

## **SOUTH WALES SEA FISHERIES COMMITTEE**

### **FISHERY OFFICER**

#### **Supplementary Information**

#### **GENERAL**

The South Wales Sea Fisheries Committee is a Joint Committee of seven Local Authorities in South Wales and is funded entirely by them. Expenditure in 2008/09 gave rise to a levy of £656,770 and the Committee employs 14 staff.

Created by Statutory Instrument under the Sea Fisheries (Regulation) Act 1966, the Committee is charged with the regulation (principally via byelaws) of sea fisheries within a district stretching from Cardiff to Cardigan and six miles to seaward from the coast and offshore islands.

#### **THE DISTRICT**

South Wales has one of the most diverse inshore fisheries areas of the UK. The major port of Milford Haven bases larger mobile vessels, while numerous small coves and harbours support smaller vessels using static pots and nets constituting important crustacean shellfish and other fisheries. Extensive intertidal areas support important bivalve mollusc fisheries prosecuted mainly by artisanal methods. The upper reaches of the Bristol Channel in the east contrasts markedly with the Pembrokeshire Islands in the West.

Extensive parts of the district are in the process of being designated as marine Special Areas of Conservation in which the Committee and its officers are actively involved.

#### **REGULATION**

The Committee has 48 byelaws which regulate activity within its District. In addition its officers may enforce aspects of UK and European fisheries technical conservation measures. The Committee investigates and prosecutes offences (through the Magistrates Court) having particular regard for the Police and Criminal Evidence Act.

#### **FISHERY OFFICERS AND PATROL VESSEL**

Five shore based officers work under the supervision of a Senior Fishery Officer, and in turn are responsible to office based Director and Deputy Director. They make up a crew complement of four on the Patrol Vessel on a rota basis, including the permanent Master and Mate. However, the vessel may sail with two or three crew on restricted operations. Working around weather-windows, and especially in the busy April-October period, the Patrol Vessel may stay at sea for up to six days, mooring in strategic locations around the District. The vessel has recently been extensively modernised.

A Marine Conservation Officer and grant aided Biodiversity Position provide biological information to inform the Committees' management decisions.

An annualised hour's system facilitates flexible working patterns which must be matched to the season and hour of day or night of the fishing activity to be monitored.

Duties require committed application in what can be a pressurised environment. Clearly frequent irregular hours and social disruption can be expected.

Law enforcement requires a confident but measured approach in what can be challenging situations.

## **EQUIPMENT**

Both offshore (19m) Fishery Protection Vessel and inshore (6m) vessel are operated to facilitate sea going enforcement, equipped with up to date navigational gear. Four wheeled drive all terrain vehicles transport officers in the intertidal zones where the latest technology may be used to detect night time poaching activity.

## **HOME BASE LOCATION**

Officers must reside within a reasonable travel to work distance of the coastal patrol area they are allocated. This should be no more than 30 minutes.

## **SUPERANNUATION**

As an employee of the South Wales Sea Fisheries Committee you are eligible to join the Local Government Superannuation Scheme. This is administered by Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council on our behalf. Information can be found at [www.rctpensions.org.uk](http://www.rctpensions.org.uk).

## **WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT**

The Welsh Assembly Rural Affairs Minister announced in October 2008 that WAG would be assuming full responsibility for fisheries management in Wales with effect from April 2010.

Indications from WAG to date suggest that all Sea Fisheries Committee post holders in Wales are to be transferred to WAG as part of the process, having due regard to TUPE-type provisions operating within the Civil Service.

The final details of such transfers are yet to be determined.

Further information is available on the Committee's website [www.swsfc.org.uk](http://www.swsfc.org.uk)