

A Summary of the IOTC Regional Observer Programme During 2015



IOTC

Annual Contractors' Report

18/03/2016

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Project code:	ZG2013
Version:	2.0
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Approved by:	JP

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Acronyms

ATF	Authorisation to Fish
CCSBT	Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna
CMF	Catch Monitoring Form
CV	Carrier Vessel
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
ICCAT	International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas
IOTC	Indian Ocean Tuna Commission
IRCS	International Radio Call Sign
LSTLV	Large Scale Tuna Longlining Vessel
ROP	Regional Observer Programme
VMS	Vessel Monitoring System

1 Introduction

During the calendar year 2015, the Regional Observer Programme (ROP) monitored a total of 726 transhipments from Large Scale Tuna Longlining Vessels (LSTLVs) within the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission's (IOTC) Area of Competence; 66% were from Taiwan, Province of China, with Chinese, Japanese, Malaysian and Seychellois flagged vessels accounting for 13%, 8%, 5% and 5% respectively (Figure 1). The category 'Others' is made up of vessels from Thailand, Tanzania, and India, all of which contributed, individually, to approximately 1%. The number of transhipments made is higher than the 704 performed in 2014. The proportion made by Taiwan, China is down from 73%, but there was a significant increase in transhipments made by China (2% to 13%).

Deployments occurred on Carrier Vessels (CVs) predominantly flagged to Vanuatu (27%), Taiwan, Province of China (22%), and Malaysia (22%), with transhipments also completed by CVs flagged to Republic of Korea, Panama, Singapore and Japan.

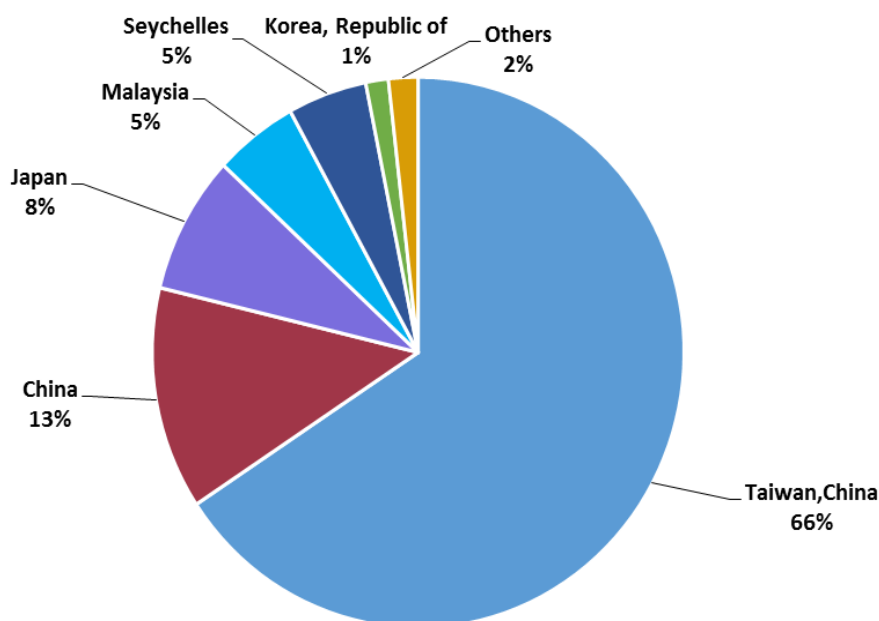


Figure 1 Percentage contribution by fleet to the total number of IOTC transhipments during 2015.

A summary of the ROP deployments (i.e. the number of CV trips with observers deployed on them) during 2015 is shown in Figure 2. There were a total of 36 deployments, six of which continued onto or came from the Atlantic Ocean and the regulatory area of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT). The number of deployments was highest in January and June, with a peak of seven deployments in each of those months. Number of deployments fluctuated between three and six throughout the year, dropping to one deployment in March and August.

