

**NINTH PACIFIC ISLAND  
REGIONAL FISHERIES OBSERVER COORDINATORS' WORKSHOP**

**And**

**Observer Data Management Workshop**

16 to 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2009



Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency  
Honiara  
Solomon Islands



Oceanic Fisheries Programme  
Secretariat of the Pacific Community  
Noumea, New Caledonia

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## Opening of the Meeting

Peter Sharples of SPC and Tim Park of FFA welcomed participants from; the Cooks Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Marshall Islands, New Caledonia, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, the United States of America, Vanuatu, Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA).

### *Apologies*

Representatives from French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru and the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission sent apologies.

### *Appointment of Rapporteurs*

Deirdre Brogan from the SPC volunteered to record the minutes. Tim Park FFA and Peter Sharples offered to assist, and other participants were encouraged to involve themselves in the exercise.

### *Election of Chairperson*

Manasseh Avicks, Steve Retalmai and John Kelly were nominated to chair the workshop. John Kelly finally agreed to take on the role.

### *Adoption of the agenda*

The meeting considered the agenda and it was adopted.

## Country Reports

Participants were asked to give short programme report, paying particular attention to some of the highs and lows experienced during the year. Below is a summary of these plenary reports, in order of the seating arrangements.

### **FFA - Management Summary**

Tim Park gave a presentation on “FFA’s Regional Observer Implementation Plan”. The full presentation is available on the workshop website. It was initially presented to the FFC, but was thought appropriate for the participants at the ROCW as it sets out the scale of the problem being faced with the FAD closure and CMM2008-01. It shows how FFA plans to operate and provide for members needs

#### FFA work plan priorities

- To coordinate placements for vessel operating under FSMA and USMLT.
- To assist in the coordination of observer coverage for vessels operating under the Member’s flags those who are not under the FSMA. In the first instance observers for these vessels should be sourced from other member countries.
- Ensure PNA member countries have sufficient observers to attain 100% coverage under the 3IA.
- Maximizing the benefits of 100% coverage for FFA members’ national observer programmes, as providers to the ROP.

### What is the scope of the work?

607 vessels on the WCPFC register, but a lot of these don't necessarily fish in the region. On the FFA register 217 purse-seiners. The USMLT and FSM domestic vessels were not covered by the 3IA, so 151 boats affected.

Attempt to calculate the number of observers required for the 3IA and the CMM2008-01, so for the 2009 FAD closure, but also beyond 2010 onwards, as well as FSMA and USMLT vessels, and longliners from 2012. The average fishing effort within PNA zones from 2003 to 2007 is 32,456 days. If observers do 100 sea days per year then 325 observers are required; however, the average observer is currently achieving 50 days.

Where are the observers needed? The fishing effort per zone was shown as was the transshipment activity per port with the idea of having the observers where transshipments takes place. (For PNA members FSM had 36% of the transshipments, PNG had 26%, SB 16%, KI 11%, RMI 11%, NR 0%, TV 0%, PW 0%).

To calculate the numbers of observers need per country the port activity was multiplied by the total number of required observers. The following ballpark numbers were calculated for PNA purse-seiners initial training goals (PG 109, FSM 82, Kiribati 45, Solomons 36, Marshalls 22, Nauru 10, Palau 2, and Tuvalu 5). Training requirements for other vessels/programmes was also given USMLT (68 observers), FSMA (52). The estimated longline effort was calculated at 5,385 longline trips for small island developing states and 9,548 trips for ROP. At 5% observer coverage, with an observer boarding 10 trips per year an additional 75 observers will be required.

The total number of observers that are required for 100% coverage on purse-seiners is anticipated to be approximately 437 observers. A longline coverage rate of 5% will require a further 75 observers, giving a grand total of **510** observers (note: now at 400, including cadets). The attrition of observers is around 100 new observers will be needed yearly and the use of extra 'specialised observers' (sampling / compliance etc) are already been discussed

465 observers have been trained since 1997, but 60% of these are no longer available mainly due to a lack of work being available at the end of training. 191 observers are presently available in FFA members' states, so another 320 need to be trained. FFA training costs for 2009 were itemised and calculated in the region of \$300,000 USD. Placement costs provided by SPC were calculated to be \$140 USD per boat per day. This suggested that a cost recovery amount from vessels is **\$150 USD** per day. The amounts charged by FFA members are well below this at the moment. The costs could be recovered individually or collectively through the vessel day scheme, vessel registration fees etc. There are additional training costs to be considered. FFA currently has a consultant putting together a business plan to look at how individual countries can benefit, by building in all costs of observer placements.

### For next year - 2010

Six trainings are envisaged and these will aim to bring up the skills of the current cadets and build up the number of longline observers. Training was to focus on FSM, KI and observers from Nauru, but some of those needs have already been met. There will be continued emphasis on the successful training of trainers and building debriefer numbers. There is an intention to look at electronic recording of data and hopefully to employ a new position to help with the coordination of observers and try to address the data volume issues. FFA will aim to facilitate ROP accreditation for all national programmes.

FFA congratulated everyone around the table for facing up to and meeting the gigantic challenge of the FAD closure period. It was generally assumed that the national programmes wouldn't be able to meet the requirements but they did. With the encouragement of SPC a round of applause was initiated. The chairman went further saying that it was a momentous task, and much of it had been achieved with personal sacrifices. He urged participants to take the time to reflex on the lessons they had learned and to prepare to overcome any of the previous short-coming which had been forced by inadequate resources by voicing their needs strongly. FSM recognised the efforts that the regional organisations had made helping them with the challenge.

### **FFA - Operational Summary**

Ambrose Orianiha'a took the time to thank the national programmes for their support while noting that FFA has no observers of their own so they relied on national programmes for observers. They also wanted to strongly express their thanks to Gordon Yamasaki in Pago Pago as well as NFA, NORMA MIMRA and the Solomon Island programme for their outstanding and unprecedented support during the FAD closure period.

Last licensing period USMLT - 21<sup>st</sup> licensing period, 54 trips were covered. For the FSMA (during the same period – 14<sup>th</sup> LP) 41 trips were covered. All observers came from member countries. This year, which included the FAD closure period for the USMLT – out of 39 possible vessels they placed observers on 31 vessels and currently 57 trips have been covered. For the FSMA 23 vessels were part of the current licensing period and observers were placed on 11 vessels, while the other 12 vessels were taken care of by MIMRA (RMI) and NORMA (FSM).

There are currently 40 observers out at sea and contact is being kept with them through the weekly report. Coordinators were encouraged to keep in constant contact with FFA as this gave them a link to their at-sea observers and that connection was valuable not only for the programmes but also for the observer's families.

Some of the lows experienced during the year are recurring issues which FFA had no direct control over like money transfers, flight delays and travel visas. They also expressed concern in not being involved in any logistical meeting before the start of the FAD closure. A lot of extra resources were used during the FAD closure period i.e. over-time, fuel for transport, stationary etc and while it was a pleasure to serve the region it will not be possible to do this on a continual basis without extra support. There were many interjections at this point about the problems and burdens of the FAD closure and it was agreed to pursue this further under another agenda item. The main highlight of the year was the excellent support the programme was given by national coordinators in the region.

Ambrose referred to paragraph 184. of the last ROCW report (draft) and reiterated the benefits of being able to deploy observer from non-PNA members for the FSM arrangement. An appreciation for the FFA weekly report was offered by NOAA, noting how informative and useful it has been. Information about observer programmes is always appreciated and sought out by the media and other circles so it was suggested that any information programmes are able to provide will quickly find an audience.

### **FSM**

The FSM observer programme is a mature programme which started in the late 1970s. They have 12 regular observers. These were augmented by training in March for 23 cadet observers and most recently training assisted by the Marshall Island's observer programme that produced 21 observers, but only for purse-seine gear. The programme now has 56 observers. They hope to have another training this year assisted by FFA and would like to have 30 or more observers.

Port sampling continues but was affected by the recent FAD closure for which their entire observer crew were deployed on vessels. Only one port sampler was continuously available and this was not enough to cover all the unloadings. Roughly 50 trips were covered during the FAD closure period and all 35 observers were deployed. Currently it looks as if a new record of 110 plus boardings for the year will be achieved. The additional work created by the FAD closure put a lot of pressure on the programme both financially and on the staff involved. They welcomed the possibility of reviewing the FAD closure topic with the other participants and expressed their disappointment that a representative from the WCPFC was not able to join the meeting.

## **Tuvalu**

Tuvalu reported on the one boarding that they made onboard licensed purse-seiners. This was quite an achievement after many years of no activity due to a lack of operational funds. Three new observers were trained during the year and a funding proposal for an observer coordinator position is currently with their Ministry of Finance.

## **Cook Islands**

Highs: The recruitment of an expatriate observer from the Solomon Islands. The assistance of the Solomon Islands and SPC is gratefully acknowledged, the cooperation from industry, 9.4 % coverage level and the turtle bycatch mitigation and workshop syllabus with thanks to Mike McCoy and SPC and collaborations with other Pacific programmes.

Lows: Lack of available observers despite a number already being certified. Lack of funding (as opposed to support) for the observer programme for government. While recognising its obligations to the WCPFC it is still struggling to meet its national requirements. There was a reduction in fleet size and therefore the budget. Total coverage of northern fisheries to date has been insignificant.

## **Niue**

There are no trained observers available at this time. However, Niue would like to be in a position to provide assistance to the regional requirement to achieve 100% coverage on purse-seine vessels.

## **Tonga**

In 2008-2009, a maximum of eleven (11) local longline fishing vessels were licensed to fish within Tonga's fisheries waters, although not all were active. This year most vessels switched to harvest bech-de-mer and some have not left port since January 09.

Five observers were available for deployment and of those two were constantly overseas, and another opted to become a crew member towards the middle of the year. Two new observers were trained at the end of the year.

To date there have been five trips on the local fleet and five on the sub-regional programmes.

## **PNG**

*Oliver Teno gave a comprehensive overview on the administration of the PNG observer programme.*

The programme is administered under the National Fisheries Act (1988) and routine operations follow the Observer Manual and NFA Policy and Procedures Manual, while the day to day running is carried out by senior observer who work on a contract basis. The programme responsibilities include;



collecting observer data to ensure compliance with licensing conditions, facilitate boarding for the national, sub-regional and regional observer programmes, ensure effective debriefing and data management is in place and offer observer trainings to ensure a complete cadre of observer are available.

PNG now have a Programme Manager an observer officer, 159 observers located in 10 provinces with a budget close to 3.5 million Kina.

The administration highlights were deemed to be; the appointment of the programme manager, weekly administration briefings in headquarters which are relayed to the ports, the new operation office, replicated functional office service in each port

Logistically they would like increase their cadre of observer to 200 and achieve greater funder support while rationalising their services and activities. PNG printed their workbooks locally for the first time in 2009.

