

Agenda Item C4
Report on the patrol vessel 'Tamesis'
Kent and Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority
Quarterly report for the period ending March 2014

Vessel priorities

- Monitor Commercial and private fishing vessels, fixed/drift nets and static gear for compliance with Kent and Essex Byelaws, EU Legislation and Regulations.
- Monitor vessels fishing within the Thames and Blackwater Herring Fishery
- Sea Spyder camera survey with Cefas and STR
- Monitor local whelk fishery.
- Monitor closed Cockle areas.
- Conduct seed mussel sampling and monitor seed mussel harvesting
- Input enforcement information into UK fisheries Monitoring, Control Surveillance System database. (MCSS)
- Fit out and sea trials with new variable speed roof winch.

Risk based fisheries enforcement

Risk based Enforcement has been continued, allowing senior officers to determine species at risk within the district throughout the whole year. Tactical meetings between senior officers allows informed decisions to be made on how to enforce and regulate, using information reports and data collected by officers on shore and vessel patrols.

Enforcement patrols have been conducted covering the Thames Estuary and up to the six mile limit including local rivers.

Twenty seven registered fishing vessels were sighted and recorded. Two non boarding inspections were carried out to check for compliance with Byelaws and EU regulations. Eighteen private vessels have been recorded with fifteen non boarding inspections carried out. Guidance was given to individuals on legislation relating to drift nets, pots and traps and minimum size of species.

Data collected on patrols for fixed nets and static gear sightings has resulted three gear sightings (GS identified PLN or name and address) and two gear inspections (handled gear checked for compliance) being recorded which resulted in two inspection notices being issued. No other infringements were recorded.

Patrols were carried out to monitor closed area cockle beds with no activity recorded. Patrols were carried out to monitor whelk fishing activity with in the Essex coastline. Limited commercial fishing was recorded with small catches. No infringements were recorded.

The Thames and Black water Herring Fishery has been extended due to quota not being taken this is scheduled to close when the MMO implement their closure or when the allocated quota is taken. Drift nets and minimum landing size have been checked and monitored.

Commercial vessels fishing for seed mussels within the area designated were monitored. Vessels engaged in this activity continue to move catches to the River Crouch for re laying.

Surveys

Trial surveys were carried out using the day grab and a survey dredge to check operation of the new variable speed roof winch. The speed and line capacity of the winch increases the capability of the vessel and should allow more varied surveys and towing operations to be conducted for future projects.

Cefas and Subsea Technology and Rentals used Tamesis in February for a drop camera trial survey. This was to ascertain whether the camera supplied by STR would be suitable to be used by the IFCAs. STR took stills and video footage of local sea bed areas. The data was used in a following meeting with Cefas, STR and IFCAs to discuss the success of the equipment.

Maintenance

Work on Tamesis was completed in January and the vessel returned to Brightlingsea on 28th January 2014. Trials were carried out with a small survey dredge and the Day grab. The new winch reaches the speed required for these activities allowing faster deployment/ recovery of survey equipment. The greater line capacity and speed will also allow flexibility for future survey methods to be adopted.

Regular maintenance has been carried out for the vessel's engines and equipment, records have been stored in both hard copy and electronic format.

Statistics

During this quarter, Tamesis has undertaken 18 patrols, used 1936.32 litres of fuel and travelled 447.2 sea miles. The engines have run a total of 61 hours.

Training and Procedures

Standard operating procedures are being finalised for survey methods and equipment on board Tamesis, the procedures will outline safe working practices for employees and other agencies whilst working on the boat.

Invitation to Authority Members

Authority members are welcome to contact the office to arrange a day out on Tamesis to observe the work that the vessel and officers engage in.

Mark Davey
Skipper/IFC Officer