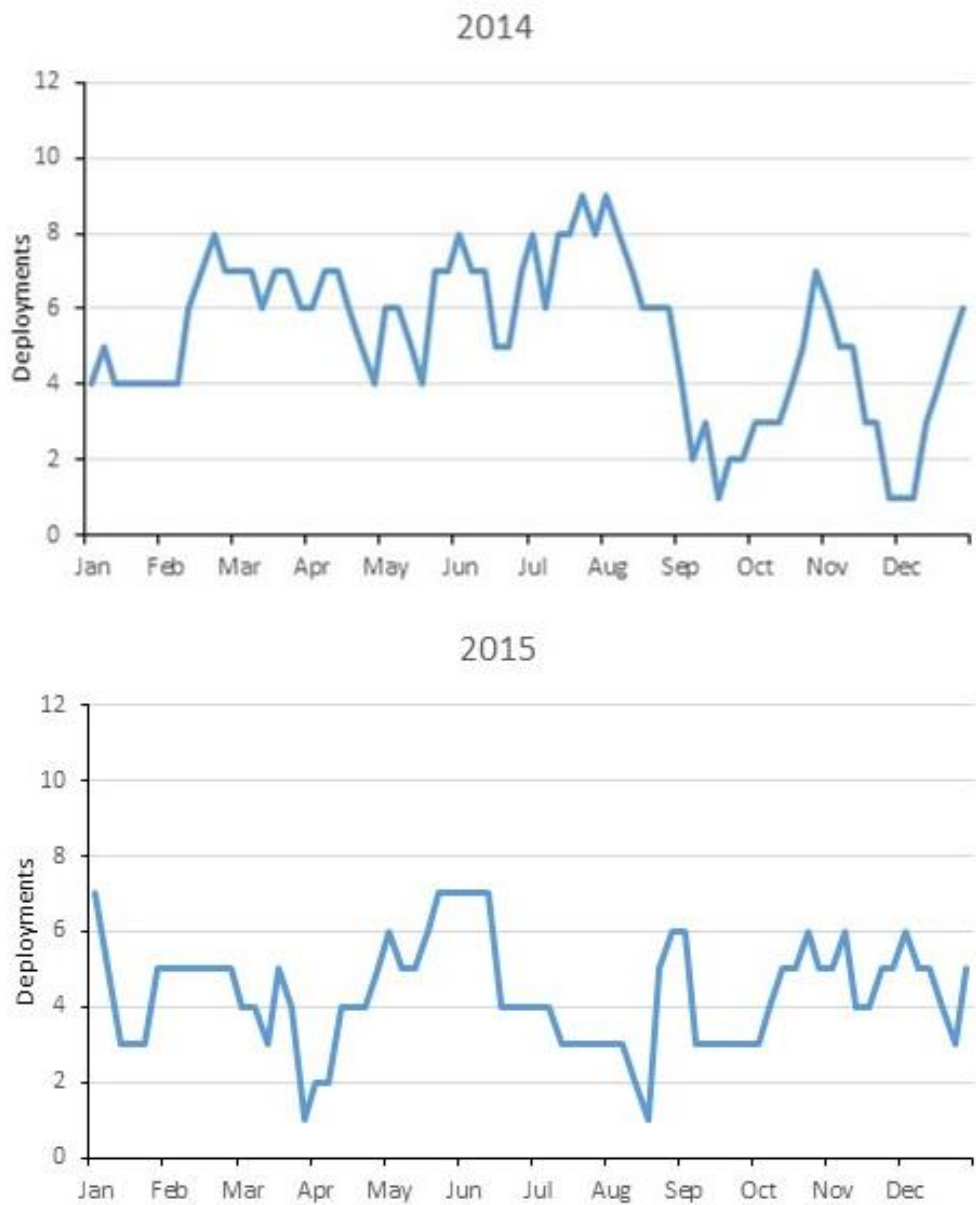


Figure 2 Observer deployments for IOTC ROP in 2014 and 2015.