*Philip Lens gave a presentation on the PNG observer programme's operations during the year.*

A detailed list of all 159 observers was presented (with name, observer code, home port and province, observer rank, and internal employee number), as well as a summary of 18 senior observers, who are also de-briefers. The coverage by fleet was shown. Observers boarded purse-seiners, longliners, payao deployments, prawn trawls and mothership vessels from 2008 to mid - 2009. No boardings were made on shark longliners or live reef fish vessels due to a decline in operations attributed to the high cost of fuel and the suspension of the life reef licences after continuous breaches of the licensing condition. In total 143 observer trips were carried out, of these 122 were on purse seiners and 14 on longliners.

The operational highlights were;

- Own national trainers (2 appointed and 3 apprentices).
- Full basic training offered nationally includes; sea safety, fire fighting, first aid, post harvest, and basic computing. All are offered at PNG National Fisheries College (NFC).
- Seaman Record Book issued to observers upon successful completion of basic seamanship component.
- 159 active observers, with an aim of 175 by end of 2009 and targeting 200 by early 2010.
- Largest programme in the region with some of the best observers.
- Authorized ROP programme.
- Covering seven different fisheries.
- Completed FAD closure coverage (27 on Japanese vessels, 3 on UST, 2 on FSMA, and 4 on Taiwanese).
- Fully functioning offices in the capital and at five provincial ports.
- Observers continually assigned to special projects (stomach, liver, muscle, otholith, spill sampling, tagging and tag seeding).
- Observers successful in their applications to other employers (i.e. Provincial Fisheries Dept, NFC and NFA).

The operation lowlights were seen to be;

- Some disciplinary issues with observers.
- Repatriation from foreign ports.
- Prawn trawl coverage.

- Port sampling – this is carried out under the NFA Fisheries Management section and is not assigned to observer programme.
- Observer workbook and waterproof form supply
- Observer database and MapInfo software

*Manoi Kutan presented a summary of PNG training activities*

PNG currently employ a training coordinator (Manoi Kutan), an observer tutor (Glen English) and three associate trainees. Two trainings have already been completed this year with 33 observers certified from 34 participants. Training was extended to 8 weeks from five with four of those weeks being general seamanship and the other four weeks used for the observer component. Now using associate trainers (apprentices) to support various parts of the observer trainings and developing practical exercises for some areas of the observer training.

Areas where future improvements are planned are with more video coverage covering the fishery operations and sourcing more training equipment – laptops, printers, projectors. Administratively they see the need to improve the coordination of the training desk, to decentralise the training tasks (i.e. it is now a Fisheries College - NFC responsibility and not NFA), and augment the competencies with those for performance appraisal and capacity enhancement.

FSM enquired whether the training was available for regional purposes. They were informed that while PNG's main aim was national training there was a general agreement that the ultimate aim was to provide regional training. It was explained that their observers can move onto the NFC especially when they have sea-days under their belt (a pre-requisite for the NFC college) and that they were heartened to see some experienced observers move into industry or other government positions. This helps to spread the word of the observer!

SPC highlighted that the observer programmes in the Pacific enjoyed better retention rates and this was a direct result of recruitment requiring a lower education level than more developed countries, and that these observers saw the work as a career path. NOAA mentioned that they also had a better retention rate from their Alu Like program, which did not require university education for entry. The last factor in observer retention rates was thought to be the availability of work on graduation.

### **Solomon Islands**

Currently have 61 observers, 16 are fully trained observers while 45 are cadet observers with two national trainers who have gone through intensive SPC / FFA training during the last 2 years and four debriefers in place as from the end of last year.

Lows:

The placement of observers onboard longliners has been a recurring issue over the last eight years. There have been difficulties with vessels fishing under bilateral agreements which do not offload in the Solomons. The claim that a lack of space (the observer would have to replace one crew member) and the burden of accommodating an observer over the long trip as barriers to accepting an observer. An attempt will be made to strengthen understanding on these issues in upcoming bilateral talks/negotiations.

Only about one quarter of the newly trained cadet observers have been deployed for the fad closer as fishing activity in the zone has been low. Some of the reasons given by companies include the cost of steaming to port to get an observer. Port sampling funds were not allocated in 2009; however, the

program will look at reviving these activities in 2010. Observer repatriation was another challenge experienced during the year.

Highs:

In national trainers development two national trainers have been involved in trainee trainer trainings. One has been involved in trainings in the Solomons, PNG, Kiribati and Vanuatu. One national observer is currently assisting the Cook Islands programme for a second term and this shows the Solomons commitment to regional solidarity. The involvement in the new spill sampling trial is also considered a high for the program, the Solomon Islands Program acknowledge SPC's assistance and interim funding towards this project. The 45 national cadet observers who will hopefully be fully trained in November as well as the debriefing carried out by senior observers for all disembarking observers are also considered highs for the programme.

### **Palau**

Palau's Oceanic Fisheries Programme is in its third year. Thirteen trips were completed in 2007 another 13 trips in 2008 and also 13 trips by the end of September 2009. The current highlights are thought to be the good base information which has gradually been built up on the local fleet, and the growing cooperation and improved liaison with industry. Six observers passed training in 2008 and most (5) have been deployed on sub-regional programme vessels, which included the FAD closure period. The lowlights were the lack of logistical information that was made available from pertinent policy meetings on the FAD closure and the fact that there were few avenues for information to help the programme prepare for FAD closure period. Further observer training will be formally requested and a national trainer and a debriefer are also required. It would be preferred if these were in place before any future training. NMFS enquired after the total number of active observers to which Palau replied six, including two female observers, one of which went out on a USMLT vessel (the first of her gender to do so) and by all accounts the trip has been successful. SPC enquired about the programme corporate status and were advised that a review is under place with a move to the Fisheries, away from the Enforcement Section, the likely outcome.

### **Marshall Islands**

There are three staff involved in the programme's management. The Coordinator (also trainer), a national trainer (trainee) and a observer supervisor. There are 33 active observers and all but 3 of these were involved in the FAD closure. RMI have a reciprocal arrangement with NORMA whereby their observers will be used on our flagged vessels and vice-versa. In 2008 71 trips were covered and training was provided to 10 new recruits. Assistance was also provided to FSM to run their own national training. The coordinator also was on attachment to NMFS to absorb their approach to observer training in July for which MIMRA expressed their thanks to NMFS.

One national trainer is currently being groomed by SPC / FFA and he was involved in national training in July and then went to FSM under the supervision of RMI's Coordinator to train 21 observers for FSM.

Purse-seine unloadings are being covered by four observers who have managed 50% of all port calls so far in 2009. Three staff also provided continuous debriefing, placements etc. However, they noted the extra stresses on the programme's capacity to manage the increased coverage. MIMRA now have a legal officer and this will help deal with any incidents. There is an intention during the month of October to suspend all trips and spend more time on data management, scanning, data entry and debriefing.

## **SPC**

There are two positions at SPC tasked with observer programme duties; Peter Sharples (Observer Coordinator) and Siosifa Fukofuka (Observer and port Sampler Trainer). A third position Deirdre Brogan (Fishery Monitoring Position) provides some assistance, but the role is more concerned with the overall approach to national data management.

Both positions were heavily involved in observer training over the last year and a half due to staff illness and then the ‘madness’ of the preparations for the FAD closure. A major role for SPC, in its role as capacity building for member countries has been the preparation of the training standards to allow and facilitate training of observers by national programme. The development of the standards was hampered by the amount of time that was required to be spent in training, but a final product (the consultant’s report) has been made available to the workshop. SPC’s role as scientific provider to the Commission, and the greater number of scientists has also affected the work done by the observer unit at SPC. A concentrated review of the purse-seine sampling protocols, involvement in tagging trials and an examination of length weight relationship were all areas that required attention during the year.

The scientific committee (SC) endorsed the new spill sampling, confirmed that the data collected from the trials were superior to the normal grab sampling and suggested that this way of sampling will become a feature of observer work in the future. There was some disappointment that the extra observer work load and difficulties of implementing the sampling were not taken into account by the SC and the presumption that spill sampling could be instigated by the end of next year drew some short breaths. FSM asked whether the new spill sampling method had been presented in training, and while SPC said it had been it is obvious that previously trained observer will still have to be upgraded.

## **Samoa**

Samoa summarised the various vagaries of their observer programme over the years. They noted that previously six observers were trained and while some did board USMLT trips it has always been harder to get observers on the local fleet and this has affected observer retention. Internal management issue and issues with the local fleet (lack of space for observers, safety aspects) continue to task the programme. Samoa do hope to overcome these challenges and believe a recent fisheries re-structuring will help their cause. It was noted that they are ideally situated to assist with the pressing need for observers from Pago Pago NMFS –How many observers – only 2, training local staff for alias. After questioning Samoa confirmed that there are currently two trained observers available in country.

## **New Caledonia**

There was a new coordinator who started during 2009 and one new observer was recruited. One of the previous observers moved to port sampling work. 15-16 trips were covered during the year and port sampling was carried out in Noumea and in Koumac, the new albacore sampling programme has been followed since July 2008 with 122 samples already collected. Many of the issues with the ‘Pescana’ fleet with prevent both at-sea and port side sampling have been resolved. SPC asked how this problem was resolved and they were told that there was a change in the position of Director, and the new Director accepted sampling of the vessels.

## **Vanuatu**

Vanuatu is a young observer programme. They now have eight full time observers and 31 cadet observers. They recently covered six transhipments in port, and 15 unloadings for fresh bigeye and yellowfin shipments to Japan by the newly established Taiwanese fishing base. Port sampling coverage is 100%. There have been two placements on locally based foreign vessels and 4 on carriers

vessels, these vessels fish in Vanuatu and tranship their by-catch to Fiji.). The lack of debriefers is seen as a programme low, along with the fact that they weren't able to place any of their 31 cadets during FAD closure. The highlights have been establishing good connections with industry especially for observer payments and acquiring funds for trainings etc. SPC commended Vanuatu on establishing these profitable liaisons.

## **Fiji**

The programme commenced in 2002 under the authority of the Tuna Management Plan, The Marine Spaces Act (Cap 158A) and the Fisheries Act (Cap 158). Currently there are 52 Fiji flagged vessels and 84 locally based foreign vessels registered. In 2008 there were 46 licences issued and 11 trained observers with two port samplers to cover these vessels. The programme is involved in; observer placements (national and USMLT), port sampling for licensed vessels, unloading supervision (foreign vessel) and data collection (logsheets and unloading data). Their aim for 2008, under the annual corporate plan was to achieve 60 obs. trips, 144 port samples, 100% supervision on all foreign unloadings and cover all requests for USMLT trips. In 2008 they achieved a 7% coverage rate. They are also involved in stomach sampling (SPC), stripped marlin, turtle mitigation programme and the cetacean mitigation project (USP). They would like to train 10 more observer and two debriefers.

