

## Remote Vessel Monitoring of Mobile Fishing Vessels in D&S IFCA's District

### Officers' Recommendation

**That Members agree to the procurement and installation of REWIRE tracking devices on board affected mobile fishing vessels operating in D&S IFCA's District.**

**That Members agree to D&S IFCA covering the transmission costs of IVMS data for affected mobile fishing vessels for six months.**

### Background

Mobile fishing is managed in the District through the Mobile Fishing Permit Byelaw (introduced in 2014) and its associated permit conditions. In 2018, D&S IFCA introduced a requirement, using permit conditions, for all vessels between 6.99 metres and 15.25 metres in overall length to have a fully functioning remotely accessed electronic reporting device (vessel monitoring device) fitted to the vessel which reports the required information. The remade Size of Fishing Vessel Byelaw restricted the maximum size of any vessel operating in the District to 14.99 metres.

The current Category One Mobile Fishing Permit Conditions intentionally do not specify what make or model (type approval) the device should be, but that it must be a device that transmits the required information which must be received by the UK VMS Hub.

The national roll out of Inshore Vessel Monitoring System (IVMS) to all commercial, licensed vessels below 12 metres in overall length, required IVMS devices to have received MMO type approval. Through the process of type approval, initially three suppliers of IVMS devices were identified by the MMO.

The national rollout of IVMS was supported by grant funding and fishers were invited to choose from the three suppliers. In 2024, one of the IVMS suppliers, Maritime Systems, lost its type approval and those fishers that had chosen this supplier's device were invited to choose to have a replacement IVMS device from one of the two remaining suppliers.

### Vessel Monitoring Issues & Succorfish Devices

On 12<sup>th</sup> August 2025, Succorfish, one of the two remaining suppliers of type approved IVMS devices, stopped sending data to the UK VMS Hub. Following the MMO's introduction of a national fishing licence condition on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2025 requiring all under 12 metre vessels to have a fully functioning IVMS device onboard, D&S IFCA ended the Service Level Agreement (SLA) it had with Succorfish that ensured IVMS data transmitted from the onboard devices was forwarded to the UK VMS Hub.

On 12<sup>th</sup> August 2025, Succorfish stated on their website that the forwarding of IVMS data from their secure servers to the MMO systems had been carried out at their own expense for a prolonged period which was not financially sustainable for them. Succorfish stated that for over a year they had attempted, but failed, to secure a contractual agreement with the MMO

to ensure a structured, funded, and accountable data-forwarding process. Succorfish also stated that the resumption of IVMS to the MMO (UK VMS Hub) will be contingent on the MMO implementing a formal service agreement with them.

The MMO also produced an update on the GOV.UK website posted on 12<sup>th</sup> August 2025. The MMO stated that vessels with Succorfish devices fitted should continue to operate as normal, including having their I-VMS devices switched on and transmitting positional data while at sea.

Succorfish has decided not to reinstate the SLA with D&S IFCA at this time. On 12<sup>th</sup> August D&S IFCA issued a statement (a news item) setting out its position and that fishers with fully functioning Succorfish devices fitted to their vessels could continue fishing whilst this issue was addressed or until further notice was given.

### **Alternative IVMS Devices**

As directly reported to Members on 21<sup>st</sup> August 2025, the Chief Officer has been in contact with the MMO and has emphasised the importance of resolving the contractual issues with Succorfish. D&S IFCA relies on IVMS data to monitor the activity of mobile fishing vessels in and around the Marine Protected Area network in its District. The Chief Officer set out his intention to prepare a contingency plan to address the issue if a quick solution was not found at a national level.

At a meeting with the MMO on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2025, representatives of D&S IFCA, the Welsh Government and Isle of Man Government were informed that no resolution had been achieved and that there was no timeline given to indicate when the matter would be resolved. Although the MMO has introduced a formal, legal requirement for all vessels under 12m to have a fully functioning IVMS device on board, the MMO views this as a 'soft launch' ahead of the IVMS Statutory Instrument that will, at some point, replace the licence condition.

When Maritime Systems lost its type approval it affected a small number of mobile gear and diving vessels operating in D&S IFCA's District. In response, D&S IFCA provided the owners of the affected vessels with an alternative IVMS device supplied by Rewire Security (REWIRE). The purchase, install and airtime were funded by D&S IFCA. When the owners of these vessels were offered a replacement device funded by the restarted national IVMS roll out, the airtime contract for the REWIRE device was terminated. The vessel owners were offered the choice on whether they wanted to keep the REWIRE device onboard or have them removed.

One diving vessel operating in the District this summer continued to have problems with its Succorfish device so the fisher restarted its REWIRE device and paid for transmissions that D&S IFCA could view on the supplier's own hub. On 29<sup>th</sup> August 2025, REWIRE, at D&S IFCA's request, and with the fisher's knowledge forwarded the positional data to the UK VMS Hub.

REWIRE is one of the two companies that D&S IFCA has been working with since 2023 in its REM project on up to five towed gear vessels. REWIRE already supplies over a 100 IVMS devices to Jersey to monitor its fleet of commercial vessels.

### **Proposal**

D&S IFCA has not been able to see the data from approximately 50 demersal towed gear vessels for over four weeks at the time of writing this paper. D&S IFCA presumes that the

data from Succorfish devices onboard the affected vessels are continuing to be forwarded to Succorfish and in the event that matters are resolved with the MMO, the data will be made available.

D&S IFCA relies on its ability to access IVMS data and to view the information in real time to monitor fishing activity of mobile gear vessels and provide protection to the Marine Protected Area network. The scallop dredge fishery reopens on 1<sup>st</sup> October, and this means that up to 16 vessels that could be engaged in the scallop dredge fishery would not be monitored directly.

**Officers recommend that Members approve the purchase and installation of REWIRE devices on all the affected vessels that are currently fishing in D&S IFCA's District. Officers also recommend that members approve the funding of the airtime cost for the transmission of the data for at least six months.**

Officers propose to use the same engineering company, Tecmarine for all the installations, having worked successfully with the company on the roll out of IVMS in 2018 and the REM installations in the last three years.

Officers have estimated that the total cost (covering all affected vessels) for purchase, installation and airtime will be approximately £10,000. There may be additional installation costs depending on how far the engineers need to travel to install the devices.

Officers recognise that in these particular circumstances it is D&S IFCA's obligation to provide and fund a solution whereby Mobile Gear Fishing Permit Holders can meet all of the permit conditions and for D&S IFCA to create the opportunity to monitor these affected vessels.

Officers are exploring different sources of funding and whilst initially the costs would need to be underwritten by D&S IFCA's General Reserves, Officers are confident that other funding will be found.

D&S IFCA has been working on REM projects for the last three years and the REWIRE tracking devices are also an integral component of the REM system it has been trialling. It is the Officers intention to ask the Authority to consider introducing a mandatory requirement for REM once the replacement for the current Mobile Fishing Permit Byelaw (the Mobile Fishing Permit Byelaw 2022) is confirmed by the Minister.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

### Background Information

- [Succorfish Statement](#) (website): 12<sup>th</sup> August 2025
- [MMO Urgent Update](#) (GOV.UK website): 12<sup>th</sup> August 2025
- [D&S IFCA Position Statement](#) (website news item): 12<sup>th</sup> August 2025
- B&PSC meeting papers, reports, and minutes ([D&S IFCA Website/Section B Resource Library](#))