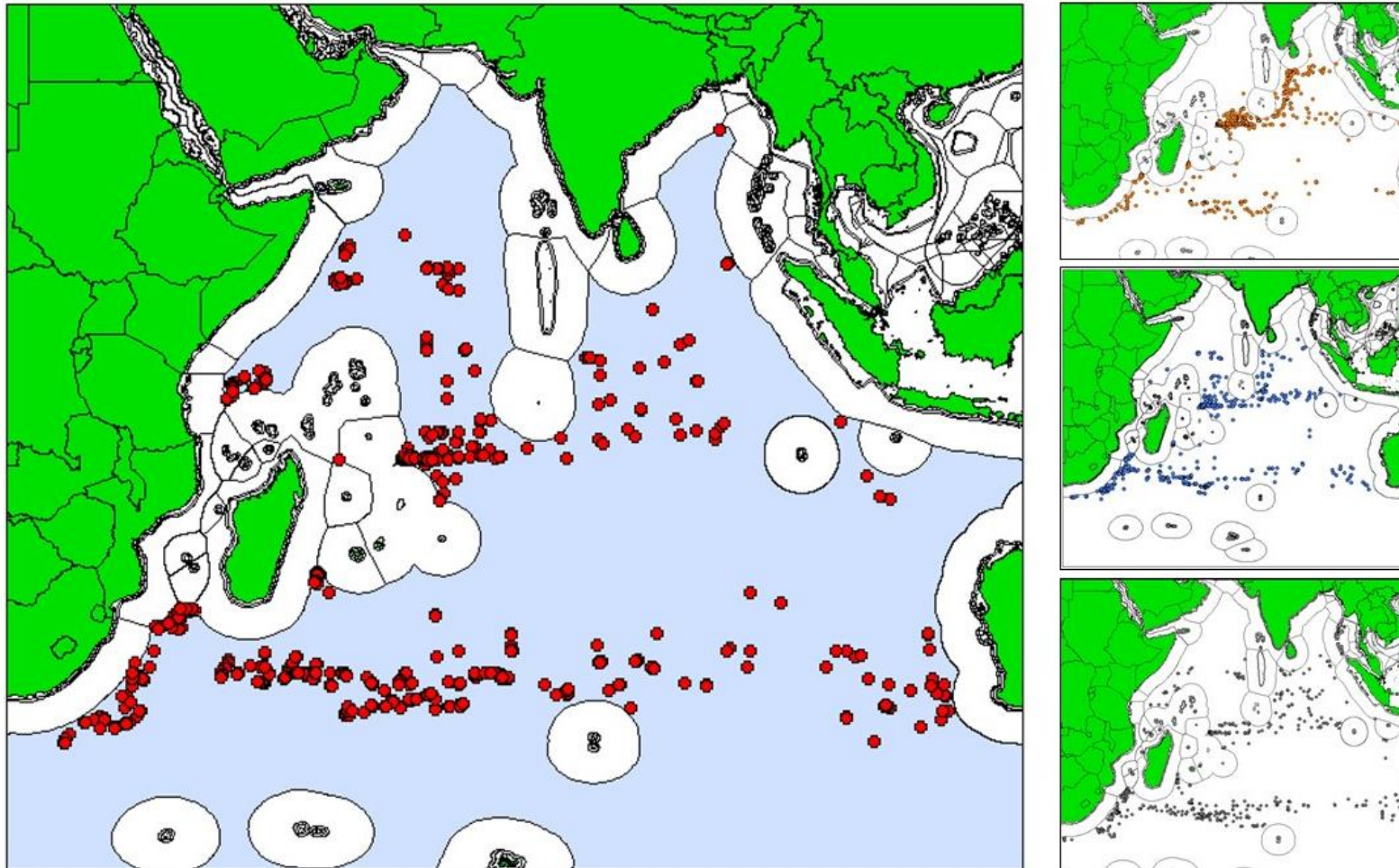


Figure 3 Transshipment locations during 2015 (main), 2012 (top right), 2013 (middle right) and 2014 (bottom right).

NB: The spatial distribution of transshipments is similar to previous years with distinctive 'bands' of transshipments at around 12° and 34° south, though with a greater number of transshipments occurring in the north-western Indian Ocean. There were no transshipments made within Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs).

2 Sampling

2.1 Weight estimations

Weight estimation procedures have been previously discussed in the Review of the IOTC Regional Observer Programme¹. The differences between the overall observed weight and the vessel declared weight is shown in Figure 4 and for tuna species only in Figure 5.