## **NOAA Fisheries (National Marine Fisheries Service - NMFS)**

### *Pacific Islands Region, American Samoa Field Office*

Managed by Gordon Yamasaki this office has recently moved to Pago Plaza, Suite 202 (at the end of the harbour). There are three port samplers attached to the office and the office ensures that data are collected from vessels unloading to the local canneries, with a particular emphasis on USMLT vessels. A strong request to FFA was made for a minimum of two weeks' notice to be given for any observer placements. This is the time needed to acquire local entry permit waiver documents (*Note a US visa is not valid for entry into American Samoa, a local entry permit must be obtained*). NMFS continues to facilitate observer placements by arranging transport, advance funds, temporary accommodations, placement aboard the vessel and/or repatriation of the observer on return. A full placement meeting carried out by the Manager, or staff, in the presence of the Captain and observer. A special reminder was issued to all observers that they must carry their own bedding supplies – blanket, pillows, sheet, shoes and all personal toiletries. When asked about the upcoming cannery closure Gordon replied that one will close at the end of the month and the status of the other cannery was unclear although many rumors had been heard. The issue of local entry permits initiated a long and interesting discussion on observer travel requirements in general.

### *American Samoa Longline Observer Programme*

See websites

[www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/st4/nop/regions/american\\_samoa\\_tuna.html](http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/st4/nop/regions/american_samoa_tuna.html)

[www.pifsc.noaa.gov/wpacfin/index.php](http://www.pifsc.noaa.gov/wpacfin/index.php),

[http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/IFD/ifd\\_index.html](http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/IFD/ifd_index.html),

[http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/OBS/obs\\_index.html](http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/OBS/obs_index.html)

[http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/OBS/obs\\_american\\_samoa.html](http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/OBS/obs_american_samoa.html)

<http://www.pifsc.noaa.gov/wpacfin/as/Pages/>

Steve Kostelnik, the Observer Coordinator presented information from the programme.

There are currently 40 permits for fishing in the American Samoa EEZ, of these 24 boats are actually fishing along with one alia. Some vessels are currently in Hawaii and some are tied up.

Two observers from the Hawaii Observer Programme cover the fleet at any one time. There have been four different observers involved in the programme during 2009. The programme is seen as an extension of the Hawaiian programme and they use a modified manual. Most observers do around four trips before returning to Hawaii and the average trip length is around 47 days. Currently there are no local observers, but there are intentions to use them in the future with training under Alu Like and NMFS.

There have been 38 trips since March 2006. The current coverage level is 8.79, with a target of 7%. The program plans on ramping up the coverage to 40% with 10-12 observers for 2010 and 2011. Annual protective species workshops are a requirement and are conducted for captains, owners and crew. Interactions with any species of special interest are passed on to the American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife. Biological samples are collected for SPC's albacore sampling programme. Safety drills are also conducted along with a vessel safety check and orientation before observer departures.

One of the challenges has been that many boats do not have US Coast Guard stickers and observers will not be placed on a vessel without one. A vessel is obliged to stay in port until they get a sticker before they can depart. Vessels are picked randomly; the coordinator does not make the selection, so only selecting vessels with stickers is not an option. Having a sticker is a national requirement and while a vessel can leave without an observer they will have all their fish confiscated if they depart without the observer and the sticker. In the early days of the programme some boats sat around for a month before getting the sticker, but the observer programme believes it is important to stand strong on this safety issue. Other safety checks are done during placement as there have been boats with stickers which were deemed to be unsafe.

SPC encouraged the Coordinator to board a purse-seine trip with a view to becoming involved in purse-seine debriefing for observers disembarking from USMLT trips.

Cooks Islands enquired about the use of Saltwater (Observer Contractor) employees in their own programme and they were reminded that these issues were covered before, but NMFS are willing to re-visit the idea again.

#### *NMFS – Hawaii*

The current coverage is 20% on tuna vessels and 100% on swordfish. There are 164 vessels fishing out of Hawaii. There is an obligation on swordfish vessels to inform the programme when they intend to go fishing and an additional obligation on the programme to supply an observer. Concern for species of special interests by environmental groups continues to keep the pressure on this observer programme. A new law suit generated from false killer whale interactions may require increased coverage, especially for American Samoa, Many feel these interactions are a result of behaviour it is unclear whether the interactions can be reduced in the short term. Bigeye is another species that they are currently keeping a close eye, especially with the new allocation. All interactions with species of special interest are reported to the program via satellite phone. The Hawaiian fleet only take 17 turtles per year, and this is in stark contrast to the thousands of turtles taken by some fisheries in some Eastern Pacific areas and the Mediterranean.

Two pilot projects will be initiated to explore the possibility of observers collecting electronic data. Two different platforms will be tested and the results of the project can be made to Pacific Island programmes. Basic training continue as there is a high turnover with observers. This is a major cost for the programme along with observers getting sea-sick. If a vessel is forced to return because of a sea-sick observer the programme is liable for the costs. There may be a need to re-visit the recruitment process.

The programme was pleased to be able to invite two Pacific Islanders (Manoi Kutan and Manasseh Avicks) to Hawaii to sit in on their trainings. They have also been involved in training with other Pacific observers from the Philippines, Indonesia and Vietnam, through the Coral Triangle Initiative and are offering to host senior observers to participate in their debriefings. PNG, FFA and SPC warmly expressed their gratitude to NMFS for their various inputs into training over the last year.

## **Report of the 8th ROCW, Koror, Palau**

The participants took time to review the report of the last workshop. No comments or amendments were suggested.

## **Review of WCPFC CMM2008-01**

Tim Park from FFA, using a presentation usually intended for observers, guided the participants through the Conservation and Management Measure for Bigeye and Yellowfin Tuna in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (CMM2008-01).

The aim (over a three year period, starting in 2009) is to achieve a 30% reduction in fishing mortality on bigeye from the average fishing level obtained in (2001 – 2004 or 2004) and to ensure there is no increase in yellowfin fishing mortality during the same period.

- It applies to the Convention area which is contained within the 20 degrees north and 20 degrees south of the Equator boundary lines.
- Three fishing activities are concerned; 1) the use of FAD, 2) the retention of catch and 3) fishing in high seas pockets.
- Activities 1 and 2 will be monitored using 100% observer coverage and activity 3 through VMS
- These activities will be limited from;

For 1)

During 2009: 0000 August 1 – 2400 September 30 UTC

During 2010/11: 0000 July 1 – 2400 September 30

For 2)

During 2009: not applicable

During 2010/11: From 1 January 2010 +

For 3)

During 2009: not applicable

During 2010/11: From 1 January 2010 +

During the noted periods vessels without an observer from the ROP must cease fishing and return to port.

*To note* 20% coverage overall in 2009 required, the FAD closure period will result in this target being achieved ~18%, but vessels fishing outside during closure period have to get their coverage elsewhere / later on during the year.

- FADs are natural or manmade devices that can be anchored or drifting: log, raft, payo, branch, live or dead whale etc. Vessels cannot deploy or service any FAD or any associated electronic devices or fish on schools that are associated with FADs nor can they make a FAD set which is less than 1 nautical mile away from a floating object from the time that the skiff is released.
- Some fleets have gained an exemption, but they must show a 10% reduction in bigeye fishing mortality through 100% port sampling coverage and a show a commitment to having 20% observer coverage in the future.
- Catch retention requires vessels to keep all bigeye, yellowfin and skipjack onboard until the next in port unloading.
- The catch retention exemptions are relevant to target catch only and are clarified as: in the final set of a trip if there is insufficient well space to accommodate all fish caught in that set; set sharing is ok with another purse-seine vessel provided this is not prohibited under any applicable national laws; where fish are unfit for human consumption and when serious malfunction of equipment occurs.
- An observer's role is to record information as prescribed by the regional data forms and in diaries, trip reports, but they are not to offer any direction to the vessel.

### *Comparison of CMM2008-01 and the 3IA*

A table showing the similarities and differences between the CMM2008-01 and the 3rd Implementing Arrangement (3IA) for Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) was presented by Tim Park (see appendix 2.)

Generally the two policies are similar. However the 3IA only applies to 'foreign' vessels and therefore it is not applicable to FSMA and USMLT vessels and it was noted that there has been some confusion between them as they have similar start dates and overlapping requirements. There were some questions about whether national vessels could fish on FADs in national waters. FFA commented that this is contrary to the CMM2008-01 which is applicable to all waters from 20 degrees North to 20 degrees South, within the Convention area. They agreed that this item had been confusing for skippers and some coastal states and that it was likely to generate discussion at the TCC meeting.

### *Affects of FAD closure period on national programmes*

FSM – A lot of the unloading activity took place in Pohnpei during the closure period and the national programme was extremely strained. Their own observer numbers were low, but many of the vessels wanted FSM observers as it was expensive to source them elsewhere. At one moment there were FSMA, USMLT, KR, CH Taipei vessels in port at the same time, all looking for observers. FSM sent an email to other national programmes looking for assistance and this at least let them know if other observers were available. Fishing companies sent constant emails with hundreds of emails coming in a day. Fleet managers were also flying in and looking for personal assistance.

There was not always enough equipment for travelling observers. FSM reported that about 40% of their workbooks were utilised by observers from other programmes and they need to consider if there are any cost recovery options for this. And while cadet training was provided to increase the observer numbers, the cadet workbooks took longer to arrive. Photocopying was done in the meantime. Flight bookings were particularly heavy and even if an observer was sourced from elsewhere they flight



books were not always available. Travel visas also affected the movements of observers. The increase in coverage on purse-seiners affected their ability to cover their longline fleet.

NMFS commended FSM on their achievements, but warned that this will happen again, so it will be good to learn some of the lessons ahead of time. FFA noted that FSM were the main focus of activity at the time, but also reminded countries that they wanted this opportunity and for that reason at least they should stand up to the challenge. PNG noted the need to prepare in advance.

Tuvalu were not greatly affected by the FAD closure as there was less activity in their zone at the time.

Niue do not have any observers at this time.

Cooks did not have any purse-seine activity in their waters. They now recognise that they can make a valuable contribution to the regional effort by supplying observers and they hope to be in a position to do so in the future.

Tonga had no activity in their zone but they did supply three national observers to the sub-regional programme during the period.

PNG 's policy is to achieve 100% national coverage in the first instance, but they are always willing to consider regional requests. Logistically they have found passport and visa issues to be a challenge and they pointed out that since observers are not stationed in Port Moresby they need to be flown in to the capital and accommodated there first before they can fly out. PNG successfully supplied observers for 27 Japanese vessels during the closure. These placements were planned and observers were flown to Japan well before the first date of closure and the coverage went smoothly. They are in the enviable position of being able to provide full training for their own purposes and to other countries. Gordon queried the use of a non-standard form PNG observers were requesting from USMLT. PNG wanted to refer this matter back to their office for clarification, but believed the vessels were being asked to fill in the regional standard purse-seine unloading form. This may be required under bi-laterals but not the USMLT. PNG would seek clarification on the matter, but accepted it showed the need for a national implementation workshop. A standard code of conduct was proposed, so that observers operating under the ROP understand the requirements and are not left confused by the different national and regional legislation. They urged other programmes to direct or advise their observers on any matter if the need arose, and they were happy to reciprocate on this with any visiting observers.

