

NAMMCO



COMMITTEE ON INSPECTION AND OBSERVATION

*8 and 18 February 2020
Hafnarfjörður, Iceland*

REPORT



Course for NAMMCO observers 5 – 7 February 2020, Iceland

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Please cite this report as:

NAMMCO-North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (2020). Report of the Committee on Inspection and Observation, February 2020, Hafnarfjörður, Iceland.

Available at https://nammco.no/topics/cio_reports/

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0. SUMMARY

The Committee on Inspection and Observation (CIO) met 8 February at the Directorate of Fisheries in Hafnarfjörður, Iceland and online 18 February 2020.

Present were Guðni Magnús Eiríksson, Chair (Iceland), Nette Levermann (Greenland), Hild Ynnesdal (Norway), Ulla Svarrer Wang (Faroe Islands) and Charlotte Winsnes from the Secretariat.

Actions arising from the meeting

Secretariat

- To contact the International Labour Organisation to (ILO) to explore options for short time contracts like the NAMMCO observes. Prior to the Norwegian sealing season resolve the insurance question.
- To find a solution on the issue of binoculars as part of the tool kit for observers
-

Chair and Secretariat

- To review documents MC-05 and CHM-XX to identifying recommendations of concern or not of concern. The developed list will be circulated to members in advance of the next meeting for their comments.

Norway and Secretariat

- To look at possible coverage rates and to incorporate this aspect into the check list for sealing observation.

All members

- To submit copies of logbooks and licenses prior to the next meeting.
- To get feedback from the observers on what their expectations had been, how it was met, how NAMMCO can improve training in the future and whatever other input they may have.
- To find if radio communication and VHF certification are part of the safety at sea course that observer must have and report back.

1. ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND REVIEW OF DOCUMENTS

The Chair, Guðni Magnús Eiríksson, opened the meeting for comments to the agenda. The agenda (appendix 1) was adopted, and meeting documents (appendix 2) reviewed.

2. ANNUAL REPORTING FROM MEMBERS

The Council decided in 2019 to extend the annual national progress reporting to include standardised data requirements from all committees and subsidiary bodies and not only the Scientific Committee. The Secretariat had circulated an email to this extent with the agreed deadline of 1 February.

CIO saw the reporting for the year 2019 as a trial year to assess if the identified data categories were functional and if needed to make improvements and decide on follow up actions.

Only Iceland and the Faroe Islands had submitted their reports within the deadline, and CIO agreed to postpone the discussion until all reports were available.

3. OBSERVATION SCHEME

3.1 OUTSTANDING ISSUES

3.1.1 Safety and insurance issues

Winsnes informed that an inquiry had been sent to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) for guidance pertaining to insurance options for short time contracts like the NAMMCO observes. No response had been received at the time of the skype meeting.

CIO reiterated the importance of defining a standard minimum coverage for private insurances and defining a process ensuring that the observers have this standard insurance. If needed CIO agreed to confer with legal experts to ensure adequate insurance coverage and to also establish a correct procedure to ensure that the observers have the required minimum standards. It was envisaged that these conditions and requirements should be clearly stated in writing including who is responsible for what. The issue on insurance must be resolved before the observer is sent out this season.

3.1.2 Health certificate

All observers are required to have a special health certificate for seamen. The health certificates are time limited, as is the certificates issued after safety at sea courses, and CIO agreed that requirements pertaining to these certificates would only take effect at the time of active service and not in other years.

Health certificates are differently labelled in member countries and CIO noted that the respective names in member countries should be referred to in the Observer CV. In GL it is called "Sundhedsbevis -Søfarende egnet til skibstjeneste or Blåbog" in FO it is «Blåbog fra søfartslege» and IS and NO would return with the name in questions.

3.2 PROVISION TEXT INCLUDING GUIDELINES TO OBSERVATION SCHEME

CIO reviewed the text of Section B of the Provisions of the Inspection and Observation including guidelines to Section B.

For streamlining purposes, a minor edit was made in paragraph 5 of Section B. The reference to NAMMCO /the Council – "the Council" was deleted and "for the coming year" was deleted. The new paragraph reads: NAMMCO decides annually the scope of the observation priorities.

The guidelines to Section B were discussed in detail and the agreed text is found in appendix 3.

3.3 REPORTING

CIO had previously agreed:

- that each member should develop hunt specific check lists and that these would be the only reporting form for the observers on which the Secretariats annual reporting to Council would be based.

