

# Observer Professionalism Terminology

## General Definitions:

### Professionalism:

- ❖ Maintaining expertise, while representing oneself and conducting one's job in a manner of high moral and ethical standards, such that the integrity and respect of the employee and the profession is not compromised or biased.
- ❖ Expressed knowledge of and adherence to the terms of reference, the bylaws, the standards of work, the codes of conduct, and the myriad of regulations applicable to the profession in a particular area of work.
- ❖ Exhibiting personal responsibility in work with the ability to self regulate, and demonstrating a commitment to *professional development*
- ❖ Acting with no conflicting interests

### Professional Development:

- ❖ The intentional ongoing advancement of an employee's professional knowledge and competency by way of regular trainings, skill maintenance, accessibility of resources, career path opportunities, participation in professional meetings, workshops, and conferences. Employee evaluations and recognition for exceptional work play an important role in professional development.
- ❖ Professional development is the responsibility of both the employee and the employer

### Social Equity:

- ❖ Denotes fairness, justice and equality before and under the law, and necessarily includes the notions of gender and racial equality

## Fisheries Observer Profession Definitions:

### Fisheries Observer and Fisheries Observer Programme Types:

A variety of management objectives can drive an observer programme, however the term *Fisheries Observer Programme* is commonly used to describe any observer programme, and observers from any observer programme are commonly referred to as "Fisheries Observers." Nevertheless, Fisheries observer programmes can be categorized by three general types, and the duties tasked to an Observer in a particular type of programme reveal the scope of a programme's main objectives. The three types are:

- ❖ *Scientific Observer Programme*
  - Objectives: include stock (targeted and /or bycatch species) assessments and predictions of future fisheries' exploitation of stocks
  - Observer Duties: include collection of catch composition and environmental / ecological information, and biological sampling of catch

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- ❖ ***Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) Observer Programme***
  - Objectives: include assessments of fishing and /or transshipment activities to ensure that fisheries management measures are followed
  - Observer Duties: include verification of logbooks with fishing and /or transshipment activities and registering compliance with all regulations
- ❖ ***Fisheries Observer Programme***
  - Objectives: include objectives found in both Scientific and MCS observer programmes
  - Observer Duties: include observer duties found in both Scientific and MCS observer programmes

***Notes: 1.) The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nation's, FAO Technical Paper, "Guidelines for developing an at-sea fishery observer program" (2002), T. Nishida's "Recent Situation of the Regional Tuna Observer Programs" (2004), and the "Proceedings of the 5th International Fisheries Observer Conference" (2007), were all referenced for defining "Fishery Observer" and "Fisheries Observer Program" types. 2.) Fisheries inspection programmes, conducted by officials with enforcement powers, are not to be considered observer programmes. Though observers may be tasked to register compliance with fisheries regulations, it must be noted that observers do not have enforcement powers and are not to be considered enforcement agents. 3.) It also must be noted that Fisher self-monitoring scenarios are not to be considered Fisheries Observer Programmes.***

**Fisher Self-monitoring:**

- ❖ With no certified Fisheries Observer or certified Electronic Monitoring scheme (aside from a Vessel Monitoring System (VMS)) aboard, the collection of fisheries management information aboard a fishing vessel by an individual designated by the fisher or collected by the fisher themselves may be referred to as "Fisher Self-monitoring"

**Fisheries Observer Employment and Experience Definitions:**

**Observer Sea-Day:**

- ❖ In terms of describing Observer work experience (though not necessarily in terms of how an Observer may be paid) an *Observer Sea-day* may be defined as: a calendar day (any part of a local-time 24-hour period) that is spent aboard a vessel at sea. A sea-day begins when mooring lines are released from a dock at the beginning of a trip and a sea-day ends when mooring lines are tied up. An *Observer sea-day* may not include any day in which an Observer is deployed in the field but is not aboard a vessel at sea, regardless if that Observer is "assigned" to a vessel or not.

**Active Observer:**

- ❖ An individual who has worked as a certified *Fisheries Observer* within one year

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### **Prior Observer (not active):**

- ❖ An individual who has prior work experience (equaling 90 sea days or more) as a certified *Fisheries Observer*, though has not worked as an Observer within one year

### **Experienced Observer:**

- ❖ A 'seasoned veteran' *Active Observer* who has demonstrated and continues to demonstrate his / her working knowledge and skills regarding all parameters of fisheries observer work within a bioregion, is well respected among employers and peers, has a good data sampling record, and has handled well all encountered conflicts and safety concerns while at sea
- ❖ Some observer programmes signify a veteran "experienced" Observer with a title such as 'Senior Observer'. These observers often take on more responsible mentor-like roles, such as: advising, coordinating, and directing their colleagues in the field.
- ❖ "Experience" is often considered a function of time, and we have summarized feedback to these ends into a rough estimate. A rough average of adequate time of work that may define an *Experienced Observer* is approximately 1 full year of employment as an Observer, or approximately 200 *Observer Sea-days*.

### **Professional Observer:**

- ❖ A dependable, well respected, *Active Observer* who: is dedicated to the objectives, ethics, and codes of conduct of an observer programme, consistently collects high quality data, never compromises the integrity of their data or their profession, and always practices a high degree of safety.
- ❖ This Observer may think of the profession (and / or fisheries science / management) as a career and posses qualities that make them a leader amongst their colleagues

### **Observer Living Wage:**

- ❖ A package of wages and benefits which allow an Observer and his/her family to live, function, and sustain economic efficiency among their local community.
- ❖ For seafarers such as Observers, wages and benefits should be comparable to other professions (i.e. government marine biologists) with similar at-sea risks and demands. A wages scale should reflect at-sea experience, and pay considerations should be made for land-based time.

### **Observer Employment Availability:**

- ❖ The time within a calendar year in which work is available for Observers in a particular bioregion. Actual employment of an individual Observer may not exactly correspond with the availability of employment opportunities to that Observer being that other factors (such as rest in between at-sea deployments and deployment rotations) may influence actual employment.

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