Solomon Islands- The programme was affected by travel issues. One observer was stuck in Cairns for one week until a letter of guarantee of employment could be raised by the WCPFC. Travel and visas are difficult because you cannot process several at one time. Often visa costs etc have not been budgeted for. They highlighted that newly recruited observers can be shy and unsure of what to say to Immigration Officials. A letter or documentation to ease their travel is required. Advances for travelling observers needs to be considered. Agents are business men and they are not always aware of their obligations and may not have the funds to hand instantly. They used their own resources – fuel, stationary to help travelling observers. They did not have sufficient workbooks and forms were photocopied in the interim.

Discussion: FFA talked of the need to tackle the issues with a higher level. Their own programme will be out of money next month. SPC – not many of the Solomon cadet observers got out mostly due to low fishing activity in the zone, isn't that right. SB – yes. FSM – do you only issue a one way ticket to your observers? SB – yes. FSM – some airlines won't allow them to board without a return ticket. The discussion continued on the topic of observer travel. FFA there has been no final agreement if the costs will come directly from the Commission budget or from the providers. The budget issue was

always the last on the agenda and was constantly left in the 'too hard to handle' basket. At this stage that seems irresponsible and there was a consensus that this needs to be tackled with urgency.

Palau - Were able to send 5 certified observers to help cover the FAD closure. They are a young programme, and still need to source better funding, but hope to be in a better position for the next closure and meet what they accept as their responsibility to contribute to the regional efforts.

FFA (operations) – Noted their disappointment with the lack of information that was made available to observers about the closure. They received emails from observers asking questions about the FAD closure requirements. Vessel agents and captains were asking the same questions. Their own lack of resources were highlighted, especially manpower coupled with an increasing number of boardings. A few weeks ago they ran out of funds and this has affected some of the national accounts. They recognised that the way they spend money has some limitations, but hope that the new business plan will address this (see below).

The coverage that FFA achieved in 2009 would not have been possible without the support of national programmes. They also relied on resources supplied by FFA – staff bus for airport transfers etc. They reiterated their request to use non-PNA member observers especially since for the moment all observers are trained on multi-gears. The need for additional in-country accounts to streamline payments was accepted. A consultant is currently drawing up a business plan for the observer programme.

With regards to observers themselves FFA wanted to send a reminder to observers through their national programmes that raising a requisition for funds takes time. Both they and their families should be aware of this. Observers need to be medically fit before travelling and they were especially mindful of this with the recent passing away of Takaie Tabuia (Kiribati). Some observers had boarded at sea to facilitate the immense need for observers during the period.

Marshall Islands suffered many of the same issues and had only limited observers. Of their 33 observers, 30 have been deployed with only 3 are still on standby. They were short of equipment (workbook and calipers), although they did receive some during the closure period. They have a number of digital cameras for senior observers only, but feel they are necessary for observers to provide evidence of fishing on FADs.

It was difficult for MIMRA to keep up with debriefing and even getting observers to finish their reports within 3 or 4 days and get back out on the unloaded vessels was a test. MIMRA do facilitate advances for their own observers but are not in a position to do this for other programmes. One observer was bribed during the closure and the issue is now with their new legal officer. It looks like a substantial out of court fine will be paid. MIMRA were commended for following through on the incident.

SPC are totally under manned, this was true even before the FAD closure was announced. There was immense pressure for training especially, and the two staff members involved in the area were flat out all year. Meeting training needs left little time for other programme management or development work. Additionally, the equipment SPC have always supplied gratefully but without obligation came under pressure. Equipment has always been supplied to observer programmes in their start up period, but there was never any expectation that SPC would continue to supply equipment to mature programmes. Unfortunately, through both a misunderstanding and unprepared nature of the FAD Closure many programmes were left wanting, while new outside suppliers were sourced and tested. SPC finances have not been able to stretch to the additional strains caused by the FAD closure and no extra funds were allocated to cope with 5 times the work.

Samoa was not involved in the FAD closure. FFA encouraged Samoa to prepare observers for placements onboard purse-seine vessels as they are the closest port to Pago Pago. Niue and the Cook Islands were also asked to consider helping the regional efforts to maintain 100% observer coverage.

New Caledonia are not a FFA member state nor do they have an operational purse-seine fleet.

Vanuatu trained 31 cadet observers but unfortunately they were not able to get them onboard. Funding was in place but it wasn't understood at the time they could not put their own observers on Vanuatu flagged vessels. FFA noted that since Vanuatu was not a member of the FSMA they were not able to use their observers either. Vanuatu now intends to upgrade their cadets to full observers in the near future.

Fiji commended the efforts of the other national programmes in meeting the regional obligations. They, much like PNG, are obliged to achieve their national coverage first as this is stipulated in their national development plan. However, they are also interested in contributing to the regional observer programme and they will require more trainings to achieve this. They need to review their insurance for observers travelling overseas. SPC queried whether the policy to have all observers as government employees will change in the future and therefore allow observer to be used overseas. Fiji replied that this policy was not a hindrance to overseas deployments, but rather the need to achieve national coverage in the first instance.

### *Issues or difficulties during the FAD closure period as reported to the WCPFC*

Tim Park presented a list of challenges encountered during the FAD closure period as reported to WCPFC. (See appendix 1.) Many of these challenges were submitted by the national observer programmes. The list generated the following comments.

Programmes were reminded that from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2010 100% coverage is required and that will be a monumental task for programmes. Lessons have been learnt, and now is the time to act on them. Only challenges with boardings have been encountered to this point, pressure for the data management area is only around the corner.

A task force (made up of volunteers from the workshop and others) is required to look at and prepare for all the issues noted during the workshop. A moderator who can spread out the load should be appointed. Everyone, including the regional programmes are over-tasked so saying you are too busy is not acceptable. The challenge is to let people know “what can be done”, not just “what needs to be done”.

#### Specific Issues

- Take note! 100% coverage starts on the 1<sup>st</sup> Jan. during the holiday high-travel season. Observers should be in place well ahead of time.
- The first challenge is to identify observers for the fleets/ vessels.
- Don't let the vessel “play” with the programme. Use strong enforcement and reminders to show whose jurisdiction the vessels were fishing in. (Issues which show vessels are playing around: leaving dogs in the wheelhouse, requesting and then not using observers etc, using un-authorized observers).
- Using un-authorized observer may breach confidentiality procedures.

- Insurance for observers (which will include any transfers at sea) needs to be resolved under the Commission
- Some of the incidents are not new (dog in the wheelhouse)

Consider this

- If you don't get back up from your superiors, re-consider your positions.
- Be encouraged that these problems also arise in mature programmes.
- Fleets that have been compliant will not appreciate that others have not played ball. Ask them to put pressure on these other fleets through the Commission.
- Keep complaining until you get results! Get the information flowing on to a place where it can be acted on.
- The issues should be dealt with nationally, with internal workshop / review etc.
- The issues show there was not enough dialogue between policy and implementation.

Tasks ahead

- A ROCW task force should be formed to bring the needs of the observer programme to TCC. The normal avenue to achieve this is for the report of this meeting to go to the MCS meeting and then to be considered at TCC. FFA currently preparing a brief on the FAD closure for TCC. A summary of the discussion at ROCW can be included. Some of the participants from ROCW will also attend TCC.
- The IWG ROP's technical workshop has not yet been formed and it is an ideal venue to work through these logistical problems. Put pressure on ROP to get this group formed.
- NMFS intends to highlight these issues with its own authorities.
- PNA members to consider putting together their own task force to tackle the issues
- The group should become more result orientated.
- It may not be worthwhile bringing specific problems to the Commission i.e. bribery, but rather policies or any direction that will help programmes deal with specific issues, especially those caused by the Commission's directives.

## Placements

### *At-sea transfers*

The increased pressure of the FAD closure saw some observers placing themselves on vessels and others doing this after being transferred to a second vessel at sea. The merits and dangers of this practice were discussed.

- The increased need for observers means there is greater pressure on observers to do back-to-back trip (approx. 3 months). This is encouraged for USMLT observers and was a recent requirement for SPC observer contracts for spill sampling.
- Travel makes up two-thirds of an observer's trip costs.
- Multiple trips are the leading reason for observers to leave the programme.
- Observers who transfer at sea will be out of contact with their observer programme, often until the next weekly report, although the Commission will always know when an observer has been placed (reporting requirement).

- Some observers may not want to do a second trip, especially if they have endured any particular mental or physical stresses during the first trip. Should they be forced to do the second trip?
- At-sea transfer can be physically dangerous.
- It is likely that vessels will put pressure on programmes to transfer when CMM-2008-01 comes into force on the 1<sup>st</sup> January.
- If transfers are done at sea the placement meeting cannot take place. The importance of the placement meeting to outline the duties and obligations of both the vessel and the observer has been a recurring theme of the meeting.
- Allowing at-sea transfers is not true to the spirit of the CMM which aims to reduce the fishing mortality.
- Observer programmes should consider having a placement policy in place.
- Transfers at sea is a safety issue. Safety is compromised when observers are transferred at sea.
- It would be helpful to get Commission guidelines on the practice.
- Transferring at sea suggests fleets are not properly prepared when it comes to sourcing and placing observers.
- Programmes have an ‘obligation of care’ to the observer to ensure that they have been placed properly.
- Data collected by observers who transfer at sea can still be used by scientists. All observer data can be used but it may not be possible to use it for all analysis.
- Observers need to know that they may have to do extra trip.
- There has to be a policy on transfers at sea because there will be time when observers want to get off the boats. Observer also needs to know his obligations and this can be done through placement or terms of reference.
- Vessel’s report on the condition of the observer to include any possible at-sea transfers.
- The 21-day notice to the Commission needs to be clarified/ amended to give more time to prepare.
- FFA to keep a list of observers that are on standby. Vessel operators can then see where there are observers available.
- To overcome the problem a centralized coordination was proposed but technically fleets must coordinate themselves with national programmes
- Manual for boarding or moving observers

### *Access and use of collected information (digital cameras)*

Observers need to understand that all information collected including photographs during an observer trip remain the property of the observer programme. FFA stated that all photos taken during FFA trips are the property of FFA. National programmes are urged to have a policy to cover the use of collected information. Some images may be mis-understood and are likely to cause difficulties if released into the general public

### *Travel and repatriation*

There were many tribulations with managing observers’ travel to overseas ports. The workshop suggested compiling a resource document to show the national visa requirements. The group believed that the Commission was in a very strong position to negotiate with Immigration authorities in the relevant airports and alert them of role of observers and to hopefully produce a letter, certificate or otherwise to assist travelling observer with both entry into the country and the procurement of visas.

Other items to consider

- One way travel tickets were purchased at times as the return dates were unknown but were unhelpful for speedy travel.
- A local entry permit is required for American Samoa. The procedures are different to those in the US or Guam for instance. Passport details must be sent to the local NMFS office (Gordon Yamasaki) at least two week in advance.
- Multiple entry visa, although less common these days, should be explored especially for the US and Australia. Applications could be supported by the Commission.
- Observers should have at least six months left in their passport and 3 empty pages.

