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Shrimp Permit Conditions Review

**This consultation closes at midday on Thursday 6 November 2025**

Eastern IFCA are seeking the views of stakeholders as part of the review for the Shrimp Permit Byelaw 2018 permit conditions. It is a requirement of the byelaw that the permit conditions are reviewed every four years. The purpose of the review is to evaluate the effectiveness of existing permit measures and to identify challenges or opportunities for improvement. This review covers both the conditions of the Category 1 permits for the Wash and North Norfolk Coast, and the Category 2 permits for the rest of the district.

While no significant environmental or compliance issues have been identified with the shrimp fisheries that need to be addressed, Eastern IFCA is proposing two changes to the permit conditions:

1. **An increase to a 3-minute ping rate for VMS.**   
   This will bring all positional reporting in line with IVMS and provide fishing activity information for the most effective fisheries management.
2. **Removing or altering the experience requirements on Category 1 Shrimp Permits (usable within the Wash and North Norfolk Coast).**  
   Industry members have told us that this requirement is making it very difficult to find skippers, and as a result vessels are sometimes not able to go to sea. Alterations could, for example, include replacing the experience requirement with a training session to ensure skippers are aware of the permit conditions and closed areas and how to ensure the fishery doesn’t adversely affect the habitats of the Wash and North Norfolk Coast.

This consultation is an opportunity for stakeholders to provide feedback on the above proposals, as well as the broader permit conditions.

The measures and existing permit conditions for the Shrimp Permit Byelaw 2018 can be found [here](https://www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk/shrimp-permit-byelaw-2018/).

# Making your comments

This consultation document is intended for you to have your say on management measures and to inform an impact assessment on the matter.

The information you provide will be processed in accordance with our privacy notice found here: <https://www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk/consultations/>

We acknowledge that consultations can be time consuming to complete and we appreciate your continued engagement.

If you require a printed copy of the document, please contact the office and we will post you a physical copy.

Please email completed documents to [mail@eastern-ifca.gov.uk](file:///\\eifca-fs1.eastern-ifca.gov.uk\eifca_share\S_Correspondence_library\C_Mussel_correspondence\2025_Mussel_fishery\Biosecurity%20Review%20Consultation\mail@eastern-ifca.gov.uk). Alternatively, physical copies may be sent to the address below. You are welcome to provide a written response instead of filling out this document, also to the address below.

Eastern IFCA

Unit 6 North Lynn Business Village

Bergen Way

King's Lynn

Norfolk

PE30 2JG

**This consultation closes at midday on Thursday 6 November 2025**

# Section 1. Your Details

Please provide your details below. This will enable us to provide specific support if it is requested and to contact you about your answers if we require further clarification.

Full name:

Operating port:

Vessel name(s) and PLN:

Address:

Telephone (landline):

Mobile:

Email:

# Section 2: Permit Conditions – All Permits

The permit conditions that apply to all permits, both Category 1 and Category 2, are detailed below, with the opportunity to provide ratings and comments for each.

**Try-Nets**

Permit Condition:

2. A vessel must not carry or deploy more than one try-net.

3. A try-net must:

a) be deployed and hauled only by hand;

b) have a beam width of no more than 500 millimetres;

c) be no more than 20 kilograms in weight; and

d) not have tickler chains or any other attachment designed to, or with the effect of, penetrating the seabed except guides, skids or a shoe

Explanation and Intention:

A “try-net” means a trawl deployed by hand from a vessel used to determine the presence or absence of shrimps. This condition requires that only one try-net is aboard any vessel, and limits their size. It is intended to ensure that all fishing is undertaken by approved and certified gear, and that try-nets are limited in size and number to prevent them causing any damage to the seabed.

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| Please indicate to what extent you believe the measure is **effective at achieving its intent**? | | | | |
| Very Ineffective | Ineffective | Neither effective or ineffective | Effective | Very effective |
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| Please provide information to describe to what extent this measure **impacts your fishing opportunities** or causes you other **financial impacts** |
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| Please provide further information about your answer and any other comments about this permit condition |
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**Prohibited attachments**

4. A vessel must not carry or deploy a net, the mesh of which measures between 16 and 31 millimetres which has:

a) tickler chains;

b) any item designed to, or with the effect of penetrating the seabed except guides, skids or shoes;

c) guides, skids or shoes unless the surface of such which comes into contact with the seabed is flat across its entire length.

Explanation and Intention:

This condition prevents items that can dig into the seabed from being attached to fishing gear. It is intended to prevent damage to the seabed.

