

MCA to carry out unannounced inspections of fishing vessels

The inspections are being carried out as part of ongoing work around fishing vessel safety in an industry recognised to be one of the dangerous in the world.

Since November 2020, there have been eight deaths –that’s more than ten per cent of the total for the previous ten years. Between 2011 to 2020, the Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB), reported 60 fatalities from UK fishing vessels.

The MCA has worked solidly with the fishing industry, reinforcing the messages about the requirements of legislation around standards of safety for crew and for vessels.

Surveyors regularly carry out surveys and inspections of fishing vessels and detain those that do not meet the requirement of the law, until those deficiencies are corrected.

The MCA has also worked with industry and other partners to drive home the message about wearing Personal Flotation Devices.

However, the Agency has said that it can and will take action where it feels advice is being ignored and safety not taken seriously.

Tony Heslop, Assistant Director, Survey and Inspection (South) said: “Fishing is one of the most dangerous industries in the world. We’ve pushed the message for many years now about the importance of wearing life jackets and making sure that fishing vessels are fit for purpose under the survey and inspection regime.

“While education is important and we will continue to do that, enforcement is also needed for those who consistently ignore our message, to emphasise why this matters and why we take it seriously.”

Fraser Heasley, Assistant Director, Survey and Inspection (North) said: “The MCA continues to work with industry, including the Fishing Industry Safety Group, as part of all of our ongoing commitment to reduce the deaths which cause so much heartache and sadness to so many.”