standard.

Excluded requirements	
Recycling Fishing Gear	The issue of redundant fishing gear is of increasing concern and there is increasing pressure to recycle these materials. Ports will also need to accommodate the RFS litter-at sea initiative which requires vessels to land vessel 'litter' that can include redundant fishing gear.

Agreements with gear manufacturers and local authorities in context of disposing of fishing gear	Requirement to develop relationships with relevant organisations to facilitate recycling of fishing gear (collection and disposal)
Module detailing provision of port services (e.g. electricity, ice, net mending)	Requirement to provide guidance of services offered by port
Module on live holding of shellfish	Some ports undertake extensive activities involving the handling of live shellfish. A consistent and informed approach to handling live product would provide transparency and assurance to the supply chain, and improve ports' professionalism and, possibly, profitability.
'Earned recognition' -	Liaise with Food Standards Agency about the eligibility of RFPS for 'Earned recognition' which can help reduce the audit burden of service organisations FSA MOU for Earned Recognition
Footbaths	<p>Requirement to include use of footbaths to minimise cross contamination between auction floorings and boxed fish. The requirement for footbaths was considered but has been addressed in the current standard through appropriate cleaning schedules. Other suggested approaches include separating fish from the floor by the use of boxes, pallets or stands.</p> <p>The requirement for footbaths was considered but has been addressed in the current standard by mitigating contamination through risk assessment and adequate cleaning schedules.</p> <p>Further suggestions to minimise scope for contamination include separating fish from the floor by the use of boxes, pallets, stands</p>
Threat Assessment and Critical Control Points (TACCP) – preventing malicious damage.	Requirement to formalise risk assessment process designed to prevent malicious damage. Suggestions include training in TACCP and implementing mitigating measures in response to any identified.
Vehicles – third party contracted lorry drivers	Requirement to bring third party contracted lorry drivers into scope of Standard. <i>Suggestions include extension of Supplier Agreements to third party peripheral activities.</i>

4.0 Other considerations

These comprise miscellaneous topics deemed relevant for further consideration in context of developing the standard.

Fish transported between certified and non-certified ports in context of traceability.
Port 'improvement journey' - to help ports make progress towards achieving accreditation.
Logo development – a logo is currently available; however, it needs to be registered as a certification mark to ensure it is a 'protected brand'. After it is registered, it can include the words 'certification mark'; it is an offence to use these terms in the logo before the registration process is completed.