



BIOT Administration
Overseas Territories
Directorate | Foreign and
Commonwealth Office | King
Charles Street | London SW1A
2AHs

Code of conduct for fishing vessel inspections in the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT).

The BIOT Administration undertakes to inspect vessels in a fair and professional manner, while being courteous and sensitive to the needs of the fishing industry.

BIOT's marine protected area is monitored by patrol vessels such as those shown. The daughter craft (DC) and fast reaction craft (FRC) of the patrol vessel are used to conduct the inspections.

The patrol vessel and the boarding craft can be identified by the words BIOT PATROL on their hulls.



Fishing vessels (FVs) transiting through British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) waters are requested to inform the BIOT Authorities prior to doing so. These vessels may also be subject to a routine inspection by a BIOT Senior Fishery Protection Officer (SFPO) and boarding party. Boarding teams will try to minimise the amount of time that the FV's transit is slowed or suspended during an inspection. All other FVs found in BIOT will be boarded as a matter of procedure. Inspections may be carried out at any time, day or night, regardless of the FV's activity.

It is expected that FV masters maintain proper radio watch in accordance with good practice including the monitoring of VHF channel 16 and HF channel 2182, and to respond accordingly when hailed. Masters will not be required to reveal commercially sensitive information over open radio channels.

A boarding will not normally take place without notice unless communication cannot be established. However, in cases where no radio contact has been made, the patrol vessel will raise the SIERRA QUEBAC THREE

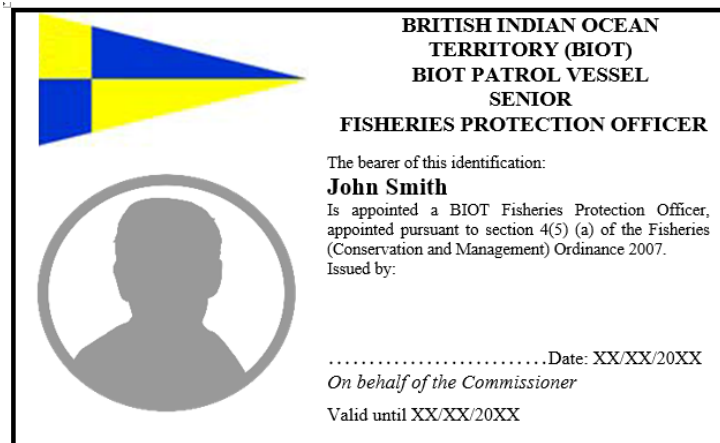


BIOT Administration
Overseas Territories
Directorate | Foreign and
Commonwealth Office | King
Charles Street | London SW1A
2AHs

signal flags which signify “*heave to, I intend to board you*” and/or flash by use of a signal lamp from the patrol vessel, the Morse code symbol LIMA which signifies “*You should stop your vessel instantly*”.

Masters of fishing vessels will be expected to facilitate safe embarkation of boarding teams, providing a boarding ladder meeting the requirements of the regulations and providing a lee as necessary. Inspection teams will work with the Master to ensure that no action is taken that may compromise the safety of the fishing vessel and its crew. Inspection teams will have due regard to safety hazards on board fishing vessels and masters of fishing vessels should alert boarding teams to any particular hazards.

Any Sea Marshalls onboard must stow ALL weapons within the accommodation before entering the MPA.



SFPOs are responsible for carrying out inspections of fishing vessels. The objective is to monitor compliance with BIOT Fisheries Ordinance and IOTC Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs).

All SFPOs will present, upon boarding, their identity document. This document will bear the name and a photograph of the person to whom it is issued, state that the person is a Fisheries Protection Officer, and state its date of issue and period of validity.

Your help with many aspects of the inspection and compliance with reasonable requests made by SFPOs will mean that the inspection time is minimised.

The SFPO is authorised to require the Master to produce, or provide access to, some or all of the following: the vessel flag state fishing license on board; the fishing logbook; captain and crew identification, VMS; GPS, charts; fishing gear; the fish hold; and any fish onboard.