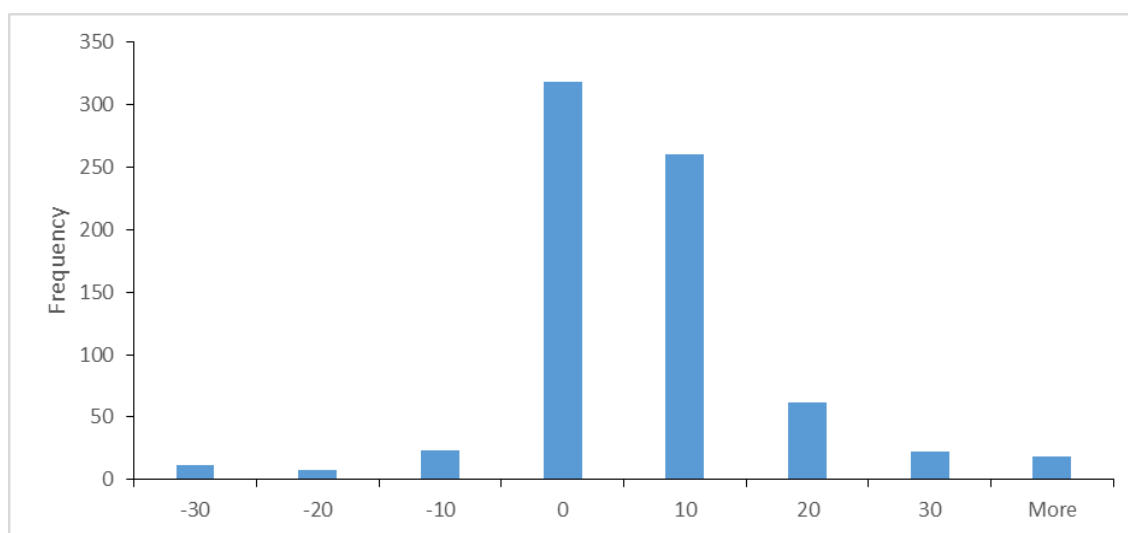


Figure 4 Difference in observed weight compared to vessel declared weight (all species).

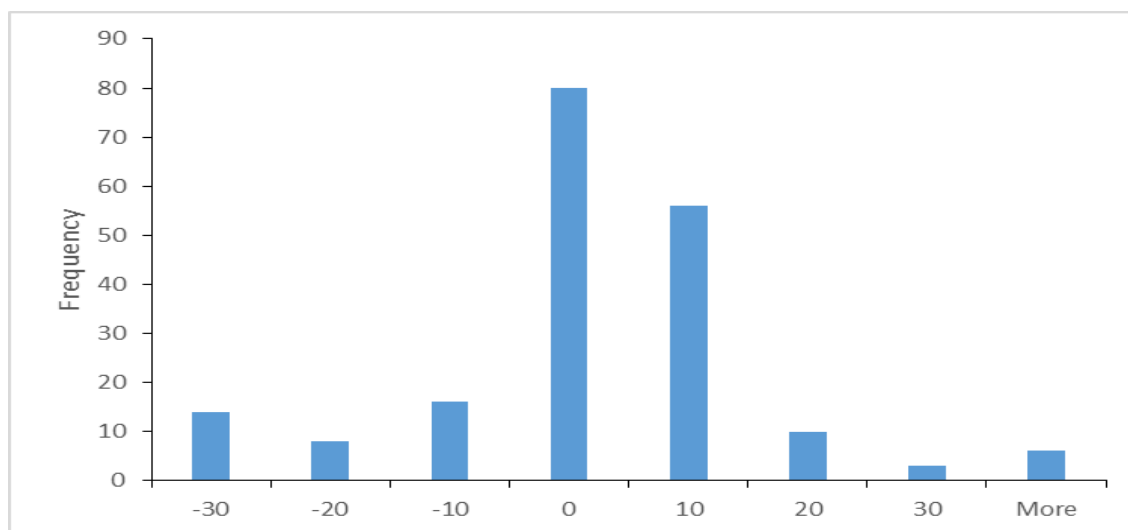


Figure 5 Differences in observed weight compared to vessel declared weight (tuna species only).

Negative differences represent transhipments where the observer's estimate is higher than the vessel's declaration, positive differences are where the observer's estimate is lower.

¹ MRAG and CapFish (2010). Review of the IOTC Regional Observer Programme. CoC48_Add1[E]

For all fish, 83% of estimates were within 10% of the vessel's declaration, with the vessel declaring greater than 10% more than the observer's estimate on approximately 14% of occasions. Where tuna only products are considered, a similar trend is seen.

Discrepancies between observed and declared weights have been discussed in previous reports.

2.2 Species Identification

The main species transhipped during 2015 were bigeye tuna (*Thunnus obesus*), albacore (*Thunnus alalunga*), yellowfin tuna (*Thunnus albacares*), oilfish (*Ruvettus pretiosus*), with lesser quantities of other species including swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*), southern bluefin tuna (*Thunnus maccoyii*), various shark species (Selachimorpha (Pleurotremata)), opah (*Lampris guttatus*) and striped (*Tetrapturus audax*), black (*Makaira indica*) and Indo-Pacific blue marlin (*Makaira mazara*).