### ***Funding and other implications***

The unprecedented increase in coverage had hit many operational budgets hard. Many programmes are now short of funds until the end to the year. SPC and FFA are both short of funds at this stage. They were tasked with doing five times the work with the same funds. SPC acknowledges that they have provided equipment to programmes in the past, but stipulated there was never any obligation to do so and that they were unable to meet all the requests for equipment for the last FAD closure. If countries want SPC to continue to do this work they should have their national representative put a request through CRGA

Sourcing the funds for an observer programme needs to be done under the bilateral agreement. The Commission has no funds for observer placements etc.

PNG will increase their budget by 30% next year and RMI have sufficient funds in their observer levy fund as long as it is not appropriated by other sections or outside agencies.

## **Equipment**

### ***Workbooks***

SPC experienced pressure on their workbook orders because of the FAD closure. Over a 1000 units were shipped during the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2009, when normally 400 units per year are shipped. Additionally new procedures were set up to help countries become more independent in producing and sourcing workbooks. This included making an electronic file of the workbooks available and sourcing outside printers in Guam and Australia. The average costs for printing and shipping workshops were shown below.

### **All figures in US dollars - and all workings estimates**

All shipping and printing quotes depend on the amount ordered - unit costs, normally are lower for larger orders.

### **PS Workbooks**

Printing Costs	Shipping/ kg	Total per workbook
		X 0.63 plus printing

SPC	10 USD	15 -30	<b>20 to 30</b>	Shipping to all countries.
Guam	10 USD	2-3	<b>11 to 12</b>	Shipping to FSM / RMI / Palau ??
Australia	15 USD	5 USD	<b>18</b>	Shipping to Solomons only..
Fiji	11 USD	???		

Printing	Shipping	<b>Total per PS-4</b>	
<b>PS-4s</b>		X 0.3	
SPC	5 USD	15-30	<b>10 to 15</b>
			Waterproof paper difficult to source.

PS Workbook is 400g and LL-4 is 300g. PS-4 is 300g and, LL wxbs is 400g and LL-4 is 300g

*Overseas printer contacts:*

Graphic Center, Inc., 240 Biang St. #1, Mong Mong, Guam USA 96910, 1-671-472-3072  
 Email: [rbiolchino@yahoo.com](mailto:rbiolchino@yahoo.com) (President).

Print Systems Australia, PO Box 69, Salisbury Q4107, 172 Evans Road, Salisbury, Q 4107.  
[www.printsystems.com.au](http://www.printsystems.com.au).

***Calipers***

There was a lack of calipers during the FAD closure. Calipers are not needed by every observer, at least initially, but there should be an effort to distribute what calipers that are available across the fleets. There seem to be no difficulties getting calipers or other equipment out of the various Custom offices around the region.

Calipers are best issued individually. The care of the item increases dramatically when issued to individuals. There were some calls to have calipers made available on each vessels as they are hard to travel with. Many thought that the vessels would not take care of the caliper. Measuring boards could be integrated into the new sampling bins, although left-hand observers would be at a disadvantage. The cost of calipers has been rising from 500 to 1000 Kina in PNG and while the prices remained the same for the SPC sourced calipers from NZ (150USD + shipping), it was thought the quality had suffered. FSM report the numbers coming off the recently received calipers from NZ.

***Digital data recorders***

NMFS have two pilot projects going to look at two different platforms to collect data electronically. It is understood that the cost of paper, data processing etc is an enormous burden and it seems inevitable that electronic data recorders will be used by observer programmes in the future.

Initially there is a large cost and much planning to be done before a workable solution with good back up can be found. NMFS has followed some of the trails being done by other US programmes, and they will be happy to release the result of their own project with the Pacific observer programmes. The use of cheap laptops had been suggested, but it was found that they don't last long in the saltwater

environment. Some issues to think about are; who will pay for the units and how will new data forms, debriefing and the cost of transmission be handled. Will the observer be allowed to use satellite transmission systems if the vessel is paying for the connection?

## **PIFRO – Observer Certification and Training Standards – Review**

Training is an essential part of ensuring an observer will do a good job. The number of trainings for observers has increased, but there are no trainings currently available for port coordinators, debriefers, placement officers, data entry and data management staff. Training observers in the new management measures is still required.

SPC and FFA recognise that they can no longer do all the training that is required. In the last few years they have started to train trainers and that has been particularly successful in PNG, as they are now able to run their own training courses. In the good old days, people were just put on the boats to see what was happening. The advent of the USMLT formalised observer training, but it was still a light load for observers who were often fishery officers taking a holiday! However, a lot has been learnt over the years from the various training and this information along with the need to outsource training has led to the development of training standards and protocols - PIFRO

The meeting is being used to launch the standards. The standards have been brought to the table before and have been endorsed by FFC which has helped to pave the way forward. While it took longer to develop the standards than planned it was recognised that there were no funds to help with the work and it was done alongside the heavy training schedule. The completed consultants report was presented for comments. See ‘Pacific Island Regional Fisheries Observer, Final Report. Available on the workshop website. <http://www.spc.int/oceanfish/Html/Meetings/ROCW9/index.htm>

Standards for observers are now in place and there are proposed standards for debriefers also, along with a policy to guide the work that needs to be done. What still needs to be done is to develop the training aids, and many of these have already been done. One of the essential elements to implementing the standards is having a good assessor. This is more important than a trainer. The way you assess your ability to train must be competent and consistent and meets the standards. Moderation of assessments means standards can be developed and changed as required. The new national trainers have done well in their role as trainers but they are more challenged with the assessments, so more work needs to be done in this area.

Each competency has a standard and an assessment guide to show how you will assess if an observer can do these skills. These will be made available on line, as they may need to be up-dated frequently. Associated with this will be the teaching materials so online training will be possible. Observers could even train themselves online. RMI asked that some material should be restricted to the trainers only and it was thought that the assessments, but not the training material would be kept restricted. There are different competencies i.e. port sampling etc. Some competencies are grouped under the competencies that are need to go to sea (i.e. fire fighting etc) and others were grouped to the specific gear types.

PIFRO permits active observers to be certified without the need for re-training. This saves costs and recognises existing competent observers. It is also flexible in that there is no need for an observer to train in all competencies. If you only have a longline fishery you don't have to carry out the purse-seine competencies. This approach was highlighted by the recent trainings of cadet observers.

Accreditation of training will include auditing the whole process of training, including items like funds for training and infrastructure/ equipment.



A training committee – CMC - was formed during the 7<sup>th</sup> ROCW, but the group has not been active since then. This committee will be tasked with; issuing certificates, supporting the delivery and assessment of observer training and making sure that training gets the support it needs. They will also be required to moderate the assessments and developing new training standards and assessments for any future training standards. They have an important role to play in the auditing of training. There is a pressing need for this group to re-form and to meet at the end of every ROCW.

The proposed qualifications structure shows the expected career path for an observer who will start with basic training. With sea-time and valid data then can become endorsed for a specific gear type and further training and sea-time will result in recognition as a senior observer etc.

It was noticed that there was no ‘compliance’ competency. This was discussed and it was felt that observers do not have a compliance role or enforcement powers - they only record and report on what they have seen. The observer does not act on what they have seen after the trip, neither does the observer programme. However, the enforcement unit may choose to act on the observer records.

All observer data is used for both compliance and science reasons and it is unhelpful to label observers as one type of observer over another. In fact there is no need to label an observer at all. Observers collect independent and impartial information and are trained to report on what they have seen. Obviously they will need to be train observers in specific compliance issues, but the report writing element is the main skill. Still, it is true that the recent decision to implement 100% observer coverage is a compliance one, and we should be mindful that many people see the observers in those terms. Conflict resolution training will be added.

PIFRO level 3 is an internationally recognised standard possibly equivalent to a high school certificate. PIFRO level 4 is recognised as international high level education standard.

The aspiration is to implement the standards straight away, but don’t there aren’t enough trainers to do this. PIFRO is slowly being introduced to the current training, but it is unlikely that there will be enough persons available to offer trainings by the end of next year. More work needs to be done to standardise the training for the trainers.

### *Training Requests*

Cooks Islands	2	Trainer training
FSM	15	
Fiji	10	
French Polynesia	–	
Kiribati		Request sent by email
Marshall Islands	20	
Nauru	–	
New Caledonia	1	
Niue	?	Future request for 2

Palau	4
PNG	Can offer training, accept request from CKs
Samoa	2
Solomon Islands	Upgrade current cadets
Tonga	3
Tuvalu	7
Vanuatu	

## **Workshop compilation of Important Tasks ahead**

### *For FFA Members*

#### **Centralised funding mechanisms**

A centralised funding mechanism for FFA member observer providers to cater for placements and operations is required. The fund should be flexible enough to deal with any fleets/programmes that are involved in only bi-lateral or more casual arrangements. It is recommended that the placement funds should be separated from the training and equipment funds as this will improve transparency and that the accounts are regularly audited by FFA or another independent body. Setting up bank accounts in member countries will also help streamline payments.

It is envisaged that the proposed new observer administration system (TOAD) will assist with facilitating centralised observer placements for FFA members and act as a repository of active observers. In the meantime a weekly email listing the basic details of deployed observers and their assigned vessels, along with an up-to-date list of certified observers should be circulated between programmes. FFC 67 endorsed a more active role for FFA with the coordination of placements. This may include sourcing observers for member's flagged vessels and providing repatriation assistance to their observers.

### *For the Commission's ROP Technical Working Group*

#### **Placement Procedures and Notification**

There were some difficulties with placement procedures in the past, especially during the last FAD closure period and a review of the placement procedures with a view to generating a general placement policy would be welcomed. Some areas that could be explored under the policy is access to a weekly list of available observers, the issue of at-sea transfers and the need for vessels to take a more active role in placements and repatriation as they do when in port outside FFA members zones.

The requirement for 21 days notification by fleets to the Commission for observers was thought to be sufficient; however observer providers would welcome a strengthening of the placement notification

process and request a further 14 day notification from the Commission to the observer provider detailing a vessel's estimated time of arrival (ETA). In requesting this observer providers acknowledge their own responsibility to have up-to-date lists of observers available for deployment.

The lines of communication for placement were found to be difficult during the FAD closure period and it was thought preferable for the provider to liaise directly with the vessels, rather than to the Commission. A copy of the correspondence can be sent to the Commission. It is understood that ETAs are notoriously difficult to predict, and for that reason it was suggested the one of the Commission's role could include arbitration for any placement difficulties that may arise.

### **At-sea Transfers**

The placement policy should prohibit at-sea transfers. The practice puts the observers at risk and it is not consistent with the aims of the CMM-2008-01, primarily aimed at reducing fishing mortality and ensuring full catch retention. Importantly, essential observer placement briefings cannot take place, offering further support to this request for a ban on any at-sea transfer activity under the ROP.

### **Observer Accommodation**

The Commission is urged to take on the responsibility of sending a clear and documented message to vessels which shows they are obliged to allocate a bunk of good standard to the observer for the duration of their deployment.

### **Insurance**

Observers must be fully insured at all times. Clear guidelines showing which parties are responsible for the observers' insurance at the different stages of their travel are required. Requesting relevant parties to submit details of their insurance coverage to the Commission would be helpful. The Commission is strongly urged to help small observer programmes find a product that suits their circumstances.