CIO reiterated the importance of the check lists and that these would represent a major part of the reporting from the observers. In addition, CIO agreed that it would be valuable to develop a standardised reporting form covering issues like number of days of observed hunting days, days of travel, information on weather and ice conditions. For inspiration the national fisheries inspectors' forms should be reviewed. Levermann and Ynnesdal agreed to consult the national inspectors' forms and report back within a week.

CIO agreed that the check lists would be developed and/or revised when the scope of the observation activities required it. The member country in question would be the responsible agent for developing the lists. The priority for 2020 is the check list for Norwegian sealing. The check list was circulated to CIO prior to the skype meeting on 18 February.

It was also agreed that CIO would review logbooks and licenses to discuss if and how the information collected through these could be best used. What kind of analyses would be feasible based on the information? Only GL had submitted this information prior to the meeting so CIO agreed to discuss this further at the next meeting. Members would submit licences and logbooks to this end prior to the meeting.

4. EVALUATION OF THE SCHEME

4.1 MEMBERS COMPLIANCE TO RECOMMENDATIONS

To meet one of the objectives of the scheme, CIO has agreed to review member countries compliance to recommendations given by NAMMCO. Compliance may among other things be measured by recommendations being reflected in national regulations where applicable. CIO agreed that both the CHM document “Overview of Recommendations from CHM Workshop and Expert group meetings (documents CHM-XX) and the Management Committee document “Overview of recommendations for conservation and management” (document MC-05) would be useful tools.

The Chair and the Secretary will review the documents and categorise the recommendations and responses, based on the principle of identifying recommendations of concern or not of concern. The developed list will be circulated to members in advance of the next meeting for their comments and the compiled list with responses will form the basis for this part of the evaluation of the Scheme.

4.2 COVERAGE RATES

Assuming coverage rates might be one useful tool for evaluating the Scheme, CIO agreed at its last meeting to task the members to consider and give proposals for applicable coverage rates when developing the hunt specific check lists with a deadline of 1st December.

Rethinking CIO agreed that coverage rates not necessarily would be a fixed measure for a specific hunt and thus should be discussed and defined when setting the scope for a year. This is in line with the decision to develop hunt specific check lists in conjunction with setting the scope.

CIO discussed possible coverage rates related to the 2020 scope, Norwegian sealing in the pack ice. Based on information gathered by the national inspectors what kind of coverage rates are feasible? The national inspection scheme has 100% coverage in terms of presence on board. The main task of the national inspectors is to oversee that the killing process, the 3-step process, is followed.

Total number of catches is recorded but not whether it is from the “plukfangst” or the hunt on the ice for adult seals. CIO tasked Ynnesdal in cooperation with the Secretariat to look at possible coverage rates and to incorporate this aspect into the check list for sealing.

5. TRAINING COURSE OBSERVERS

The training course for observer candidates was held 5 – 7 February at the Directorate of Fisheries in Hafnarfjörður, Iceland. Participating were nine observers (1 from FO, 3 from GL, 3 from IS and 2 from NO) and nine presenters (including one by skype). The 3 day programme covered presentations on NAMMCO as an organisation, Section B of the Inspection and Observation Scheme, the different hunts taking place in NAMMCO including relevant regulations with examples of check lists, former observers sharing their experiences on being out in the field and administrative conditions like contracts, remuneration.

The internal (CIO) and external (observers) evaluation and feedback from the 2013 course had pointed to language as the principal challenge. Both in 2013 and 2020 most presentations were given in Danish, Norwegian or some mix of Nordic languages and not English. The rationale for this had been that this is the reality the observer meets out in the field and thus the observers needs to be able to communicate under such circumstances.

When planning the 202019 course efforts were focused on reducing the language barriers. It was considered essential to create a relaxed and “safe” atmosphere so participants would be comfortable communicating when they did not understand or when more information was needed during presentations. To this end the course started with an activity where participants paired up to interview each other for the purpose of presenting the partner to the group in plenum afterwards. CIO members had agreed prior to the course to actively intervene during presentations with questions for clarification or with added information, with the aim of contributing to an informal setting. In addition, emphasis on social happenings like joint dinners (the chair invited the group home one evening) and visiting the Maritime Museum in Reykjavik assisted in making an informal, team like atmosphere.

The feedback from the observers were positive and those members of CIO that had participated in 2013 experienced that the group was more dynamic, actively participating and engaging in the dialogue. The composition of the observers may have contributed to this as the 2020 group were national fisheries/marine mammal inspectors /wildlife officers. This contributed to good discussion in general and especially on the different role of an observer and an inspector.