3 Southern bluefin tuna

Since the adoption of the Resolution on the Implementation of a CCSBT (Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna) Catch Documentation Scheme on 1st January 2010, any southern bluefin tuna transferred must be accompanied by a catch monitoring form (CMF) which is countersigned by the observer to verify they have monitored the transshipment. During 2015, southern bluefin tuna were transhipped and declared on 59 occasions during 9 different deployments with a total of 1035.131 tonnes being transferred (Table 1).

Table 1 Transhipments of Southern Bluefin tuna (*Thunnus maccoyii*) declared during 2015.

Request No.	CV Name	CV IOTC #	Observer Name	Number of Transhipments	Total Declared Weight (t)
300	HARU	8441	Taylan Koken	1	0.931
307	LADY TUNA	8448	Pedro de Jesus	2	5.173
313	SHENG HONG	900080040	Pedro Costa and Ricardo da Silva	1	9.99
318	SHOTA MARU	8459	David Virgo	19	213.789
320	CHITOSE	15114	Hendrik Crous	21	255.947
322	CHIKUMA	14788	Barrie Rose	1	14.596
323	TAISEI MARU NO.15	8465	Rebeca Ocon	1	32.219
327	FUTAGAMI	8453	Stewart Norman	1	9.282
329	MEITA MARU	8461	Henry John Heyns	9	376.519
332	TAISEI MARU NO.24	8466	Hakan Yilmazyerli	3	116.685

4 Vessel checks

The roles and responsibilities of the observers with regards to at sea vessel checks are outlined in Annex 3 of Resolution 14/06 and the differences in the procedures for vessel checking were highlighted in the 2013 ROP report (IOTC-2013-CoC10-04b).

A total of 726 transhipments were undertaken by 304 different LSTLVs during 2015. Checks were carried out on the LSTLVs 719 times. In most cases the LSTLV was boarded for inspection, however on 33 occasions the vessel was not boarded but instead logbooks and the Authorisation to Fish (ATF) were passed over to the observer on the CV. Most LSTLVs were checked once or twice, however several LSTLVs were checked multiple times including one LSTLV that was checked ten times. The number of times individual LSTLVs were checked in 2015 is shown in Figure 6.

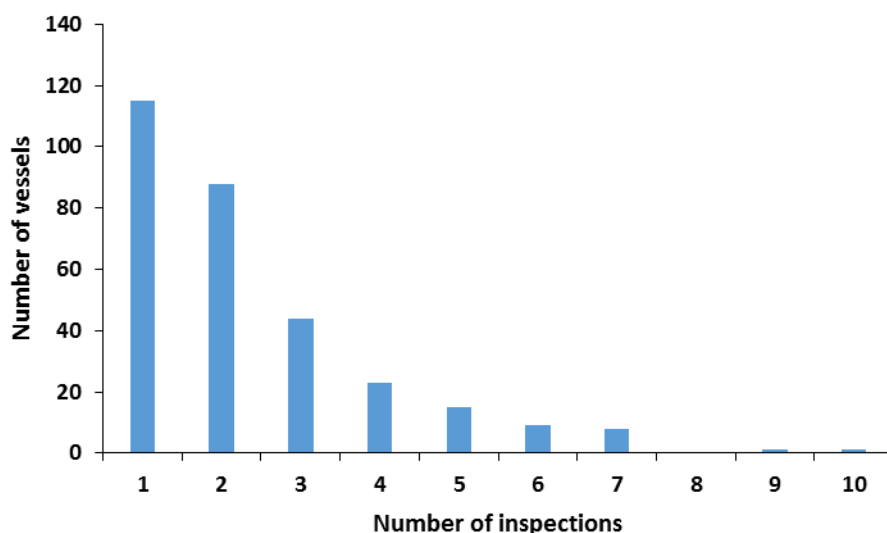


Figure 6 Number of times vessels checked in 2015.

