



FFA

CIRCULAR REF: 09/16

8 April 2009

TO: ALL TYPE APPROVED VMS UNIT VENDORS

FROM: SU'A N.F. TANIELU, DIRECTOR-GENERAL

**SUBJECT: CHANGES TO THE FFA VESSEL MONITORING SYSTEM (VMS)
TYPE APPROVAL PROCEDURE**

This letter contains important information about changes to the FFA VMS processes and procedures. You should ensure you are familiar with the new requirements and their implications. The new requirements are substantially changed from previous requirements.

The new type approval specification is available at www.ffa.int.

Vendors should be aware that FFA has agreed on the implementation of electronic transmission of catch and effort data from vessels on a fishery by fishery basis. The transmission of such data would be through the VMS communication channels using 'E-FORMS' as prescribed by FFA. E-FORMs may only be used by units approved for such use; these units are called Enhanced-Mobile Transceiver Units (E-MTUs).

Consequently units that are only approved as Mobile Transceiver Units (MTUs) will not be eligible to be used in E-FORM reporting. Many fisheries agencies globally are moving to, or have moved to, the use of electronic catch reporting. Into the future, with the expansion in the use of E-FORMS, it is possible that units without the capability to handle E-FORMS may be un-approved or may fall into disuse as the use of E-FORMS widens. More details about E-FORMS can be found in the type approval specification.

I invite you to consider the above issue and its implication for your business. Vendors with units that do not currently have E-FORM capability may wish to consider upgrading their units to incorporate this functionality (note such units will require full type approval to the new specification).

As a result of the review of the type approval process a number of units are no longer approved by FFA. In order to allow the fishing industry to change over units as necessary, all units on List One in the attachment may continue to be used until 30 June 2010, so long as this MTU is consistently reporting automatically to the FFA VMS in accordance with FFA requirements. After this date and pending the outcome of the review all vessels on the FFA register may then be required to have fitted type approved units (refer List Two below).

The units contained on List one may gradually be removed from the list of FFA type approved units because the units are no longer supplied, the software version is outdated, or the units themselves are outdated and there is no vendor support.

A further important change to the type approval process is that the vendor of the units is now wholly responsible for the supply chain. **Consequently vendors must supply an updated list of their authorised installers to FFA by 30 June 2009.** These lists will be posted to the FFA website by FFA but changes to the lists are the responsibility of the vendor and any changes to the lists should be communicated to FFA.

Vendors should be aware that any new or updated VMS units will be required to meet the new type approval specifications. Another major change to the type approval is the inclusion of the Mobile Communications Service Provider in the type approval.

I urge you to familiarise yourself with these requirements. For further information contact the Manager, Vessel Monitoring System on:

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DIRECTOR-GENERAL

CC: FFA Fisheries Contacts
All National Licensing and Surveillance Authorities



FFA VMS Unit Approvals

This document contains important information in relation to the FFA Vessel Monitoring System. Fishing operators and vendors should familiarize themselves with the contents of this document. Particularly important information is marked with the symbol: 

Introduction

As of 1 May 2008 FFA has changed the specifications for the type approval of units used with the FFA Vessel Monitoring System. This document outlines the changes and defines how FFA will treat the units that were approved prior to the new specifications being approved.

The new specifications have been produced as a result of changes in technology and changes in the way in which VMS is used now and into the future. The new specifications harmonise with other type approval specifications in use around the world.

This means FFA can take advantage of changes in technology and simplifies the process for vendors applying for type approval in other jurisdictions.

The new specifications can be found on www.ffa.int.

Changes to the Type Approval Specifications

The new specifications provide a more rigorous approach to type approval than had previously been the case.

The new specifications also provide for the approval of terminals attached to units to allow for the cost effective transmission of catch data to FFA. In addition the specifications also apply to the Mobile Communications Service Provider (MCSP) to ensure the integrity and timeliness of the data transmitted to FFA from fishing vessels.

In harmonizing the specifications FFA has also changed the terminology for units as the older terminology is generally Inmarsat-C specific. Consequently the following terminology is now in use:

MTU = Mobile Transceiver Unit (old terminology = ALC), a unit which meets the basic functional requirements for VMS.

E-MTU = Enhanced Mobile Transceiver Units, a unit which meets the enhanced functional requirements for the transmission of data (eg catch data) to FFA.

MCSP = Mobile Communications Service Provider, the provider of the communications system, eg Stratos or Vizada for Inmarsat-C, Iridium, etc.