### **Travel Assistance**

Observer providers are concerned that managing observer travel continues to be challenging. The Commission is asked to help expedite observer travel by:

- instigating urgent high-level diplomatic negotiations to facilitate understanding and suitable recognition of the peculiar nature of observers' work that calls on travel to unexpected ports at short notice with a view to improving visa issue arrangements to enhance the safe and quick passage of observers through the main transit airports;
- formalising ROP observer identification cards; and
- supplying observers with recognised documentation that will explain their role to Immigration Authorities.
- Formal intervention with local airlines to clarify the specific travel needs of observers (one-way or reasonable return tickets) would be welcomed.

Observer Coordinators are acutely aware of the added complexity that the holiday period leading up to the 1<sup>st</sup> of January deadline for continuous 100% observer coverage of purse seine vessels, a period of much greater stress on travel networks and much slower operations in the bureaucratic frameworks that support their work. They urge that all parties pay due attention to this and do their utmost to pull their weight in whatever way they can help smooth the process. Observer Coordinators believe that the Commission Secretariat is in far better position in terms of prestige to exert influence, as described in the above paragraph.

## Critical data management issues

National and sub-regional observer programmes require formal and standardised guidelines to successfully deal with the ten-fold increase in data collection that they are already experiencing). The recent draft guidelines circulated by the Commission were welcomed, but these should consider the procedures that are already in place for national programmes, and provide an opportunity to comment on the draft.

Data management guidelines need to include data security and confidentiality issues and detail the acceptable access, use, processing and ownership of the data. Particular attention should be paid to the data dissemination procedures when working with or reporting on data from a trip where an infringement is known to have taken place. The commission reference to the 'timely submission of data' needs to be further clarified and the responsibilities for cost of the submission also made clear.

Commission to ensure there is an appropriate reaction (in speed and severity sufficient to support observers and prevent an advent of "if my superiors don't really care then why should I really care – a tough come-back from) to breaches or suspicious incidents as outlined in the reports Attachment 4 (?) and the death of an observer.

Should be ROP procedures for dealing with bribes etc

What are protocols with dealing with hindrance issues

What are the procedures for dealing with issues of obs destroying equipment on vessel

## Biological Sampling

### *Spill sampling*

Peter Sharples presented the new approach to species composition sampling on purse-seine vessels. A recent comprehensive review of species composition data found biases in observer data. The issues were thought to originate from the selection of fish by observers. The old sampling protocol (now know as grab sampling) where the observer self-selected 5 fish has been supplemented with a new approach to sampling – a spill sampling project. The initial analyses of the spill sampling results look very promising so much so that at the last SC it was suggested that all observers move to this type of sampling as soon as possible.

Some of the issues with the older grab sampling protocol were discussed. Collecting a genuinely random sample is difficult for observers. The inherent challenges with grab sampling were thought to be; large fish getting buried and small fish slipping past the sampling area, brail layering was thought to be occurring, and this continued on to the well. The hopper presented the best grab sampling opportunity (the fish were well mixed) but there were less hoppers were available.

Spill sampling involves asking the vessel to 'spill' a large amount of fish into a large bin (or otherwise). This overcomes any bias in selection by observers and all fish are sampled. The current pilot project uses 3 types of bins (the basic plastic bin, a cargo net and smaller aluminium bin.) It was noted that since vessel / deck designs are different one standard design bin cannot be used. The bin

must be big enough to gather enough fish, but not too big to impede vessel operations. A combination of measuring boards and calipers is the best approach and despite previous reluctance the improvements in digital recorders now means that they will be used to record sampling information. Training in the pitfalls of transcribing data is recommended. Spill sampling only samples a 'moment' in the set, but that 'moment' is noted. A brail selection plan for observers was circulated. The presentation also includes many slides to help with spill sampling training.

PNG wondered whether it was possible to amend the grab sampling protocol in some way to improved it. SPC replied that this had been tried, without success for the moment. FSM pointed out the extra-heavy burden on observers. This was noted by SPC, but it was also pointed out that the new 100% coverage by observers would allow for more demarcation of tasks between observers and that not all observers would have to carry out spill sampling, and those that did may have reduced tasks in other areas. Martin Hall notified the audience of an Norwegian electronic measuring board. The expense of the sampling was queried and it was thought the monies would have to come from science as they had expressed the need for this work. Money for extra training should not be forgotten.

### *Albacore tagging*

The first albacore tagging cruise for the EU-funded SCIFISH project was completed in early 2009. The main objective of the cruise was to tag albacore with conventional tags in an effort to obtain information on exploitation rates and movement. The cruise also provided the opportunity to conduct an experiment to validate the age of albacore derived from hard parts such as otoliths and spines. A New Zealand commercial troll fishing vessel was chartered to fish the west coast of the south island of New Zealand between January and March 2009. Overall, a total of 2766 albacore were tagged and released with 1457 of these fish also receiving an injection of oxytetracycline (OTC) for the age validation experiment.

There have been no recaptures of tagged albacore to date, but based on previous albacore tagging projects, the likelihood of any recaptures within a month or two after tagging is extremely low. Most tagged albacore would be expected to be recaptured between one and four years after being released, with the majority captured by the longline fisheries.

The second albacore tagging cruise for the SCIFISH project is scheduled for 2010. For this second cruise, albacore will be tagged along the east coast of New Zealand and in more tropical waters at 20°S in an effort to spread the tagging effort across the south Pacific and to facilitate the mixing of tagged fish within the entire population. Albacore caught during this cruise will be tagged with conventional tags, and all tagged fish will receive an injection of OTC. A small number of pop-up satellite archival tags, which are capable of providing more detailed information on movement patterns, will be tested on some larger albacore captured during this cruise.

### *Stomach sampling*

Sampling pelagic species' stomachs gives a better understanding of ecosystem interactions. A better ecosystem model can be built and offering then a better management of the ecosystem as a whole, and not just the target species fishery. The crucial cooperation from the national observer programmes was recognised with over 3000 stomachs now analysed. Basic data needs to be collected along with the biological sample. For instance, by recording the length measurement the size/ age of the fish is known. This is important as bigger fish swim faster and will catch different prey species. Additional

fishing gear / strategy information is needed, but most is collected on observer forms. The aim is to collect 100 samples per species per area / gear (areas shown in presentation).

The project is already starting to show interesting results. A larger proportion of Pacific tuna reside in the west (84%), but there are much lower amounts of plankton there; when compared to the east Pacific. Previously scientists thought that the tuna travelled to the central Pacific to feed, but the results of the stomach sampling project (specifically the muscle samples) are indicating that tuna do not travel as extensively as once thought. Additionally, for non-empty stomachs the western Pacific tuna are two to four times fuller and more likely to contain fish. A much higher percentage of squid was found in the eastern Pacific samples. New food chains have now been developed and can now be incorporated into the ecosystem models. This work will better allow scientists to better answer questions like “What will happen to tuna if the FAD fishery is closed?”

### *Tuna sampling*

Caroline Sanchez presented the project on tuna sampling. Gonads, otolith and the first dorsal fin are required from a number of tuna species and observer assistance is requested to obtain these. Training in the extractions of the samples will be given through basic training, or field visits. Samples are needed to assess the status of the albacore stock and to gain a better understanding of the bigeye and yellowfin stock.

A map of the albacore sampling areas was shown and it was explained that 100 samples are needed from 25 areas across the Pacific. These will be used to check for any regional variance in growth. Programmes will be updated on the numbers of samples received from each area by the biological newsletter. Fleets from local ports may fish across more than one sampling area.

Before implementing a large study on yellowfin and bigeye (late 2010) they must determine the number of fish needed from each location. A pilot study is scheduled for FSM and Palau in late 2009 and early 2010, as a full size range of fish are caught in these EEZs, and catches from this area strongly influence stock model as many larger fish are landed. Aim of the initial study will be to sample 180 fish. The collected information will be used in conjunction with samples already taken from the Philippines and the Coral Sea and together these will determine the needs for the larger project. From September 2010 the main project will move to other observer programmes around the Pacific.

The presentation gave a short overview of how the samples will be extracted and managed. Training has already been provided and more will follow. There was a request to coordinators to have tuna available for the training. A letter will be prepared for the Captain to explain that the sampling will not damage the fish. Cutters will be used to remove otoliths from small tuna and drills from the larger animals. Rewards will only be provided when data and samples are provided. Two-dollars per sample will be paid, rising to three-dollars once 100 samples have been collected and \$4 for over 300 samples.

### *Seed Tagging*

An overview of the current tagging project was given, including information on the releases and returns of the project. The detailed information is available in presentation.

Tag seeding is currently being conducted by observers on board purse-seine vessels. The purse seine fleet is targeted for primarily because; they account for most of the total catch in the WCPFC area; the speed of storage gives little opportunity to inspect individual fish; the layout of the vessel and the immediate unloading provide chance to tag and recovery quickly.

From February 2007 to February 2009 51 conventional tag seeding kits have been distributed to observer coordinators in PNG, Solomon Islands, FSM, Marshall Islands and American Samoa to issue to senior observers. In 2009, to avoid rapid shedding, tags with metal attachments were distributed, to better secure anchorage within the flesh of the fish. From February 2009, 70 tag seeding kits (steel heads) have been distributed but to date no tag seeding logs for this tag type have been received therefore only the tag seeding data for the conventional tags used for tag seeding is represented.

In-country observer coordinators are being used as focal points for the distribution of tag seeding kits to trained observers. Trained observers on purse seine vessels were asked to deploy up to 25 tags in the catch during a voyage. Optimally, observers were asked to tag 15 tunas with a single tag and to double tag 5 fish; making up the 25 tags released during the voyage but tagging only 20 fish.

Fish are tagged discretely, usually on the wet deck as part of an observer's routine sampling regime onboard. In order not to alter the detection of the tags, the streamer of the tag is the same. The tags and manner of tagging are identical to the main tagging program. Seeded tags are implanted on dead fish, as a result the anchorage of the tag within the pterigyophores is not secured by the healing of the flesh of the fish. Tag numbers, dates, species, fork lengths and well numbers are recorded on a specific tag seeding log form and the information sent to SPC at the completion of a voyage. Upon recovery, seeded tags are processed in the same fashion as genuine tag recoveries. Tag finders are paid the standard reward for tag recoveries and are not informed that the tags are part of a tag seeding experiment.

27 tag seeding logs have been received for observer trips between February 2007 and March 2009. During these cruises 610 tags were deployed and placed in fish wells. A summary of the releases and captures was shown including the species breakdown and the reporting rate by flag and length classes.

The availability of trained senior observers is the major constraint to tag seeding. Initially, 10 PNG senior observers and 2 FSM senior observers were trained to do tag seeding, and some others recently in Vanuatu. The use of the steel head tags has been demonstrated to observer coordinators as well as senior observers with the expectation that others will be briefed in the skill. Tag seeding kits and tag seeding logs were also distributed.