CIO discussed the merits of organising training courses when comparing the financial and time wise costs with the outcome. For example, some observers will not be actively deployed for several years thus most of the hunt related information will be forgotten. It was pointed out that this manner of transferring knowledge may be outdated and that one should consider more modern ways of doing it. The programme conveying a huge amount of information, both in writing and orally, was overwhelming even for members of CIO who have been and are dealing with these issues regularly.

The feedback from the observers responding to a questionnaire was generally positive but with the majority responding that language is an obstacle. It was noted that presentation could as easily have been given in English as long as they could read the important information on the slides.

CIO agreed it would be valuable to contact “their” observers in retrospect to get feedback on what their expectations had been, how it was met, how NAMMCO can improve training in the future and whatever other input they may have. Generally, CIO agreed that any future meetings should involve more interactive exercises, only presenting target hunts (some hunts will never be observed for i.e. logistical reasons), more focus on actual tasks of the observer through active using the check lists in practical exercises and more focus on safety and administrative issues.

CIO discussed the importance of keeping the interest of the members of the observer corps alive and to take measures to ensure their continued involvement. CIO agreed to formalise annual online meetings of the corps where one standard agenda item could be that the observer(s) of the season share his/her/their experiences.

CIO concluded that it would be recommended to reconsider the format of training courses while keeping in mind that language is the main challenge. Written information should be ready online before the start of a course so that those who feel the need can print it out and use it for notes. All material presented at the course will be made available on the NAMMCO webpage, i.e. national legislation, example of licenses, checklists and all presentations.

Interactive exercises should be investigated. CIO agreed to look into developing simple hands out /fact sheets in all NAMMCO languages with basic information on what NAMMCO is, the observation scheme and the role and task of the observer.

To keep the interest of the observer corps and to update the corps on new developments CIO will initiate annual online meetings with the observer corps.

6. NOMINATION OF OBSERVER CANDIDATES

CIO had previously agreed that approved observers would continue to be part of the corps. With respect to the eight new nominate candidates CIO recommended that Council approve all. The new candidates and the previously approved candidates that are still active are listed in appendix 4.

7. IDENTIFYING SCOPE OF OBSERVATION ACTIVITIES IN 2021

CIO had previously identified the following elements for prioritisation of scope of observations:

- Hunting level
- Hunts not covered by national inspectors – monitored by humans
- Implementation and compliance of new recommendations into national regulations
- Hunts where the SC or CHM request data
- Rotation between member countries
- Rotation between hunts (time interval when last observed)
- Maximising the effort to reach the objectives by allocating money from several years into one year.
- Practicality of the respective hunts making the observation assignment not feasible
- Small scale hunts that are happening infrequently and in remote areas

At the last meeting walrus, narwhal and beluga hunting in Greenland had been identified as the 2nd priority should there be no Norwegian sealing vessels going out in 2020.

CIO agreed to recommend that these Greenlandic hunts be the scope for observation activities in 2021. Levermann and Winsnes will further identify time and place based on catch statistics.

8. WORK PLAN

CIO agreed on the following workplan:

2020

February/March up to Council 28

- Finalize Section B – including guidelines
- Give recommendation on remuneration of observers
- Resolve insurance issues

Meeting August/September

- Review Section A – what has member countries used this for and how
- Review the reports from the 2020 observer
- Defining scope and range of observation activities in a three-year perspective (2022, 23 and 24), look at coverage rates, developing check lists – perhaps cooperate with SC on which hunts would be interesting for them to have more information on
- Assess the quality and functionality of the requested annual data input
- Review the recommendations in the documents MC-05 and CHM-03 to assess members compliance

2021

Follow up unresolved issues identified for the August 2020 meeting

9. WEBSITE - QUALITY CHECK

Responding to recommendations from the Working Group on the follow up from the Performance Review, CIO had agreed that new information for the website should be reviewed by the committee prior either in a meeting or intersessional by correspondence. Furthermore, CIO agreed to consider how the work of the committee could be more visible.

In line with this CIO discussed the benefits of developing fact sheets (see agenda item 5 above) and proposed that that this might be an assignment for an intern.

10. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on 25 August 2020 in Copenhagen.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Topics/issues arising from the observer course and CIO recommendations:

Equipment and competence

Binoculars should be part of the tool kit for observers. CIO agreed to recommend that binoculars are made available for all observers. The Secretariat will come with a suggestion on how to accomplish this.

Radio communication and VHF certification. Members will investigate whether this is a part of the safety at sea course that observer must have and report back.