Benefits

- Greater confidence in the accuracy and timeliness of the data provided to FFA from fishing vessels
- Allows for the approval of units that have been approved under similar specifications elsewhere without extended testing, providing greater opportunity for vendors in the Pacific region, resulting in greater choice for the fishing industry.
- Ability to transmit catch and effort information using VMS units on board fishing vessels to FFA in a manner that is cost effective, consistent, timely and accurate.



Approved Units

Prior to the new specifications being finalised a number of units were approved that are no longer supplied or do not meet the new specifications. In addition these units do not provide the functionality required for future use with VMS, such as electronic reporting of catch and effort information. The list of type approved units change from time to time and can be found at www.ffa.int.



Consequently, FFA has revised the list of approved units and a number of units are (refer List One below) no longer approved but may be used until 30 June 2010, so long as this MTU is consistently reporting automatically to the FFA VMS in accordance with FFA requirements. After this date and pending the outcome of the review all vessels on the FFA register may then be required to have fitted type approved units (refer List Two below).

Vendors will be given the opportunity to update the un-approved units so that they meet the new specifications but the responsibility will lie with the vendors and not FFA. Fishing operators should not assume that units will be updated.



Fishing operators should be aware that only "E-MTUs" are approved for transmission of catch and effort data. FFA is considering the electronic transmission of catch and effort data on a fishery by fishery basis. Operators should therefore give careful consideration to their choice of units as units currently classed only as MTUs will **not** meet the requirements for electronic transmission of catch and effort data.



List One: units that are no longer approved but may be used **until** 30 June 2010 are:

Model Name	Model N°	Software Version
Thrane and Thrane (Sailor) Capsat Transceiver	TT-3022D	3.11
Thrane and Thrane (Sailor) Capsat Transceiver	TT-3022D	3.24
Thrane and Thrane (Sailor) Capsat Transceiver	TT-3022D	3.28
Thrane and Thrane (Sailor) Capsat Transceiver	TT-3026S	2.12
Japan Radio Company Limited Inmarsat-C Transceiver	JUE-75C	8.0
Japan Radio Company Limited Inmarsat-C Transceiver	JUE-75CV	6.1
Trimble Galaxy Transceiver	TNL 7001	5.10a
Trimble Galaxy Transceiver	TNL 7005	5.10
Trimble Galaxy Transceiver (Sentinel)	TNL 8001	5.10
Trimble Galaxy Transceiver (Courier)	TNL 8005	5.10
Furuno Inmarsat-C MES Transceiver	Felcom 15	DCE F15 V02+FFA
Furuno Inmarsat-C Transceiver	Felcom 12 (IC-2112)	DCE Version 07+FFA
Furuno Inmarsat-C Transceiver	Felcom 12 (IC-2112)	DCE Version 08+FFA
Sailor Inmarsat-C MES Transceiver (SAT-C)	H1622D	TT-10202A Version 3.21 non-SOLAS



List Two: units that are approved (refer list of type approved units on www.ffa.int) for continued use after 30 June 2009 are:

Type	Model Name	Model N°	Software Version	E-MTU terminal	Additional Comment
E-MTU	Thrane and Thrane (Sailor) Capsat Transceiver	TT-3026D Mini-C	2.21 using FFA 3026 configuration guide Version 3026-1.0	Thrane and Thrane 3036XP Terminal	
E-MTU	Faria Watchdog (Iridium)	750VMS		V-TERM Terminal	
MTU	Thrane and Thrane (Sailor) Capsat Transceiver	TT-3022D	3.32 using FFA 3022 configuration guide Version 3022-1.0	N/A	
MTU	Thrane and Thrane (Sailor) Capsat Transceiver	TT-3026S Mini-C	2.21 using FFA 3026 configuration guide Version 3026-1.0	N/A	
MTU	Thrane and Thrane (Sailor) Capsat Transceiver	TT-3026D Mini-C	2.21 using FFA 3026 configuration guide Version 3026-1.0	N/A	
MTU	Japan Radio Company Limited Inmarsat-C Transceiver	JUE-95VM	1.0	N/A	
MTU	Furuno Inmarsat-C MES Transceiver (includes the Nera Mini-C model)	Felcom 16	DCE F16 V02+FFA	N/A	
MTU	Faria Watchdog (Iridium)	750VMS		N/A	

Expiry of Type Approval

Type approval of units will be issued for an initial period of four years. At the end of this period FFA will review the approval of units and may grant approval for units for a further period.

FFA reserves the right to remove units from the type approved list under circumstances FFA deems fit. Such circumstances may include but not be limited to:

- units are found not to meet the type approval specifications
- security flaws discovered in a unit
- manufacturer's cease to supply and/or support a unit, ie the unit reaches the end of its economic life.