Niue, and others, enquired about the meaning of secret tagging and it was explained that it was necessary to conduct seed tagging without the knowledge of the crew or captain. It defeats the purpose if the crew know about the tagging and return the tags immediately, but it is this element which also makes the job difficult. RMI asked why their returns were not on the presented tables and they were told that the information has since been updated. FSM expressed the difficulties their observers had with deploying the tags. They found double tagging difficult – although it was clarified that double tagging is not required with the new steel tags and seed tagging on deck was not possible. Their observers had been 'caught' doing this and were not able to proceed with the work. SPC noted that seed tagging levels were still low so that perhaps the Captain, at least, should be aware that this is going on. PNG felt that seed tagging was possible and had been carried out successfully. Experience helps and placing the tags quickly at the start of the set had found to be successful. Tag deployments and retrieval should be classified by drifting FAD, and anchored FADs located both nearby and offshore.

## Observer Data Management Workshop

### *Observer data management*

This presentation looked at what was meant by data management and gave some insights into the different components of data management.

Data management ensures that that collected observer data; is stored in an efficient manner, retains its quality (i.e. its accuracy), can be cross-checked with other sources of data, coverage is complete, is accessible to users and finally that it is secure.

Data management is important because it protects the considerable investment spent in collecting the data while also enhancing that investment. Observer data users want data that are readily accessible and representative (in quality and coverage). The owners of observer data want their data stored securely, efficiently and in a manner that will improve or retain the data's accuracy. The seven elements of best practice in data management were introduced. They were defined as; accuracy, effectiveness, efficiency, reliability, accessibility, transparency, timeliness and relevance.

### *Components of observer data management systems*

The following five major components of a good observer data management system were identified and explained.

#### *A Data Registry System*

- Used to register data from each observer trip as soon as it is received
- Ensures that all observer data received by your office can be tracked
- Can be a manual or database system
- Caters for an appropriate “links” to where hard-copy data are stored to facilitate easy retrieval
- Caters for appropriate “links” to where electronic data are stored (computer / directory / database)
- Includes the submission of data to SPC for processing (hard or scanned copies)

#### *Observer Database System (TUBS)*

An integrated database system organizes all relevant data in electronic format and allows for the efficient retrieval of the information. Database systems facilitate the verification of one type of data with another; they maintain consistency and ensure standardization

#### *Observer Data Quality Control*

Observer data quality control is carried out during the collection (debriefing) and management stage (data entry and database checks and post-entry checking processes). Data quality control aims to ensure that only accurate data are available to users.

#### *Observer Data Archiving system*



During this stage the electronic copies of observer data are backed up and the hard copies saved for a number of appropriate years. Electronic back-ups should consider what media is best for the job, and how frequently it will be done. Considerations as to where the backup will be done and where the backup should reside. (i.e. either on-site or off-site). Having a data recovery policy in place is also important.

### *Observer Data Security*

Both physical and electronic access need to be considered when reviewing observer data security. Hard copy data, laptops and storage material may need to be secured from visitors' access. Electronic access should be restricted with passwords, network firewalls, anti-virus software etc. Training and awareness for all staff on data security measures is recommended.

### *TUBS – TUFMAN observer data entry module*

Participants were given a chance to view TUBS – the observer data entry module of TUFMAN first hand. After the presentation the database was made available for an interactive session over several 2-hour sessions. Participants were asked to enter the details of one longline trip and one purse-seine trip to give them an impression of the work and time involved to undertake the work (in view of installation in their country). The presenter discussed the installation time-line for TUBs. The plan is to finish full testing of the TUBs in-house, and then to install it into two countries for further user-lead testing. Once the testing is complete TUBS will be available to all countries (expected to be from mid-2010), but only after an audit of their internal resources (equipment, staff – data entry and I.T.) has been carried out by SPC.

### *Uses of observer data and tools for the dissemination*

Observer data is used in the scientific, fisheries management and compliance areas of tuna fisheries. A more comprehensive list of the scientific uses of observer data was offered. At the last WCPFC's Scientific Committee at least 50 papers referred to observer data and it is recognised that observer data is vital component of the Ecosystem and Bycatch working group and **fundamental** to the overall work of the WCPFC scientific committee. Specific uses of observer data were presented including important work on the affects of night and day setting on catches of target and bycatch. It is understood that comprehensive information regarding by catches is only available from observer data. The users of observer data are many and varied. They range from persons in the observer programme to national and regional compliance and fisheries management officers. International scientists with authorised access are also frequent users.

Data dissemination is the process of extracting raw data from a database and assembling it to give an output that can be understood by the user and which is relevant to the requested requirements. Normally tables of summarised statistics, aggregated data in an electronic format or graphical (graphs, maps etc) are used to assemble and distribute data. The key points to remember for observer data dissemination is to; ensure that the data is extracted correctly, provide a full explanation of the meta data, make sure that confidentiality is not compromised, use efficient tools when extracting the data (i.e. a database), provide the information to the user in a manner that they can use and to deliver the data on time.

Data “tools” help facilitate the organization of the raw data into a form that will be understandable to the user. Examples of data tools include commercial software packages (i.e. Microsoft Excel) and

customized database query systems (i.e. Orse – the observer data query system that is currently in use in many PICTS). In the future there will be more enhanced reports in TUBs (similar to those already available through ORSE) and a comprehensive administrative system available through TOAD (see the presentation on ‘ a future administration system) along with an improved observer query system – similar to ORSE.

### *Potential Future management for observer data*

There are a number of ramifications for observer data management caused by the new CMM 2008-01. Most obviously increased observer coverage will put significant pressure on observer data management requirement due to the sheer quantity of data that will need to be managed in the future.

The problem has been dealt with in three recent papers submitted to the WCPFC Committees. {WCPFC-SC5-2009/ST-WP-09 [Regional Observer Programme Data Administration and Management options]; WCPFC-TCC5-2009/07 [Annual Report – Regional Observer Programme] WCPFC-TCC5-2009/08 [Estimated Costs of Observer Data Management Options],}. Some noteworthy points from these papers:

- It is important to ensure that observer data is processed in a timely manner, and that it is verified and consolidated in a common database for subsequent use by the Commission. The investment in the acquisition of the data will be undermined if robust data administration and management systems and procedures are not adhered to.”
- The current arrangements with SPC at Noumea, New Caledonia managing all observer data was found to be the most expensive, but the same services were provided by SPC’s, Suva offices would be the least expensive option. Detailed costs of the many components of managing observer data were included in the presentation.

More thought is required before a decision is made on how observer data will be managed in the future, but some likely evolving scenarios include; national programmes becoming progressively more independent in managing their own data with TUBS and electronic observer data recording implemented on a large-scale.

#### *Some key information for national observer programmes considering managing their own data:*

- One dedicated data entry staff will work for an estimated 200 days per year.
- An experienced data entry operator with good typing skills can enter one purse seine trip in 1.5-2 days. An inexperienced data entry operator can take up to 3-4 days to enter a purse seine trip.
- There will need to be at least one technical person with expert observer data knowledge always available to support the data entry staff.
- There will need to be a technical (database) person available to support the database system.
- An unexperienced, unskilled and/or unmotivated data entry operator can be potentially worse than not entering the data at all (...bad data cannot be used!).
- Countries already comfortably entering logsheets and other fishery data would be well placed to expand their data management to cover observer data entry.

#### *Things to look at in the short term:*

- Determine the potential burden that increased observer coverage will put on your programme
  - How many staff are needed (data entry, training, management and technical)
  - Infrastructure costs
  - Funds for equipment, etc. (computers, scanners, storage space)

- Funds for training
- Etc.
- 1. Decisions on whether to process data or outsource to SPC?
  - Can you afford to process data? (see 1. above)
  - Perhaps a staged approach over time ...
- 2. Develop a realistic, clear plan and approach your senior management to make them aware of the problem.
- 3. Brief your representatives to WCPFC meetings (e.g. TCC) highlighting the problems that will be faced.

### *A future observer administration system*

This last presentation gave participants the opportunity to comment on the proposed observer administration system—TOAD. The planned components and their specifications were listed and comments solicited from five working groups. The following is a compilation of the proposed specifications for each component. There is much to be gained from sharing national observer information with other programmes and this list can be used by programmes to indicate their willingness to share national information, or otherwise.

On considering the system as a whole the group agreed that human resources, operation management and reporting components were a higher priority for them than the financial and asset management components. They noted the need for procedures of use to clarify important topics like access, security, access in the absence of the authorised user, maintenance and back-up to the database

## HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

*Note: Include all applicants including any previously certified observers (they may want to come back to work).*

### **Personal details**

1. Full name, address, other contact details, physical attributes, gender, d.o.b etc
2. Passport details (secure), scan, expiration reminder.
3. Medical certification / clearance / Medical status
4. Bank account / person authorised to received funds when observer at sea
5. Social security number
6. Ids / photos
7. Driving license
8. Marital status with dependent names and ages.
9. Next of kin names and contact details

## **Qualifications**

*Note that some qualifications come with an expiry date (first aid etc). Full qualification details should be recorded (i.e. different components of CBT since they need to be recorded somewhere so why not here).*

1. Course name, period conducted and details, certifying authority
2. Course type (e.g. observer, debriefing, senior observer trainer, tertiary education, etc.)
3. Course result
4. Indicator of importance to observer work (level 1-5 ??)
5. CBT standards
6. Scoring standards?
7. Linkages to qualifications

## **Work History / Experience (including current position as observer)**

*Note: Experience shows that most observer candidates come with no previous work history; normally they have been fishery officers or unemployed before being an observer.*

1. Employer details
2. Period of employment
3. Type of work (e.g. Observer, debriefer, senior observer, port sampler, data entry clerk, other, etc.)
4. Notes on achievements, references, etc. during this work
5. Contract details
6. Police record (might be stopped from transiting because of this)
7. Political affiliation
8. Disciplinary file - work related issues / vessel report on observer

## **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

*Note: Useful as the national finance offices are often delayed in providing information. Consider how this will be useful for any auditing etc. It is understood that observer programmes are generally not in control of their finances. Some budgets may be used by more than one programme (i.e. FFA and RMI managing their emergency budget). A template to allow formatted report (e.g. existing Excel files).*

### **Observer Programme Budget**

1. Salaries
2. Local support staff salary retain (staff breakdown)
3. Operational Budget
4. Emergency / Revolving Budget
5. Equipment budget
6. Vessel payments – links to TUBS
7. Source of funds
8. Training budget

### **Observer Staff Salary Management**

### **Operational Finance Management**

### **Equipment Finance Management**

## ASSET MANAGEMENT

### **Asset Register**

1. Serial number for each equipment
2. Equipment categories (Computers, calipers, forms, cameras, GPS, sat phone etc.)
3. Maintenance schedule / calibration dates
4. Damaged / out of order/ annual status on working order
5. Depreciation schedule
6. Re-order schedule
7. Tracking System (who, where and date of return)
8. EPIRB registration and expiry dates (currently only issued to NOAA observers)
9. Funding source

### **Links to Financial Management component**

1. Equipment budget, financial management

2. Estimation of equipment cost

#### **Data forms stock control**

1. Data forms stock control (No. in stock, ordered and returned after trip)
2. Indicate when stocks are low.
3. Predictions for form use

### OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT

#### **Observer Placement Management**

1. Trip details (observer id, vessel name, departure port etc)
2. Entry and maintenance of flight and transit schedules (itineraries)
3. Link to financial management system (costing)
4. Link to FM - emergency funds – advances
5. Link to FM (vessel reimbursement)
6. Link to asset management (equipment provision)
7. Link to TUBS – to forecast observer trip placements (no. of trips and fishing area/gear)
8. Procedures/policy information (e.g. Observer placement policies, transit/travelling requirements by country, etc.)
9. Placement contracts
10. Placement form
11. Tracking of observers under other regional (sub-regional placements)
12. Observer coordinator contacts and any other relevant personnel
13. Green note – information for next observer on conditions
14. Accident file – near misses and any illness

#### **Training Course Management**

1. Entry/Maintenance of the list of courses conducted and planned (for your programme only)
2. Status (i.e. finished, planned, etc.)
3. Link to human resource management for observers who have/will attend this course

4. Name / gender of participants ( see above)
5. Results by participants name
6. Link to FM training budget

### **Debriefing Management**

*Note: this work not currently being done by smaller countries.*

1. Status of debriefing work required/completed includes entry (Schedule)
2. Data Status
3. Debriefing summary
4. First check and debriefing check tick boxes (see evaluation forms)
5. Debriefing result – evaluation summary report
6. Number of debriefs completed by debriefer
7. Re-scan request from SPC (linked and inserted into TUBs?)

