

I-VMS for England's under-12m fishing vessels takes a step forward

Suppliers have been invited to submit their products and technologies for assessment so fishers will have a range of I-VMS devices to choose from before it becomes a legal requirement for them to carry a functioning monitoring unit onboard.

To support fishers in selecting a device that is suitable for their vessel, the MMO's 'type approval' process is intended to bring as many suppliers into the marketplace as possible so that there's a broad choice of products at a range of prices for fishers to choose from.

In the under-12m fishing fleet, specifications for vessels – for example, in terms of powering and housing the devices – are diverse so vessel owners are best placed, with the right support from suppliers, to decide which device and service package suits them.

Fishers will be able to start researching devices once assessments are complete and a list of approved products is published in November 2021.

Once the approved list is published and the installation timetable is confirmed, fishers will be asked to organise installation of a device on their vessel in phases, based on vessel size, to make it easier for fishers, suppliers and engineers to plan and organise installing the devices.

The MMO will work with fishers to develop and publish detailed guidance that sets out the actions they need to take from November, alongside the approved list of devices and information from each supplier on the after-sales services they offer.

The expected timetable for the roll-out of I-VMS devices next year is:

Vessel size	Expected dates
10 to 11.99m	17 Jan – 14 Feb 2022
8 to 9.99m	15 Feb to 13 April 2022
6 to 7.99m	14 April to 18 July 2022
Below 6m	19 July to 14 November 2022

The MMO has already engaged with fishers on their main requirements for I-VMS devices and has communicated these expectations to the companies seeking approval for their products.

Engagement this summer and a survey of fishers demonstrated that they want a choice of devices and prices; reliable equipment with support if it develops a fault; clear explanations of how each device might be suitable for their particular vessel; and dependable processes for installation.

The MMO is committed to providing a grant contribution towards the initial

cost of devices and is assessing how they will be supported to carry on fishing if their device fails and requires repair or replacement.