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| Please provide information to describe to what extent this measure **impacts your fishing opportunities** or causes you other **financial impacts** |
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| Please provide further information about your answers and any other comments about this permit condition? |
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**Separator trawl or sorting grid requirement**

5. A vessel carrying fishing gear with an aggregate beam width or a net headline length of eight metres or less must not carry or deploy a net, the mesh of which measures between 16 and 31 millimetres unless:

a) netting, the mesh of which measures at least twice that of the codend and no more than 70 millimetres, is fitted across the entire cross-section of the net in such a way that:

i. sea fish cannot reach the codend without first passing through the netting; and

ii. there is a hole in the net through which all sea fish that do not pass through the netting are able to escape; or

b) a rigid grid, the spacing between the bars of which is no more than 20 millimetres, is fitted across the entire cross-section of the net in such a way that:

i. sea fish cannot reach the codend without first passing through the grid; and

ii. there is a hole in the net through which all sea fish that do not pass through the grid are able to escape.

6. Paragraph 5 does not apply to a try net.

Explanation and Intention:

This condition requires shrimp nets to have veil nets or separator grids fitted. It is intended to reduce bycatch by ensuring larger fish are prevented from entering the codend and are able to escape in vessels of all sizes.

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| Please provide information to describe to what extent this measure **impacts your fishing opportunities** or causes you other **financial impacts** |
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| Please provide further information about your answers and any other comments about this permit condition |
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# Section 3: Permit Conditions – Category 1 Only

The permit conditions that apply only to Category 1 permits, for the Wash and North Norfolk Coast, (in addition to those listed in section 2) are detailed below, with the opportunity to provide ratings and comments for each.

**Requirement to complete returns**

Permit Condition:

7. A Permit holder must submit, or cause to be submitted, to the Authority, shrimp return forms relating to the previous weeks fishing no later than the Wednesday of each week.

8. Where shrimp return forms are more than twenty one days in arrears, the Authority must notify all persons named on the associated Shrimp Permit in writing.

9. Seven days after notification under paragraph 8, the persons so notified must not fish for shrimp unless and until such time as:

a) the Authority has received all of the notified shrimp return forms referred to in the notification; and

b) the Authority has issued confirmation that such has been received.

Explanation and Intention:

This condition requires holders of Category 1 permits to provide returns detailing their fishing activity. It is intended to ensure that the Authority is fully informed regarding the level of activity so the fishery can be effectively managed, particularly in relation to managing fishing effort in accordance with the Shrimp Fishing Effort Limitation Scheme[[1]](#footnote-1). Currently, all days need to be accounted for, so returns need to be provided even when weeks are spent not fishing.

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| Please provide information to describe to what extent this measure **impacts your fishing opportunities** or causes you other **financial impacts** |
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| Please provide further information about your answers and any other comments about this permit condition |
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**Fishing effort restrictions**

Permit Condition:

10. The Authority may restrict the maximum number of trips which can be undertaken under the authority of a Shrimp Permit in accordance with the Shrimp Permit Scheme Policy and when doing so must:

a) notify all persons named on extant Shrimp Permits in writing; and

b) provide at least two weeks’ notice of the restriction coming into effect.

11. Fishing effort restrictions will have effect until the 1st August following notification or less time as may be specified in such notification.

12. Where notification is provided under paragraph 10, a person fishing for shrimps under the authority of this permit must not undertake more than the maximum number of shrimp fishing trips.

Explanation and Intention:

This condition allows Eastern IFCA to bring in trip restrictions. It is intended to ensure that the Authority is able to bring in measures to reduce effort as required to protect the Wash and North Norfolk Coast without needing to fully close the fishery. It has not so far been required in the lifetime of the byelaw.

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| Do you have any comments about this permit condition? |
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**Registration of fishing gear**

Permit Condition:

13.A person must not fish for shrimps under the authority of this permit using fishing

gear unless:

a) a ‘certificate of gear approval’ has been issued by Eastern IFCA for that shrimp fishing gear;

b) the ‘certificate of gear approval’ is valid; and

c) a tag provided by Eastern IFCA is affixed to the gear with a reference number which is associated with the ‘certificate of gear approval’.

14. For the purpose of this permit condition, a ‘certificate of gear approval’;

a) will only be issued if the shrimp fishing gear has been inspected by an Eastern IFCA Officer and meets the requirements of the conditions of this permit and the Shrimp Permit Byelaw 2018;

b) will be invalid if the shrimp fishing gear is modified in any way after the ‘certificate of gear approval’ has been issued;

c) will be valid for the period the associated permit is valid.

