

News story: Fishing company and skipper ordered to pay £37,926 for fisheries offences

Ellie Adhamh (WD206) is an Irish registered 25 metre fishing vessel operated by R & E Fishing Limited (Ireland). The court heard how the Royal Navy boarded the vessel during a routine patrol in the Celtic Sea on 29 April 2018. The Boarding Officer checked the vessel's documentation, fish room and gear and a number of offences were found. The vessel was then detained to Newlyn for further investigation by the MMO.

Six charges were brought before the court, including undersized net offences, incorrect operation of the electronic logbook and under recording of three quota species.

R & E Fishing and skipper Dan Cullimore both pleaded guilty to all charges.

Sentencing the defendants, District Judge (Magistrates Courts) Cooper said that the defendants had been negligent in failing to ensure they had appropriate systems in place to prevent the offences occurring.

R & E Fishing was fined £32,000, ordered to pay £4,416.62 in costs and a victim surcharge of £170. Dan Cullimore was fined £1,100, ordered to pay £200 in costs and a victim surcharge of £40.

A spokesperson for the MMO said:

This offending took place in the Biologically Sensitive Area and using undersized gear not only jeopardises the chance of fish stocks replenishing but gives the vessel an unfair advantage over those fishing in the same area who are compliant with the rules.

The rules on the accuracy of electronic logbook entries are also very important. If vessels fail to record their data accurately this increases the chances of unrecorded catches occurring and risks fish not being taken into account for quota uptake figures, which puts the future of the fishing industry at risk if over fishing occurs.