Throughout the inspection, our SFPOs will treat you with respect and courtesy and expect the same in return. Please ask the SFPO at any time during an inspection if you are concerned with any of the procedures being followed. At the end of each inspection, the SFPO will present the Master of the fishing vessel with a boarding receipt. This will summarise the findings of the inspection and provide contact details by which a copy of the full boarding report may be obtained, as well as how any comments relevant to the inspection may be submitted. The SFPO will also aim to provide advice to fishermen on fisheries regulations where appropriate. Ask the SFPO if you need advice at the end of the inspection.

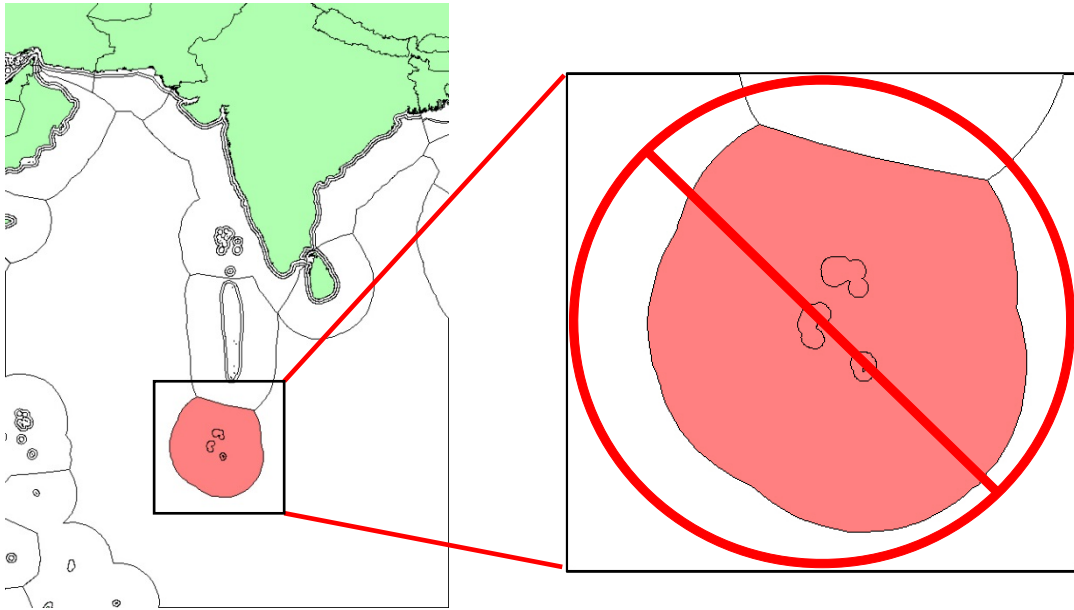
In cases where it is suspected that the FV has engaged in unlicensed fishing, or has contravened other regulations of the BIOT Fisheries Ordinance in BIOT waters, the SFPO will require the FV to accompany the BIOT Patrol Vessel to Diego Garcia where the matter will be investigated further. Please note, it is not the SFPO who then decides the resultant course of action. The Master and crew will be treated fairly while in transit and in Diego Garcia.

Any form of fishing while in BIOT waters and both the use and possession of certain types of fishing gear, including wire trace, is illegal under BIOT law.

For any queries, please email BIOTAdmin@fco.gsi.gov.uk



**IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR FISHERS REGARDING
THE BRITISH INDIAN OCEAN TERRITORY (BIOT)
(CHAGOS ARCHIPELAGO)**



**NO FISHING ACTIVITY ALLOWED ANYWHERE IN THIS AREA, INCLUDING
TRANSHIPMENT AND BUNKERING**

**FISHING HERE COULD RESULT IN IMPRISONMENT, A
FINE PER VESSEL & CONFISCATION OF ALL GEAR AND CATCH.**

This 640 000 km² area is a United Kingdom Overseas Territory and is a NO-TAKE MARINE PROTECTED AREA. All those who fish in this area are doing so **illegally**. Illegal fishing is taken **extremely seriously** and ALL vessels suspected of fishing illegally will be investigated, and may be held, by the enforcement authorities.

**CONTINUOUS SURVEILLANCE AND ENFORCEMENT IS CONDUCTED
FROM ASHORE, FROM THE AIR AND BY PATROL VESSELS.**



ADMIRALTY NOTICE TO MARINERS No 2597 of 1991

