

Shrimp Permit Byelaw 2018 Review

Formal Consultation: Outcome



This document presents the outcome to the formal consultation on the existing and proposed additional permit conditions under the Shrimp Permit Byelaw 2018. Shrimp permit conditions require review at least every four years. This consultation which ran from the 9 October to 6 November 2025 and forms part of the review process.

We asked:

We asked our stakeholders for views on both the effectiveness of existing permit conditions and opportunities for improvement. This included two proposed 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 informed 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, closed areas, and how to ensure the fishery doesn't adversely affect the habitats of the Wash and North Norfolk Coast.

You said and our response:

We received responses to the consultation from 6 stakeholders. Three of these responses were made at the association level, and three were submitted by individuals. Collectively, the responses covered approximately three quarters of the vessels engaged with the fishery over the last three years. The following is a summary of the key issues raised and our response.

Only two stakeholders provided comments to the existing permit conditions (try-net condition, prohibited attachments, separator trawl or sorting grid, requirement to complete returns, effort restrictions, and registration of fishing gear). Both said the conditions are 'effective'.

All 6 responses primarily focused on the two proposed changes to the permit conditions. Regarding the VMS ping rate increase, two responses were positive/neutral, 2 opposed the suggestion, and the final 2 did not provide comment. Half of the responses objected to the proposition of lowering the experience

requirement due to concerns that doing so would threaten the fishery as a result of an influx of vessels exhausting the available trips. The other half were supportive of changing the requirements due to the limitations they pose on finding skippers or diversifying their fishing opportunities.

Some concerns were raised in regard to the two proposed changes to the permit conditions:

You said	Our response
1. Increasing the VMS ping rate to 3-minutes	
A 3 minute ping rate is not necessary, a 10 minute ping rate would be enough.	Due to the small size of the closed areas, a frequent ping rate is necessary to effectively monitor the areas and detect any potential incursions. Ten-minute pings would be insufficient and would undermine monitoring.
The increase in ping rate will increase costs for vessels that are potentially already under financial strain.	While effort will always be made to minimise costs for the industry, increasing the VMS ping rate is necessary for effective monitoring of the fishery.
There is no pattern of non-compliance to necessitate the increase in ping rate.	Whilst we are not aware of any non-compliance, the current 2-hour ping rate leaves an unacceptable risk of non-compliance occurring and going undetected. Close monitoring of fishing effort is an essential component of management measures that enable it to continue in a sensitive Marine Protected Area.
2. Removing/altering the experience requirements on Category 1 shrimp permits	
The experience requirements are necessary to protect the fishery from new vessels, particularly as there is no permit limit. An influx of vessels could mean the TAE is exhausted faster, impacting financial continuity throughout the year.	While impact assessments indicate the fishery has capacity to support further vessels, and the ability for vessels to diversify is an important element of inshore fisheries, there is a genuine risk to existing businesses should there be a significant influx of vessels. As such, a review will be undertaken of the experience requirement to ensure any

	changes do not unduly threaten existing business models.
The experience requirement is important to ensure safe and sustainable fishing practices.	Whilst we understand the importance of ensuring safe and sustainable fishing practices, the current requirement of three years' experience does not guarantee a skipper will fish responsibly. There may be other ways to encourage safe and sustainable practices.
The experience requirement supports the need to encourage local people to get involved with the fishery.	The lack of availability of skippers for existing vessels suggests the current requirements are not achieving this. We are exploring alternative methods that could lower the barrier to entry while still mitigating risk to the fishery.
The current requirements make it difficult to find skippers to take boats.	We understand that finding skippers is a significant issue for existing businesses, and are exploring alternative methods
The current requirements prevent small-scale vessel owners from diversifying into the fishery, impacting employment, financial viability, and increasing pressure on other stocks.	We understand the need for small-scale vessels to diversify as well as the risk posed by effort displacement on other stocks, and are We are exploring alternative methods.
Suggestion of restrictions at the permit or vessel level but easing the requirements for more flexibility at the skipper level.	Approaches to lower barriers to entry while maintaining control over the number of vessels within the fishery are being investigated.
Suggestion of a mentorship or supervised entry model so new entries can demonstrate their competence under existing permit holders.	The intention of this option is understood, however this method would risk gatekeeping or the commoditisation of entry to the fishery. As such, any training requirements will likely be handled by Eastern IFCA to ensure fairness.