

Agenda Item – C4

Report on the patrol vessel 'Nerissa' and daughter RIB 'Nereus' Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority Report for the period November 2022 to January 2023

Priorities of vessel for quarter

- Targeted inspection of static gear.
- Patrol District limits for any large/foreign vessel incursions.
- Patrol areas closed to bottom towed gear.
- Inspect pots and traps for compliance of byelaws.
- Inspection of commercial and recreations fishers.
- Record data of all vessel and gear sightings.
- Sightings and intel logged and reported.
- Input key enforcement information into national fisheries enforcement database (MCSS).

Fisheries Enforcement

The usual winter weather has made pre planned patrols problematic and has resulted in the patrol vessel making limited patrols this quarter. Efforts have been more targeted during this period, working from intelligence and observations, although some routine aspects were undertaken. Officer time has been utilised in other areas whilst also checking over the patrol vessel on a regular basis and keeping monthly safety checks up to date. Remote monitoring of local and visiting vessel using AIS and vessel tracking has assisted in meeting and speaking with fishers ashore during port visits.

Five patrols were undertaken when weather and staff allowed. During this time fourteen fishing vessel were sighted and four commercially registered vessels boarded. Four charter angling vessels were also seen actively fishing. The patrol vessel sighted and identified 37 individual fishing gear markers resulting in seven gear inspections. These led to the seizure of 18 lobster pots, 29 whelk pots and the recovery of a large gear marker complete with AIS transponder. This last gear marker was not from a local vessel and although it did have identification numbers present, research found it unlikely to belong to the corresponding vessel.

Vessel sighting and intelligence reports produced were entered into national databases and shared with neighbouring IFCAs and MMO where relevant as well as being discussed in biweekly enforcement meetings.

Conservation/Survey work

Crew were able to spend some time assisting with processing clam samples collected during previous surveys when weather put a hold on other works, this has assisted the Lead Science officer significantly.

There are only a few log entries for sightings of marine mammals this quarter with just six seals entered into the vessel log books.

Maintenance

Some refit works for the vessel are being planned; the spare propeller has been sent off to be ready for service if required. Some repairs are also required for the fire detection and suppression system which can be attended to inhouse and will not affect its current operation.

The normal monthly checks of the vessel, annual inspections of equipment and systems have been undertaken as required. Crew have run drills on board for man overboard and spent time discussing additional fire and first aid scenarios.

Other Information

Officer have kept observation for small vessels crossing the channel, as requested of all vessels in these areas, but not been required to assist at any time during this quarter.

Statistics:

During this period the Kent based vessel has put to sea for 23 hours and covered 200 miles, it has been required to take on approximately 3000 litres of fuel.

Ben Hermitage

Skipper FPV Nerissa & Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officer