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Joint Enforcement System for ICNAF Trawl Regulations

Joint Report on USA-USSR Exchange of Enforcement Officers, 11-28 May, 1965

Arrangements were made for U. S. and Soviet enforcement officers to observe jointly each other's methods of enforcing trawl regulations of the International Commission for the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries (ICNAF).

In addition, the purpose of the exchange permitted a study of the systems of national control and the techniques of practical implementation.

The exchange began on May 11, 1965, when the three-man U. S. team joined the three-man Soviet team on board the Soviet salvage tug STREMITELNYI in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The teams proceeded to Georges Bank where they spent seven days boarding several different types of fishing, processing, and base ships. The first ship boarded was the SVIATOGOR, from which Mr N. A. Samarinov, Expeditionary Fishing Base Chief, was directing Soviet fishing operations on Georges Bank. Discussions were held concerning the enforcement of ICNAF regulations and the problems arising from fishing vessels of several nations operating in the same area.

The inspection officers boarded fishing vessels of the BMRT, SRT-R, and SRT classes. These Soviet trawlers were not required to use a trawl net with regulation size meshes because they were not engaged in the haddock and cod fishery for which ICNAF regulations are in force. Instead, these vessels were catching silver hake, red hake, and argentine.

The trawl net on the BMRT L-312, KAROLIS PACHELA, was made of caprone and constructed with five-inch meshes in the forward parts and with gradually smaller meshes leading to one-inch meshes at the back or trailing end. The codend was of double 4 1/2-inch mesh and was constructed of 3mm twine. The last one-third of the codend, a portion of about 20 feet in length, was made of two layers of twine of equal mesh size. In order to prevent displacement in relation to the codend, the meshes of both layers were fastened with a lengthwise line, going through the center and branching out at the ends. Also laced diagonally on the codend and spaced about six feet apart were additional helper lines. Bull hides were used for bottom chafing gear.

While fishing for unregulated species, one vessel was found to have entered, unintentionally, an area where the by-catch of demersal fishes was somewhat higher than the rate of catch provided for by ICNAF trawl regulations. The captain of this vessel was strictly warned, and, at the request of the Soviet inspector, the Chief of the Expedition issued instructions to all Soviet fishing vessels to avoid operating within the above area. With the aid of visual and electronavigatory means available on the STREMITELNYI, the Soviet and U. S. inspectors were convinced that such instructions had been followed and that all Soviet commercial vessels had moved to other fishing grounds.

The STREMITELNYI and the U. S. Coast Guard cutter ACUSHNET rendezvoused on Georges Bank on May 20. The two teams transferred to the U. S. vessel in order that the Soviet team could observe the U. S. method of enforcing the ICNAF regulations at sea. Three U. S. fishing vessels were boarded and inspected. In each case the fishing vessel possessed a valid Haddock and Cod Certificate and therefore was required to have on board only trawl nets with meshes of legal size. The meshes in the nets were measured, as prescribed in the ICNAF regulations, and were found to be of a size required in those regulations.

The team departed the ACUSHNET in Boston, Massachusetts, on May 23rd. During the period of May 24 through May 28 the two teams inspected fishing vessels and shore facilities in Gloucester, Boston, and New Bedford. Inspections were made of vessels using small mesh nets, and it was ascertained that haddock or cod in amounts in excess of that permitted by the ICNAF regulations were not being taken. The method of certifying new codends, dry before use, was demonstrated.

Conclusions

1. The Soviet and American fishing vessel captains are familiar with ICNAF regulations.
2. The Soviet and American enforcement officers are more familiar with each other's enforcement systems.
3. Both nations can and do deal severely with a vessel captain when a violation is detected.
4. The construction of the codend with the extra layer of netting lashed on the top, back portion and the use of extra lines appear to be necessary to avoid the bursting of that part of the codend when stern trawlers haul aboard large catches.
5. The meaning of the ICNAF regulations describing the taper of mesh measuring gauges is not clear.
6. Soviet vessels on Georges Bank are avoiding areas of haddock concentrations.
7. The work of the Soviet and U.S. enforcement officers was carried out in a business-like and friendly atmosphere.
8. Both parties considered the results of the exchange useful.