In Greenland the VHF radio is part of the toolbox that the observers will bring with them when observing for NAMMCO.

Observers must be able to communicate with NAMMCO and with national contact persons during the assignment. Either they will get a sim card or NAMMCO will reimburse their telephone cost.

The observers will often have survival suits, binoculars etc as part of their personal equipment as national inspectors. The equipment is not private property but the property of the national authorities.

Remuneration

The current remuneration rates for observers was revised in 2008 based on the rates for national inspectors in the member countries at that time.

Norway, Greenland and Iceland had submitted information on the 2019 levels for national inspectors and the Faroes Islands were encouraged to share the same information.

CIO recommended that the rates be adjusted for the Norwegian inflation rate going back to the year when the rates were last adjusted.

12. ADOPTION OF REPORT

The report was adopted by correspondence on 28 February 2020.

APPENDIX 1: AGENDA

- 1. ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND REVIEW OF DOCUMENTS**
- 2. ANNUAL REPORTING FROM MEMBERS**
- 3. OBSERVATION SCHEME**
 - 3.1 OUTSTANDING ISSUES**
 - 3.1.1 Safety and insurance issues**
 - 3.1.2 Health certificate**
 - 3.2 PROVISION TEXT INCLUDING GUIDELINES TO OBSERVATION SCHEME**
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- 7. IDENTIFYING SCOPE OF OBSERVATION ACTIVITIES IN 2021**
- 8. WORK PLAN**
- 9. WEBSITE – QUALITY CHECK**
- 10. NEXT MEETING**
- 11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

APPENDIX 2: LIST OF DOCUMENTS**WORKING DOCUMENTS**

Doc. No.	Title	Agenda item
CIO/2020-01/01	Draft Annotated Agenda	1
CIO/2020-01/02	Draft List of Documents	1
CIO/2020-01/03	Annual Data Reporting	2
CIO/2020-01/04	Provisions Section B incl. guidelines	3
CIO/2020-01/05	Review of the Observation Scheme	4
CIO/2020-01/06	Overview of hunts in NAMMCO and hunts observed 1998 -2017	4,6
MC-05	Overview of recommendations for conservation and management	4
CHM-03	Overview of Recommendations from CHM Workshop and Expert	4

FOR INFORMATION DOCUMENTS

Doc. No.	Title	Agenda item
	Report of previous CIO meetings https://nammco.no/topics/cio_reports/	all

APPENDIX 3: GUIDELINES TO SECTION B

Text presented to Council 27 in black (both deleted and not), new text in red, and the agreed proposal is the combined black and red text excluding the deleted black.

OBSERVERS

Appointment of observer

~~The Council appoints observers for one year at a time.~~

~~Member countries develop a list of candidates for the following year and send it to the Secretariat by 1 June. Member countries may nominate non-nationals as observers.~~

~~The list shall include information on the qualifications of the candidates. The Secretariat circulates by 15 June a combined list of suggested candidates to member countries for approval. In the event that a member country wishes to make a reservation to any candidate, this must be done before 15 August. It is understood that a reservation to the appointment of a particular candidate is a reservation to his/her appointment as a NAMMCO observer in any area of activity. The Secretariat then circulates the list of candidates approved by all member countries to the Council for appointment by 1 September.~~

The NAMMCO Council approves and appoints observers. An approved observer will continue to function in the role until his/her services are withdrawn/cancelled by either personal notification or notification by the (nominating) member country.

Member countries are required to contribute a minimum of two candidates to the corps of observers.

Nomination and approval process for observers

Member countries nominate observer candidates by notifying the Secretariat and sending their names and qualifications. The Secretariat subsequently forwards the list of nominees together with information on the qualifications of the candidates to all member countries for their approval.

The member countries have one month to consider the nominations, after which the candidates are deemed approved unless direct objections or reservations are raised.

A reservation regarding a candidate must be communicated to the Secretariat and all member countries within the month following notification of the nomination. It is understood that a reservation to the appointment of a candidate is a reservation to his/her appointment as a NAMMCO observer in any area of activity.

Candidates for whom a reservation has been expressed will not be included in the observer corps.

Competence and training of observers

~~The requirements for the professional, linguistic and safety at sea qualifications of the observers (professional, linguistic and safety at sea) are defined in the attached standardised CV-form for observers. the following: Observers must have at least the same level of professional competence as that required of inspectors in the country where the observations are to take place. Exemption from this requirement can be given by the country where the observations are to take place.~~

For safety reasons, the language competency of observers must be taken into consideration. An observer on board a hunting vessel must be able to communicate spontaneously with the crew. For communication on land, a translator may be used.

