

Fisheries Management Scotland

Enforcement Committee – Minutes

14 August 2020

By Videoconference

Present

Alan Wells (FMS) (Chair)
Alison Baker (Forth)
Chris Conroy (Ness)
Brian Davidson (FMS)
Craig Duncan (Tay)

Karl Ferguson (RTC)
Diarmid Hawkins (Dee)
Keith Williams (IFM)

Apologies

Jamie Urquhart (Dee)
Bill Whyte (Wester Ross)
Richard Whyte (Spey)

In attendance

Craig Somerville, Castabroad Media

1. Welcome

AW welcomed all to the meeting and indicated that Craig Somerville, Castabroad Media would join the meeting for item 4.

2. Training Delivery

2.1. Collaborative working to update the IFM bailiff course

BD set out the current position regarding the annual water bailiff course. The core bailiff training annual exam is delivered by the Institute of Fisheries Management (IFM). The customer for the course is predominately the DSFB network, but also includes Marine Scotland who utilise the exam to accredit bailiffs where there is no DSFB to appoint them in line with the joint policy agreed with Fisheries Management Scotland.

IFM and Fisheries Management Scotland intend to review the material and questions to ensure that it remains up to date. It will be important that this training continues to meet the needs of the sector, particularly as it is fundamental in demonstrating basic competence and supports the employment of many staff. It is therefore important that there is input to this process from DSFB network. As an interim arrangement under the current circumstances, IFM will be convening a virtual exam format (with higher pass threshold) in early December.

A number of key points arose in discussion:

- The examination is only part of the picture and provides a snapshot of knowledge on law. It is important that the exam process fits into a broader training programme to ensure this knowledge is understood in a practical way;
- It was agreed that an emphasis on more online training resources will help make training more accessible, comprehensive and flexible.
- More focussed modules will help to develop competencies in a range of areas;
- As part of any review of training, job roles should be examined to ensure that the training fits the requirements of the role;
- Marine Scotland should be consulted on the approach to training review and delivery;
- The costs for the course and examination should be re-evaluated to ensure that they reflect the true value of development and delivery.

It was agreed to convene a small sub-group comprising Fisheries Management Scotland and IFM to consider the course format and core material which supports it. This will also help support the development of the online refresher course. It was agreed to invite Marine Scotland to participate in this process and seek input from someone with a background in education to review the material. BD and KW will co-ordinate this and produce a short scoping paper for the group's consideration. **ACTION: BD/KW**

2.2. *Online refresher – process to finalise and deliver*

BD outlined the features in the preferred online platform for delivering the online refresher. There is a need to generate new content for the online refresher and this should fall into the work of the sub-group agreed above. The Committee and sub-group should also consider what other assessments and tests might be introduced (including the bailiff training course and exam), identify the appropriate audiences for these and bring them within the same overall training platform. KW confirmed that he would seek IFM Scottish Branch's approval to support financially as appropriate. **ACTION: KW**

2.3. *Annual enforcement seminar*

It was recognised that COVID-19 restrictions may constrain the delivery of a seminar this year. The committee agreed that the potential for running virtual workshops to replicate the approach undertaken for the 2019 event should be examined. The workshops could be aimed at different audiences, for example for internal training needs but also aim to bring Police Scotland, Marine Scotland and SEPA into specific workshops. It was agreed to identify key priorities for these workshops and look at who might lead the input. **ACTION: BD**

3. Policy priorities – penalties review

AW provided a summary of the work on the penalties review as part of the Animals & Wildlife (Penalties, Protections and Powers) (Scotland) Bill in 2019. This included the submission of written evidence to the Scottish Parliament about the inclusion of fish within the penalties review, liaison with Scottish Government and a meeting with the Minister in late 2019. Following these discussions it was agreed that the most appropriate way to deal with this would be to bring it within the scope of the Wild Salmon Strategy and the Minister committed to doing so. It was agreed that this process will require commitment from the Enforcement Committee to further refine thinking in advance of any opportunity for change. BD will prepare a plan to help manage the input of this work from the committee and with involvement from Marine Scotland. **ACTION: BD**

4. International Year of the Salmon film project – enforcement episode

Craig Somerville was welcomed to the meeting and BD and CS provided an overview of the film project and how the enforcement episode will fit into the broader series. It was agreed that the film should demonstrate:

- how fish crime is presented in the context of broader wildlife crime and emphasise the ‘collateral damage’ fish crime can cause – ie the indiscriminate nature of the activity;
- the context of the decline in salmon numbers as part of the story;
- how people can assist in resolving the problem;
- how fish crime can be linked to serious organised crime;
- what is legal & illegal;
- positive messages about how angling is compatible with and supports fish protection.

It was recognised that there will be different messages for different audiences and that this will be reflected in the film work. The committee agreed to consider appropriate filming locations and these will be discussed with CS. **ACTION: BD/CS**

5. AOB

5.1. *Sea bass*

DH alluded to increasing incidences of fishing for sea bass. This is a new activity in some areas and may raise enforcement issues where salmon or sea trout are retained unlawfully. Further advice will be sought from other DSFBs who are experiencing similar issues. **ACTION: DH**

5.2. *PAW Scotland funding*

the funding bid for training support was not successful. BD has contacted the fund for feedback.

5.3. *Current wildlife crime data*

BD has produced an updated information sheet and this will be circulated to the committee. **ACTION: BD**

5.4. *Police Scotland*

BD has planned to meet with the new Police Scotland Wildlife Crime Co-ordinator to provide a briefing on fish crime and current work – he will report back to the committee. **ACTION: BD**

5.5. *Simon Mckelvey memorial bursary*

KW outlined the bursary arrangement for the IFM certificate & diploma course and asked if details of this can be shared for interest and applications.