A brief summary of the results of the LSTLV checks is given below. Full details of the possible infractions can be found in **IOTC CIRCULAR 2016-026** (Summary table on possible infractions observed under the Regional Observer Programme - Year 2015).

a. Check the validity of the fishing vessel's authorisation or licence to fish tuna and tuna like species in the IOTC area. Flag and coastal States are required, under Resolution 15/04, to submit to the Secretariat templates of their official ATF. The provision of templates assists observers in identifying valid ATFs when conducting vessel checks. The ROP currently has examples of ATFs from participating States from Belize, China, Taiwan Province of China, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Oman, Seychelles, Tanzania and Thailand. During 2015, three vessels did not produce a full ATF when requested by the observer. One of these vessels, from Thailand, showed the observer an accompanying letter for the ATF, but not the ATF itself. On another vessel, from China, the observer was unable to board the vessel, and no ATF was passed to the CV. Another vessel flagged to Oman did not produce an ATF during inspection.

On seven occasions the ATF shown to the observer was for an area other than the Indian Ocean. In these cases either the ATF was for the Pacific Ocean, was a coastal State licence or the issuing authority could not be identified. On six occasions the ATF shown was out of date (the date of the last fishing day recorded in the logbook was after the expiry date of the ATF).

On three occasions the ATF was not produced at the time but faxed through later to the observer on the CV after the transshipment.

b. Check and note the total quantity of catch on board, and the amount to be transferred to the carrier vessel. This is done through direct interview with the vessel captain or fishing master (using translation sheets where appropriate). Observers do not check the holds because of health and safety reasons and it is outside the remit of the programme.

c. Check the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) is functioning. On five occasions vessels were boarded but did not show the observer a VMS unit. In each case, the vessels were boarded on other occasions during 2015 and the VMS unit was shown. Of those shown, in eighteen cases the power light did not appear to be on or no power light could be found or seen. A number of observers reported that the VMS unit on the vessel was different to the VMS type and serial number as stated on the licence.

Observers also continue to report vessels that have an on / off switch located near to the unit as it is considered that they are not suitably tamperproof. However it has been commented that the switches are located nearby for safety reasons or so the vessel can switch from one system to another if one

stops working or coverage is low. Potential non-compliance related to the IOTC VMS Resolution (15/03) and the requirements for VMS coverage should be considered by the CoC and are outside the remit of this programme.

d. Examine the logbook. Logbooks are recorded as printed and bound, printed and unbound, unprinted and bound, unprinted and unbound, and electronic. Potential infractions regarding logbooks are the most common, and all unbound logbooks (62 in 2015) must be reported. A summary of logbook types observed during the vessel checks is shown in Table 2. Logbooks should also be consecutively numbered and have been issued by the vessel's flag State, all flag and coastal States must submit templates of their logbooks to the Secretariat under Resolution 15/01. The ROP currently has templates of participating States from Belize, Malaysia, Thailand, Tanzania, Korea, Japan, Indonesia and China. Logbooks were most commonly reported as unbound as the vessel needed to remove the pages to fax to its flag State authorities.

Table 2 Summary of logbook checks made in 2015.

Logbook format	Number
Printed and Bound	639
Printed and Unbound	71
Unprinted and Bound	5
Not shown	3
Unprinted and Unbound	1
Electronic	0

e. Verify whether any of the catch on board resulted from transfers from other vessels, and check on documentation on such transfers. No vessels reported receiving transshipments from other vessels.

f. In the case of an indication that there are possible infractions involving the fishing vessel, immediately report the possible infractions to the carrier vessel master. While the CV vessel master is normally notified of any possible infractions, it is through the observers' final report that the Secretariat is notified. The Secretariat will then report the possible infractions to the flag State. Due to request from the flag States, copies of the inspection reports are also offered to the vessel captain so it can be returned to the flag State.

g. Report the results from these duties on the fishing vessel in the observers report. The results of the vessel checks undertaken by observers are summarised in their final report and, any discrepancies are elaborated on. In addition a photographic record of all vessel authorisations, VMS units and logbooks as well as external vessel markings is maintained.

h. Identifying the LSTLV. In addition to the above, observers are also required to verify and record the name of the LSTLV concerned along with its IOTC number, International Radio Call Sign (IRCS) and national registration number and determine how consistent the markings are with the requirements of Resolution 15/04. The results of these vessel identification checks are shown in Table 3 and indicate the number of occasions where the observer either could not verify the information against that given in the IOTC Record of Authorised Vessels or considered that the markings on the vessel were either not correctly displayed, were worn and not legible

Table 3 Summary of checks on LSTLV identifiers

Identification check	Number of occasions
Vessel name	33
Vessel IRCS	22
Vessel national registration number	25

There is no requirement for vessels to have their national registration number marked on the superstructure. Table 3 refers to occasions where the number was marked on but could not be

verified or was incorrect. There were an additional 80 occasions where the number could not be verified as it was not displayed.

