

# **Lobster Pots and Small Craft Safety - a working group of UKSON**

## **Terms of Reference**

### **Introduction**

The entanglement of small craft with the markers ('ends') of static fishing gear poses a potential risk to life and limb. There is a multi-stakeholder consensus that existing approaches to pot marking and hazard reduction need to be reviewed, and new approaches explored, in the interests of small craft safety.

In order to address that objective, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), through the UK Safety of Navigation (UKSON) Committee, has formed a lobster pot and small craft safety working group.

The working group reports to MCA UKSON.

### **Purpose**

The specific purpose of the lobster port and small craft safety working group is to:

- 1) Collate, for comparative purposes, the various regulations and powers that pertain to the marking of static fishing gear<sup>1</sup> at up to 6 and 12 miles offshore, and beyond, for the four constituent nations of the United Kingdom.
- 2) Assess the effectiveness of existing powers, and ability, to remove poorly marked static fishing gear and the circumstances in which use of those powers might be considered and to propose measures that could best deal with the practical issues resulting from the non-compliance with existing regulations.
- 3) Review the purpose and the design of static fishing gear markers ('ends') particularly in the light of practicality for fishermen, affordability, safety of use, environmental impact and technological developments.
- 4) Consider the relationship between marking for licensing and marking for visibility and other options for avoidance.
- 5) Review the practicality of identifying and separating areas for static fishing from areas for other small craft use.
- 6) Raise awareness of the detriment to safety of navigation, and the risk to life at sea, associated with poorly marked or abandoned gear.
- 7) Publish a report of its findings and conclusions for consideration by UKSON, Government and other bodies in the UK and beyond, in the knowledge that there is international interest in finding a solution.

### **Membership**

The lobster pot and small craft safety working group includes the following organisations:

- MCA
- MMO
- Association of IFCAs

1. 'marking of static fishing gear' includes, for this purpose, all gear from the sea bed upwards.

- NFFO
- CA
- RYA
- British Ports
- DEFRA

The working group may invite any other organisation that has an interest in the marking of static gear and the safety of small craft navigation to be represented.

#### **Meeting arrangements and decisions**

The working group shall meet in such manner and at such times and venues as it may decide. A meeting shall not require all members to be physically present in the same venue provided that all persons attending can participate in the meeting.

3.2 Where decisions are voted on, the Quorum for working group meetings shall be 50% of the members of the working group.

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