## REPORTING

### **Observer staff management**

1. List of observers using several selection criteria based on experience and/or qualifications
2. Annual observer performance reporting
3. Annual debriefer and trainers performance reporting
4. Trip numbers
5. Sub-regional / National
6. Reconciliation of data from TOAD with finance received.
7. Feedback for/ from SPC/FFA re observer data quality and standards.
8. Trip comments – green note (messages to next observer, trip comments)
9. Debriefing and training report (# debriefed / trained)
10. Disciplinary file – (incidents against observers) vessel report on observer

### **Financial reporting**

*Note: will depend on the extent of coverage of financial management within TOAD.*

1. Budgets versus actual spending (by category of cost item)
2. Projected costs for next year
3. Asset cost projections
4. Placement cost projections

**Asset management**

1. List of current assets and planned depreciation by category of asset
2. Data forms stock control report(s)
3. Asset usage report
4. Depreciation schedule (for planning future asset purchases)

**Operations management**

1. Breakdown of costs by operations category (observer travel, training courses, etc. )
2. Annual Activity Summaries (Observer activity, training, debriefing, etc. ...by various categories ... )
3. Indication of coverage level for different fleets
4. Report on observer coverage vs port visits / port sampling
5. Observer status (number of observer by grade / sea day grade/ other status)
6. Forecasting – using existing records to project and forecast placement activities relating to placement numbers, observer coverage, seasonal variations impacting on activities etc



## APPENDIX 1 – Incidents reported to WCPFC during Fad Closure

### Incident reported to the Secretariat for the 2009 FAD closure

#	Issue or difficulties reported
1	Vessels reported to be ignoring “FAD Set Closure” and are setting on “Floating Objects” associated with schools of fish.
2	Vessels reporting to observers that they have been given permission to set on FADs by local fisheries personnel.
3	Vessels given exemptions to leave port and fish until observer arrives to make boarding.
4	Fleets given exemptions to fish on FADS in waters other than the fleets /vessels’ jurisdiction.
5	Some vessels in Sub-Regional Multilateral Arrangement fishing on FADs in waters of their own national jurisdictions.
6	Vessels drifting besides FADs at night and moving away slowly with lights directed to the water to try and attract fish away from the FAD before setting early next morning.
7	Sets made in the dark hours of the morning making it impossible for observers to detect any floating objects, and then floating objects found associated with the fish in the set when light is available.
8	Lights on vessel directed to try and attract fish, including the placing of underwater lights hanging from the vessel while vessel drifts at night.
9	One observer reported the presence of savage watchdogs on the bridge (wheelhouse). The dogs were constantly aggressive and an escort was required each time the observer wanted to access the GPS and charts which he is required to do as part of his duties. This limited his ability to carry out his duties in a safe manner.
10	Vessel attempting to place observers that are not from authorised programmes.
11	Vessels setting on logs and other natural floating objects as they believe these are not man-made objects and therefore as they are natural aggregating devices they believe they are not FADs.
12	Vessels using light boats to attract fish away from FADs, and also using light boats to attract or hold free schools gathering around vessels at night.
13	Vessels not stowing gear when returning to port, or transiting through area without observers during the closure period.
14	Vessels leaving observer requirements to the last minute and then reporting unavailability of observers when they want to go to sea.

15	Vessels not setting on, but servicing, floating objects by connecting or replacing electronic equipment.
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### Issues and problems requiring clarification or solutions

16	Transporting of observers - a problem to some destinations due to visa requirements and flight bookings not being available in a timely manner.
17	Observers delayed during transit to vessels because they have been given insufficient travel expenses.
18	Unclear agreements between observer providers and vessel operators on who pays for costs of observer.
19	Vessels expecting observer providers to pay all costs associated with travel to and from vessel, resulting in delays in providing observers, as provider has no funds available to accommodate this type of arrangement.
20	Observers being asked to transfer from one vessel to another at sea do not have adequate data collection forms to do extra trips.
21	Observer training requests increased but little or no funding available for training in most CCMs or regional bodies.
22	Vessels sourcing observers from multiple providers and then cancelling arrangements with the providers at the last minute when an observer arrives from one of the providers. This inefficient use of observers can add extra costs to providers in flight cancellation fees.
23	Observers and observer provider coordinators poorly briefed on requirements of CMM 2008-01 by their national coordinators or official contacts who attended meetings on this issue and/or were sent comprehensive details about the closure period.
24	Observers not informing anyone that they have landed in a port and are either awaiting the vessel's departure to go on another trip or belatedly asking an agent at the port for return flights to be organised. Either way the observer has not informed his provider or others of his situation or his intentions.
25	Vessel setting on live whales - vessel master is unclear if this is a "FAD set" or not.
26	Requests for permission to service anchored FADs by light boats (no nets on board) during closure period due to vandalism or longline fishing activity cutting anchored FADs free, thereby causing loss of a FAD or creating a navigation hazard.
27	Vessels seeking exemptions for being at sea without observers at the beginning of period as vessels have broken down at sea and are awaiting a tow back to port or parts for at-sea repairs.
28	Two countries carrying out research requested exemptions for their research vessels to continue to carry out purse seining activities on FADS during closure period. Under CMM

	2008-01 no exemptions are possible.
29	Some vessels inquired about the starting time for closure period since this is not clear in CMM 2008-01. UTC/GMT is the accepted international reporting time.
30	Under the definition of a “FAD” in CMM 2008-01 a vessel could be classed as a “FAD”. Clarification is required on whether or not a vessel can set on fish that has gathered around the vessel during the night.

## APPENDIX 2 - Implications Of CMM 2008-01 On 3IA

Subject	3IA	CMM 2008-01	Comment
1. Catch retention – exemptions	<p>Set sharing not explicitly allowed on final set (reg 6)</p> <p>Discard allowed if fish dies and spoils due to gear malfunction only if crew attempts to release fish while still alive (reg 6(3)(a)(iii))</p>	<p>Set sharing allowed (subject to national laws) (para 27(a))</p> <p>Discard allowed on any serious gear malfunction (para 27(c))</p>	<p>Set sharing allows better conservation benefit</p> <p>Parties could consider allowing set sharing in their national legislation</p> <p>3IA Regulations set a higher standard and therefore less prone to abuse. Subjective application though.</p> <p>3IA Regulations need to be amended to reflect more general wording in the CMM.</p>
2. Catch retention – discard reporting	<p>Specific fields listed for reporting all discards (reg 6(6))</p>	<p>No reporting</p>	<p>Advocate for standard form at TCC5</p> <p>Note para.27 of the CMM provides that “the provisions of this paragraph shall not prevent the PNA from implementing the catch retention requirement in their EEZs in accordance with the Third Implementing Arrangement”.</p>

				This means that the requirement for reporting in the 3IA Regulations can be maintained.
3. Catch retention - details	Detailed and complex (reg 6)	Not the same level of detail	Advocate for compatible arrangements at TCC5	
4. FAD closure – period	0001 to 2359 (reg 4)	0000 to 2400 (para 11, 17)	Note 2 above re para. 27 that this does not prevent the PNA from implementing the 3IA in their EEZs.  Too minor to be a problem...but 3IA is better	
5. FAD closure - commencement	Commences 2010 as 3 months (reg 3)	Commences 2009 (as 2 months, then moving to 3 months in 2010) (para 11)	This will either require amendment to the 3IA Regulations to accommodate the CMM provisions for 2009 or can be imposed as a licence condition for 2009	
6. FAD closure – details	Detailed and complex (reg 7)	Not the same level of detail	Advocate for compatible arrangements at TCC5	
7. Observer coverage	100% on foreign purse seine vessels	100% on all PS vessels during FAD closure for EEZs and high seas (2009)	No direct inconsistency	

	(reg 9(1))	<p>EEZs – compliant with licensing arrangements</p> <p>High Seas – minimum of 20% observer coverage (2009)</p> <p>(paras 11, 29)</p> <p>100% on all PS vessels at all times except those that fish in waters under the jurisdiction of one coastal State (2010)</p> <p>(paras 28-29)</p>	
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<b>Subject</b>	<b>3IA</b>	<b>CMM 2008-01</b>	<b>Comment</b>
8. Source of observers – EEZ	Sub-regional program or national of a Party  (reg 9(1))	ROP  (para 11,13,14 etc)	ROP includes observers from the national and subregional programmes
9. Commencement of observer coverage - EEZs	No ability for anything but the above (unless Minister exempts the vessel)  (reg 9(1 and 2))	Some ability to use flag state observer with approval from WCPFC (high seas) or coastal state (EEZ)  (para 14)	Exemptions under the 3IA have to be published in the gazette and probably therefore wouldn't be useful for the cases envisaged by 2008-01 (no observers available).
10. Source of high seas observers	Commences Jan 2010 but also provision for staged implementation  (regs 3 and 9(2))  Sub-regional program or national of a Party	Commences for FAD closure in 2009 and whole fishery in 2010  (para 11 and 28)  ROP	Can either amend 3IA regs to achieve 100% for 2009 FAD closure or include as a licence condition    This is probably an oversight in the 3IA regs. References to observers in the regs should be restricted to EEZs with high seas taken care of by the CMM. Amend reg 9 to refer to EEZ.

11. High Seas Pockets	(reg 9(1))	Closed to fishing by ANY vessel licensed by a Party	(para 11,13,14, 29 etc) Commitment to close in 2010 to purse seine only (para 22)	No particular issue with the inconsistency but not sure that people are aware that the 3IA applies to longline, troll, pole and line etc.





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