

Fisheries Response Fund (FRF) appeals process

News story

Details of the appeals process for the Fisheries Response Fund (FRF) and how individuals can appeal.



£9 million financial assistance for England's fishing and aquaculture businesses in response to Covid-19 was announced by Defra and HM Treasury on 17 April 2020.

The Fisheries Response Fund (FRF) was set up to directly contribute towards the fixed business costs of over 1200 catching and aquaculture businesses adversely impacted by the downturn of export and domestic markets for fish and shellfish.

The FRF scheme had a fixed financial limit, with [qualifying criteria](#) designed to ensure financial support was provided to help businesses most impacted by covid-19 to meet their fixed costs.

A formal appeals process has been put in place to consider cases where individuals feel they have evidence to suggest they met the criteria but have not received payment.

Whilst there may be instances where individuals have been unable to meet these criteria, for example due to vessel licensing, vessels under construction/repair, ill health or direct sales which are not required to be recorded through RBS, appeals will only be accepted if the applicant can prove that they met the original scheme criteria.

In order to ensure that the scheme is in line with the criteria the appeals process will be limited to the following circumstances:

Based on a factual error This could include an error on the documents held by MMO relating to vessel size, vessel activity or an issue with registration.

**Based on
incomplete or
unreflective data
– Aquaculture**

Where 2018 data (verified by the Fish Health Inspectorate) has been used, an appeal could be based on the provision of updated employee figures, validated by the FHI, or evidence that a farm is now actively producing for direct human consumption and has the documented evidence to prove it (differing to FHI's 2018 records).

**Based on
incomplete or
unreflective data
– Catching**

If Registered Buyers and Sellers (RBS) data has not been uploaded correctly by the registered buyer of goods, and this has adversely affected an individual's right to claim from the fund through no fault of their own. We will allow individuals to retrospectively upload sales notes in order to prove eligibility for the fund. In order to have a successful appeal under this heading any data gap must be through no fault of the individual applicant but rather a failing by those who hold the data or those responsible for collecting data.

**An error was made
when processing an
individual's
application**

If any administrative errors have been made by MMO when processing applications such as an individual being unable to access a system or no response from claim handlers then they will have the grounds to appeal.

Individuals who have already contacted MMO in line with the original disputes process will have their case considered under this appeals procedure and will receive a response by the end of July 2020.

Any individuals who have not yet contacted MMO and consider their eligibility to receive funds under the FRF has been incorrectly assessed should contact fisheries_response_fund@marinemanagement.org.uk, with supporting evidence, by 30 July 2020. Any appeals received after this date will not be considered.

MMO will continue to work with and identify ways to support the seafood industry both in the current circumstances and to ensure a sustainable, prosperous industry for the future.

Guidance to the current support available to the fishing industry is on [MMO's website](#).

Published 2 July 2020