



## **CODE OF GOOD CONDUCT**

### **INSHORE FISHERIES & CONSERVATION AUTHORITIES (IFCA'S)**

**This Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with other statutory and policy requirements.**

#### **RESPONSIBILITY DURING INSPECTIONS**

North Eastern Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority employs Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officers (IFCOs) to carry out duties with regard to enforcement of NIFCA byelaws including inspections of marine organisms, fishing vessels, fishing equipment and vehicles to monitor compliance and enforce EU, UK, local fisheries and environmental legislation both ashore and out to 6nm from the coastline. North Eastern IFCOs may also work jointly with other statutory bodies such as the Environment Agency and the Marine Management Organisation.

Whilst carrying out inspections, North Eastern IFCOs will endeavour to conduct inspections in a courteous and fair manner and will promote a professional image on behalf of the IFCA. IFCOs will state their intentions and may ask for assistance in order to carry out their duties. Those subject to inspection are expected to show a level of cooperation and courtesy that will allow the IFCOs to carry out their duties without fear of reprisal, harassment or abuse and to avoid any action which would amount to obstruction of the IFCO.

Persons subject to inspection must alert the IFCO carrying out the inspection to any potential hazards and it is expected that IFCOs and skippers of vessels being inspected

will maintain good communication at all times in order to ensure Health and Safety is not compromised.

On the conclusion of an inspection, the IFCO will inform those inspected of the findings. This may result in words of advice being given or subsequently, a written warning or a formal caution being issued or a Financial Administrative Penalty or a Court Summons issued to those suspected of not complying with the relevant legislation. If it is necessary to seize equipment during an inspection, the IFCO will issue a receipt for such seizure.

### **BOARDING VESSELS**

The lead IFCO will introduce him/herself to the skipper of the vessel subject of the inspection and will explain why the IFCO(s) is/are on board and what it is they wish to inspect and confirm if required the legal powers under which they are operating. The presence of the skipper can be requested for all or some of the elements of the inspection process. The assistance of the skipper and/or crew must be provided if it is requested. All North Eastern IFCO's carry warrant/ID cards which will be made available for inspection upon request or when it is practicable to do so. In order to facilitate an inspection, it is expected that the master/skipper of the vessel maintains a proper VHF watch on Channel 16 and cooperates and responds when hailed.

In the interests of Health & Safety the master/skipper will be asked to facilitate a safe boarding for IFCOs who are carrying out inspections and to cooperate and comply with specific instructions to aid a safe boarding and compliance with legislation. Similar actions will be necessary when disembarking from the vessel. Examples of such requests may be to slow down, to offer a lee or haul gear and provide a suitable boarding ladder. Each individual inspection will dictate the nature of the request made.

It is the intention of the North Eastern IFCA to conduct inspections so far as possible with minimal interference.

## **SHORE INSPECTIONS**

The lead IFCO will introduce him/herself to the person they are going to inspect. Officers will explain why and what they wish to inspect which could include individuals, premises or vehicles. The presence of the person/persons being inspected can be requested for all or some of the elements of the inspection process. Assistance of the said person/persons must be provided if requested.

It is the intention of North Eastern IFCA/IFCOs to conduct each shore inspection as far as possible with the minimum of interference.

## **INVESTIGATIONS**

North Eastern IFCA will endeavour to carry out necessary further investigations leading from inspections in a timely manner.

## **DRESS**

North Eastern IFCOs will not always be in uniform when carrying out their duties, but should always present their warrant cards when identifying themselves or upon request.

## **CONTACTS FOR ENQUIRIES**

Any questions about this document, the carrying out of inspections or subsequent investigations or anyone experiencing dissatisfaction during any of these processes can send their concerns in writing to the North Eastern IFCA Chief IFC Officer. The time for responding may depend on the nature of the concerns highlighted but where possible such concerns will be addressed in accordance with the Authority's feedback policy.

**For Further information and or advice please contact:**

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