



New functions for MPI Fisheries Observers

- MPI fisheries observers will be collecting information about working and living conditions on board fishing vessels to enable the relevant agencies to monitor compliance with health and safety, and labour laws.
- These additional functions of the Observer Programme were introduced through the Fisheries (Foreign Charter Vessel and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2014.
- These changes will enable vessel owners and operators to have more oversight on keeping crews safe when working in this challenging environment.
- Observers will be undertaking these new functions within their existing work shifts.
- Observers will be collecting information on behalf of Maritime NZ, which will use this information to make an assessment of each vessel and its operations. This information will be collected before sailing, during and upon completion of every observed trip. This may require observers to arrive at larger vessels earlier in order that they complete the pre-departure vessel safety checklist.
- Maritime NZ officers will still undertake Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 (HSWA) inspections to coincide with regular Maritime Operator Safety System audits. Operators will not be charged extra for any time spent on HSWA.
- MPI observers will also be monitoring crew hours of work on behalf of the Labour Inspectorate of the Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE).
- After each voyage, MBIE and Maritime NZ will be collecting and analysing the information gathered by MPI observers. When necessary, this will be provided to vessel operators in order that issues identified as needing action can be swiftly addressed.
- The data collected will enable MPI, MBIE, and Maritime NZ to obtain a better overall picture of compliance aspects of the fishing operation, including compliance with fisheries legislation, vessel safety and employment conditions.
- For further information, please see: <http://mpi.govt.nz/law-and-policy/> ; <https://www.maritimenz.govt.nz/hswa>; and <http://www.business.govt.nz>