**Fisheries: on-board cameras announcement**

**Questions and Answers**

1. **What fishing area is involved in the introduction of on-board cameras?**

* The area is off the west coast of the North Island between Whanganui and Kaitaia (Tauroa Point) and is based on General Fisheries Statistical Fishing Areas 40-42, 45 and 46 (see map).
* This area has the strongest scientific and anecdotal evidence indicating the presence of Māui dolphins.

1. **How many vessels are affected?**

* We’ve focused on the vessels that pose the highest risk of interacting with Māui dolphins based on their fishing method and where they fish.
* Trawlers and set-netters that work the inshore area are considered to have the highest chance of interacting with Maui dolphins.
* Based on 2017 fishing year data, 28 trawlers or set-netters worked this inshore area. There are 20 trawlers over 29 metres and eight set-netters under 8 metres.
* However, the final number requiring cameras from 1 November will depend on whether the identified vessels continue to fish in the area using trawl or set nets.
* Other vessels identified as fishing in this area have been excluded at this stage based on the lower risk they pose. They fish further off-shore or use fishing methods that aren’t so risky, such as long-liners, purse seiners and potters.

1. **Why are inshore trawling and set-netting considered the highest risk?**

* Set-netting is the fishing method that poses the highest fisheries risk to Māui dolphins because the nets are invisible in the water and dolphins can get caught in the nets and drown.
* Trawling is also considered a risk. It has been known to capture Hector’s dolphins in the South Island, and captures may occur if Māui dolphins are feeding around the entrance of the net.

1. **Will all vessels identified for this first stage be fitted with cameras?**

* The vessels have been identified using 2017 fishing year data. Some of them caught very little of their overall catch in the area. Some may choose to either change their fishing method, or shift their fishing activity to other areas, rather than have cameras installed.

1. **How will on-board cameras help?**

* On-board cameras will give us more accurate information about the impacts of fishing on this fragile Māui dolphin population to ensure current and future protection measures are effective.
* On-board cameras will complement observer coverage of this area. It is intended that 100% of on-board camera footage will be reviewed. This will provide a robust and high level of assurance that fishing activity in high-risk Māui habitat is being monitored closely.
* New Zealand is under pressure to meet expectations from consumers and overseas regulators about how seafood is caught and how Māui dolphins can be protected.

1. **What will on-board cameras monitor?**

* On-board cameras will monitor areas of a vessel associated with fishing-related activities. For example, cameras may be located above deck to monitor fishing gear deployment and catch.
* Camera monitoring is not intended to cover those parts of a vessel not connected to fishing or fishing-related activities; such as the bridge, crew quarters, messes, heads, or engine room.

1. **How will you protect crew members’ privacy?**

* Fisheries NZ is aware that some crew are concerned about the impact on-board cameras will have on their privacy. Fisheries New Zealand has systems and tools in place to protect personal information. It acts in accordance with the Privacy Act and Official Information Act, which both contain provisions for protecting privacy.
* Footage will be captured electronically and automatically encrypted so that nobody can access the footage without a digital ‘key’.
* Only authorised staff will have access to review camera footage.

1. **How will you deal with other fishing vessels that come into this area?**

* Vessels that historically fish outside of this area will not be required to have on-board cameras. Ongoing monitoring of catch and position reporting by commercial fishing vessels will show if new vessels enter this area.
* Fisheries New Zealand will consider if either observers or on-board cameras are required on these vessels, based on the risk they pose to Māui dolphins.

1. **Why is the Government funding this stage?**

* Crown funding enables on-board cameras to be implemented quickly and in a consistent way to support protection measures for Māui dolphins.
* Crown funding also allows Fisheries NZ to set the technical requirements and specifications for on-board camera systems. It allows officials to support and engage with commercial fishing operators and suppliers, and to make changes and improvements as the programme is tested on the water.
* Implementing on-board cameras is a significant investment. Alongside the costs of purchasing and installing cameras on fishing vessels, there are costs for government officials to review footage, store footage, respond to issues identified through analysis of the footage, and to plan and administer the programme. This is part of the day to day cost of regulation and oversight.

1. **What restrictions are already in place to protect Māui dolphins?**

* Under the Hector’s and Māui dolphin Threat Management Plan (TMP), set netting has been prohibited in approximately 6200 square kilometres of inshore waters off the west coast of the North Island. Trawling has been prohibited in 1700 square kilometres of the area.
* A significant scientific review is underway into dolphin distribution and abundance, as well as updated information about fishing and other threats, to assess the effectiveness of these measures.
* The results of the review and proposals for an updated TMP for Hector’s and Māui dolphins will be released for public consultation shortly.

1. **Will vessels with on-board cameras still be required to carry an observer?**

* Observer coverage will continue in this area to ensure that cameras are consistently able to detect interactions to the same level of accuracy as observers.
* The area identified for on-board cameras is larger than the area where set netters and trawl vessels are currently required to carry observers. As a result, not all vessels involved in this first stage of camera rollout will carry observers. All vessels considered to pose a high risk to Māui dolphins will be monitored.
* Cameras will also provide a level of coverage that is not feasible with human observers alone. Cameras are capable of 24/7 operations, and can operate without notice and irrespective of vessel size. Some vessels are too small for one observer, let alone the number of observers required for round the clock fishing activity.
* Observers carry out other activities while at sea, such as collecting biological samples and noting details about vessel working conditions.

1. **Who’s going to supply the camera systems?**

* Fisheries New Zealand will work through a competitive tender process advertised via the Government Tendering Service (GETS).
* Fisheries New Zealand is taking lessons from international jurisdictions who have already rolled out on-board cameras. It will also continue to refine the New Zealand programme to continually improve the way it receives, handles, reviews and acts on camera footage.