Notes on Canada-U.S. Exchange of Enforcement Officers, 12-30 May 1965

Canadian officials were happy to respond to the invitation extended by the U.S. Government to exchange enforcement officers as recommended at the last meeting of the Commission. The exchange took place during the period, May 12-30th of this year. U.S. officers visited a number of fishing ports in Nova Scotia and spent about three days at sea on board one of our larger patrol vessels. The U.S. Commissioners, no doubt, will report on the findings of their officers in this country.

Canadian officers were provided with an opportunity to inspect fishing craft and gear in the New England ports of Gloucester, Boston and New Bedford, and to accompany their U.S. counterparts on a patrol among the fleet operating on Georges Bank. They have reported being especially interested in the U.S. procedure for the certification of nets prior to use in the fisheries. They believe that this procedure might be adopted with advantage in Canada, where the present procedure breaks down in freezing weather.

Of particular interest to our men also was the method employed by U.S. authorities to control fishing vessels operating under the annual exemption arrangement permitted in Subarea 5. Certain aspects of this are still obscure to us and are expected to be the subject of further consultation.

In general, our officers consider that, as a result of the reciprocal Canada-U.S. exchange, they have acquired both a better knowledge of the problems encountered in the fisheries of another member country and some very useful information

on administrative devices for application in our own region. They feel too that the exchange contributed to the development of understanding and trust not only as between the fishery administrations of our two countries but as between our respective fishing industries as well.

We, in Canada, look forward to similar exchanges with other member countries.

Report on the U.S. -Canada Exchange of Enforcement Officers, 12-30 May 1965

In order that enforcement officers of the U.S. and Canada might become more familiar with procedures used by each in enforcing ICNAF Regulations, an arrangement was made for reciprocal visits of officers from each country.

Two U.S. Fisheries Management Agents joined a Canadian Protection Officer in Halifax, early in May, 1965. The two teams visited the major fishing ports throughout the Province of Nova Scotia observing the methods and procedures used by Canadian Protection Officers in enforcing the ICNAF and the Canadian Fishing Regulations. The U.S. team noted that all vessels boarded at dock side had trawl nets with mesh sizes averaging about 4 5/8 inches. The Canadian officers demonstrated the parallel-sided gauge which they propose to use in event a violation of mesh size is detected.

In the past Canada has not conducted enforcement patrols at sea. Arrangements were made to undertake such a patrol on board the fisheries patrol vessel CYGNUS during the exchanges. Two Canadian vessels were boarded and inspected during the several days spent at sea; weather conditions did not permit more vessels to be inspected.

A three man Canadian team of Protection Officers joined a U.S. Fisheries Management Agent to observe methods and procedures used by the U.S. in enforcing ICNAF Regulations on U.S. trawlers. During the dockside inspections carried out in three major fishing ports they were able to observe enforcement procedures used not only on vessels fishing for haddock and cod with large meshed nets, but also on vessels using small meshed nets fishing with either a 10% Annual Exemption Certificate or with a trip exemption. The procedure of certifying a new cod-end, dry before use, was also demonstrated.

A four-day sea patrol was made on board the U.S. Coast Guard cutter ACUSHNET. Due to weather conditions only two U.S. trawlers were boarded. Both of these vessels were registered to fish for haddock and cod and each had legal mesh sized nets on board. It is a violation for any U.S. vessel holding a valid Haddock and Cod Certificate which is in force to have any small mesh netting on the vessel at any time. No violations were discovered during either of the sea patrols, but one was detected during dockside inspections in each country. These involved a Canadian trawler with an improper topside chafer and a U.S. vessel with a certified codend which had been altered illegally. In each case corrective action was immediately taken.

Conclusions

1. The U.S. and Canadian fishing vessel captains are aware of the ICNAF regulations.
2. The U.S. and Canadian enforcement officers deal immediately and effectively with violations detected during their inspections.
3. This exchange served to demonstrate that a vessel patrol is an effective tool in enforcing the ICNAF regulations at sea, the place where a mesh-obstruction violation is most apt to occur.
4. As a result of these Canadian-U.S. exchanges, the enforcement officers taking part are now more familiar with the problems encountered and procedures used by the respective countries in enforcing the ICNAF Regulation