Explanation and Intention:

This condition requires all gear to be inspected by IFCOs prior to fishing. It is intended to ensure that all shrimp fishing gear within the Wash and North Norfolk Coast complies with the gear requirements set out in Section 2.

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| Please provide information to describe to what extent this measure **impacts your fishing opportunities** or causes you other **financial impacts** |
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| Do you have any comments about this permit condition? |
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**PROPOSED: Vessel Monitoring Devices (Category 1 Only)**

PROPOSED Permit Condition:

15. Vessels with an overall length of less than 12m must at all times whilst at sea:

a. Have either a Nemo or SC2 I-VMS MMO type-approved I-VMS device installed onboard and operations;

b. Have the I-VMS unit switched on and transmitting data to the device supplier hub for onward transmission to the UK VMS Hub at least once in every 3 minutes; and

c. Ensure that the device has not been manually overridden, has not been tampered with or damaged and is not obstructed or interfered with so as to compromise or prevent the effective transmission of data to the UK VMS Hub.

16. Subject to condition 17, vessels with an overall length of 12m or more must at all times whilst at sea:

a. Have onboard a VMS or VMS+ unit;

b. Have the VMS or VMS+ unit switched on and transmitting data to the device supplier hub for onward transmission to the UK VMS Hub at least once in every 3 minutes; and

c. Ensure that the device has not been manually overridden, has not been tampered with or damaged and is not obstructed or interfered with so as to compromise or prevent the effective transmission of data to the UK VMS Hub.

17. Where a vessel to which condition 16 applies is not able to meet condition 16(b), condition 16 shall not apply if;

a. the vessel has onboard a tracker provided by the Authority; and

b. the permit holder or nominated deputy remunerate the Authority for the associated subscription cost.

Explanation and Intention:

This condition would require all vessels to either be fitted with IVMS, or VMS with the ping rate increased to 3 minutes. If this is not reasonably possible in relation to vessels 12m and over, it would require a tracker provided by Eastern IFCA instead. It is proposed to ensure that all vessels taking part in the Wash and North Norfolk Coast shrimp fishery are reporting their positional information at a three minute ping rate, either through IVMS, VMS with its ping rate increased. Where such would require the replacement of the VMS unit, an Eastern-IFCA supplied tracker would be supplied which must be used instead.

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| Please provide information to describe to what extent this measure **impacts your fishing opportunities** or causes you other **financial impacts** |
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| Do you have any comments about this potential permit condition? |
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# Section 4: Eligibility Criteria

Category 1 Permits are currently subject to the below criteria for someone to be eligible for a permit, or to be named on a permit as a skipper.

**Eligibility Criteria – Category One Permit**

1. A person is not eligible to fish under the authority of a Shrimp Permit unless they fulfil the experience requirement.

2. The experience requirement is that a person has demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Authority they have fished for at least 16 days within a year for three separate years within the Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC.

3. When deciding what evidence is considered satisfactory, the Authority will consider a number of sources of evidence and the apparent credibility of the sources.

4. Potential sources of information include, but are not limited to, the following:

a. Testimony of a vessel owner or master;

b. Salary or other financial arrangement information;

c. Testimony of an Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officer;

d. Landings declarations or catch return forms.

5. A person is considered to have met the experience requirement if that person is named on the Wash Fishery order 1992 ‘pre-qualified list’.

Explanation and Intention:

The goal of the eligibility criteria is to ensure that those fishing within the Marine Protected Areas of the Wash and North Norfolk Coast are familiar with the area and able to fish without causing damage. However, industry members have informed us that this restriction is causing difficulties finding skippers.

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| Please provide information to describe to what extent this measure **impacts your fishing opportunities** or causes you other **financial impacts** |
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| Would you support removing or replacing the experience criteria? **(Yes/No)** |
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| Eastern IFCA is considering replacing the experience requirement with a training session. Do you think this would work? Do you have any alternative suggestions for changing or replacing the experience requirement? |
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| Do you have any other comments about this permit condition? |
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# Section 5: Other comments

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| Do you have any other comments or suggestions on the proposed conditions, or any other conditions you would propose? |
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| Do you have any other feedback you would like us to know or believe we should be aware of? |
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1. [2023\_07\_03\_Shrimp\_permit\_scheme\_policies\_Final.pdf](https://www.eastern-ifca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/2023_07_03_Shrimp_permit_scheme_policies_Final.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)