~~In order to ensure that the persons appointed as observers are sufficiently informed about the relevant hunting regulations and the duties of national control personnel, observers shall participate in whatever training courses are compulsory for control personnel in the member countries where the~~

~~observations are due to occur. If such courses are not held, or if the observer is unable for other reasons to participate in such courses, the observer must receive other relevant training, developed in co-operation between the national authorities and NAMMCO.~~

To ensure that observers are sufficiently informed about the relevant hunting regulations and the duties of national control personnel, observers shall receive all necessary documentation and relevant training before going into the field. Before being deployed in the field, a meeting will be held between the observer and the national authorities in question or NAMMCO to review legislation and information on how the hunt is carried out.

Duties of the observer

Observation activities can be carried out in ~~four~~ five areas:

- ~~• observation of whaling carried out with the use of a harpoon gun or of flensing of whales taken with a harpoon gun;~~
- observation of sealing or forms of whaling other than with harpoon guns, or the flensing of animals from such hunting;
- observation of hunting and/or flensing of whales
- observation of hunting and/or flensing of seals
- observation of hunting and/or flensing of walrus
- observation of the landing/delivery of marine mammal catches
- observations of national marine mammal inspection activities

Hunt specific check lists are available for all the hunts to be observed and the observer is required to report on all the items listed.

Reports

No later than eight days after the end of the deployment period, the observer must submit a written report to the NAMMCO Secretariat. ~~The report shall consist of the individual hunt event check list, NAMMCO hunting form (active hunting days etc, statistics)~~ **The report shall consist of the hunt specific check lists completed during the observation period and a completed standardised report form.**

The language of the report shall be either English or a Scandinavian language.

The Secretariat will compile an annual report for the consideration of the Council based on the check lists and the standardised report from the observers.

General conduct of observers

During the exercise of their duties, observers shall conduct themselves with appropriate tact and respect. Upon arrival at a vessel, a landing/receiving station or other place where observation duties are carried out, the observer shall always display their authorisation and identification card to the person in charge.

Confidentiality

Observers shall ensure the confidentiality of their duties and shall not report on observations carried out under the NAMMCO Inspection and Observation Scheme to any other parties than the Secretariat.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE SCHEME

Plans for observation and activities

~~By 1 October each year~~ The Secretariat, in cooperation with the Committee on Inspection and Observation (CIO) develops a proposal for the Council for the scope and range of observation activities **priorities (including budget) by 1 May for the following year** ~~during the following year in accordance with budgeted funds for these activities.~~ The Council shall approve this proposal **by 1 June.** and appoint

~~the observers by 1 November.~~ **This is to facilitate the possibility of observing hunts at the start of the year.** The Secretariat, in co-operation with control authorities in respective member countries, then develops a specific plan for observation activities. The plan shall, among other things, define the time frame for observation activities and shall specify the observation areas for each observer.

The Secretariat may for practical reasons, and in co-operation with the authorities of the relevant member countries, make changes in the plan if necessary. The detailed plan of observation activities ~~shall~~**will** only be known to the ~~control~~ authorities in the relevant member countries and the Secretariat.

Employment of observers

When a detailed plan for the of observation activities ~~for the year~~ is finalized, those observers ~~from the corps~~ who are ~~will~~ be called upon for active observation **duties that year** will receive an employment contract from the Secretariat. When both parties sign this **contract**, the observer will receive an identification card, as well as other relevant documentation necessary for his/her duties. The observer shall return his/her identification card to the Secretariat together with the final report of activities. ~~He/she shall then receive a letter from the Secretariat confirming his/her completion of duties according to the Scheme.~~

APPENDIX 4: OBSERVERS

NEW OBSERVERS TO BE APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Faroe Islands:

Ragnar Johannesen

Greenland:

Gerth Kristian Kristiansen
Svend Emil Lindenhann

Iceland:

Soffía Árnadóttir
Óli Þór Jóhannsson
Þórarinn Sigurður Traustason

Norway:

Trond Bakken
Jørgen Ree Wiig

PREVIOUSLY APPROVED – STILL ACTIVE

Faroe Islands:

Bjarni Mikkelsen
Signar Petersen

Greenland:

Ado Holm
Anthon Hegelund
Per Nukaraaq Hansen
Hans Mølgaard

Iceland:

Eyþór Þórðarson

Norway:

Kristian Franer