VEssel MONitoring SYSTEM DATA ACCESS AND DISSEMINATION

1 Policy

A The FWC Division of Law Enforcement is authorized by the National Marine Fisheries Service to utilize the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS). The system’s purpose is to aid in monitoring, control and surveillance of certain fishing vessels that are managed under U.S. federal fishery management programs, and other vessels that may participate (voluntarily or otherwise) in the VMS. Other purposes include planning of directed patrols, direct responses to suspicious or illegal vessel activity, search & rescue efforts, and to use VMS data for scientific research or management purposes.

B It is the policy of the FWC Division of Law Enforcement to utilize the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and the policies and procedures established by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Office of Law Enforcement (OLE).

C It is the policy of the FWC Division of Law Enforcement to regulate access to the VMS and to ensure that VMS data is disseminated only to authorized users.

2 Responsibilities

A Field Services Section

(1) The Field Services Section Leader or designee is responsible for providing training on VMS data access and dissemination prior to use of the system by Division members.

(2) The Field Services Section Leader or designee is responsible for briefing Division members on the NMFS Office of Law Enforcement Non-Disclosure Agreement and the consequences of failing to abide by said agreement.

(3) The Field Services Section Leader or designee is responsible for maintaining any member-signed NMFS Office of Law Enforcement Non-Disclosure Agreements and providing these documents to NMFS OLE representatives upon request.

B Members

(1) Members authorized and trained to use the VMS must abide by the NMFS Office of Law Enforcement Non-Disclosure Agreement.

(2) Members must follow the procedures for VMS data access and dissemination as provided by this General Order and by any additional documents provided during training on the use of the system.

References

Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Public Law 94-265)
3 PROCEDURES

A VMS is designated “protected critical infrastructure”, meaning information that is not customarily in the public domain. VMS information is categorized as ‘For Official Use Only’ and ‘Law Enforcement Sensitive’ and requires special precautions to ensure the integrity of the data and protecting it from unauthorized access.

B The following requirements must be adhered to:

1. VMS data (specifically declarations, positional data and other VMS-required forms) must not be shared with the public or industry.

2. VMS data must not be sent via personal e-mail accounts for any reason, or via government e-mail accounts for personal business.

3. The practice of e-mailing a VMS vessel using their assigned VMS e-mail address must be held to the absolute minimum necessary to conduct the mission. No personal e-mail is authorized.

4. VMS data (hard copy or government e-mail) may be shared with Division members for enforcement or search and rescue operations only for the performance of their official duties. No other form of electronic dissemination of VMS information is authorized.

5. VMS hard copy data which is no longer required must be destroyed by shredding. VMS data in electronic form that is no longer required must be deleted and/or destroyed.

6. Those members with VMS access are assigned an individual user name and password that must only be used by the individual to whom it is assigned. No sharing of user names and/or passwords is authorized.

7. When logged into VMS, the display shall not be left unattended in spaces without controlled access.

8. Any unauthorized disclosures of VMS information shall be reported immediately to the Field Services Section Leader for referral to the NMFS Office of Law Enforcement.

4 FORMS

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