5 Other Potential Infractions

There were no other potential infractions observed.

6 Observer Training

There are currently 74 observers who have received IOTC training since 2009 (Appendix 1), some of whom were trained directly through the IOTC whilst others crossed over from ICCAT with prior approval from IOTC Secretariat. All observers are also trained to monitor CCSBT transshipments. Not all observers who have been trained are currently active or are still in the programme. It is therefore necessary to continue to hold observer courses on a regular basis to replace those who drop out. Nine candidates were trained as observers for the transshipment programme during 2015.

7 Other Issues

7.1 Safety

All observers complete a pre-sea inspection of the CV prior to sailing. There has been a noticeable improvement in vessel safety since the beginning of the programme and during 2015 there were no deployment refusals by observers on the grounds of safety. To improve observer communications and safety observers have been issued with satellite phones (DeLorme inReach) since December 2015.

7.2 Waste disposal

Waste disposal methods vary among CVs and most have operational waste disposal plans in place. However the transshipment process continues to result in waste being discharged at sea by LSTLVs. The most commonly noted items disposed of are packaging boxes.

7.3 Vessel cooperation

Cooperation from both LSTLVs and CVs has generally been good.

Annex 1 IOTC-trained observers

Observer Name	IOTC	ICCAT
Raymond Manning	001	Yes
Kevin Ruck	002	No
Jano Van Heerden	003	Yes
Jonathon Roe	004	Yes
James Bennet	005	No
David Hughes	006	Yes
James Moir-Clark	007	No
Hendrik Crous	009	Yes
Jaco Visagie	012	Yes
Jonathan Newton	013	No
Sam Rush	014	No
Henry John Heyns	015	Yes
Juan Vilata	017	Yes
Patrick Nugent	018	Yes
Andrew Deary	019	No
George Stoye	020	No
Neil Davidson	022	No
Nicholas Patrick Van	023	Yes
Schalk Visagie	025	No
Thomas Gerrard	026	No
Gary Breedt	027	No
Peter Lafite	028	No
Ebol Rojas	029	Yes
Erich Gericke	030	Yes
Barrie Rose	031	Yes
Nick Wren	032	Yes
Ramon Benedet	033	Yes
Clinton Grobbelar	034	Yes
Victor Ngcongo	035	No
Stephen Westcott	036	Yes
Thomas Franklin	039	Yes
Robert Clark	040	Yes
Oliver Wilson	042	Yes
Jan Wissema	043	Yes
Elcimo Pool	044	Yes
Keith Patterson	046	No
Jane Le Lec	049	Yes
Marius Kapp	050	Yes
Aaron Mair	051	Yes
Martin Ward	052	No
Taylan Koken	101	No
Julio Ocon	102	Yes
Pedro Costa	103	Yes
Basil Vilakazi	104	Yes
Jeffrey Heineken	105	Yes
Mzwandile Silekwa	106	No

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Observer Name	IOTC	ICCAT
David Virgo	107	Yes
Dwight Reed Dryer	108	Yes
Steven Young	109	Yes
E D Higgins	110	Yes
Alex Zalewski	111	Yes
Filipe Miguel de Sousa	112	Yes
John McDonagh	113	Yes
Ricardo Jorge Monteiro Silva	114	Yes
Lindsay Jones	115	Yes
Carla Soler Carreras	116	Yes
Tony Dimitrov	117	Yes
Pedro de Jesus	118	Yes
Llewelyn Lewis	119	Yes
Samantha Clifton	120	Yes
Alistair Burls	121	Yes
Stewart Norman	122	Yes
Anthony Donnelly	123	Yes
Rebeca Ocon	124	Yes
John Caddle	125	Yes
Zara Cleere	126	Yes
Hakan Yilmazyerli	127	Yes
Maurice O'Malley	128	Yes
Philip Augustyn	129	Yes
Philip Robyn	130	Yes
Brandon Scott	131	Yes
Daniel Droste	132	Yes
Bruce Biffard	133	Yes
Rob Gater	134	Yes