



Falkland Islands Government – Job Description

Job Title:	Scientific Fisheries Observer		
Department:	Natural Resources	Section:	Fisheries
Reports to:	Observer Co-ordinator		
Grade:	Falkland Islands Government Grade – E1	Job Code:	326FO3

Job Purpose

To collect biological, fisheries and seabird information onboard commercial fishing vessels. To write reports following each deployment at sea and present the data in the required electronic format for subsequent uploading to the Fisheries Department's databases. To participate to the Department's research cruises and other scientific projects.

Main Accountabilities

- Collect samples and other biological and fisheries information onboard commercial fishing vessels by spending periods of up to five weeks at sea.
- Prepare and send the biological and fisheries data to shore by radio or email for subsequent uploading to the departmental databases.
- Carry out small research projects or to assist in the collection of material for contracted research projects and participate in the Department research cruises when required.
- Take part in sample processing in the Department laboratory.
- Produce a detailed written report on the activities of the vessel along with a short scientific analysis of the catch during the observation period.
- Monitor compliance with fishery regulations.

The job description is not an exclusive or exhaustive definition of your duties. You shall undertake such additional or other duties as may reasonably be required by FIG commensurate with your role and grade.

Additional Information

The position of observer is primarily scientific, but compliance with fishing regulations and legislation should also be monitored. Any observation of infringements of FI Fisheries Ordinances should, depending on their severity, either be dealt with immediately, or reported to the line manager and/or fisheries protection officers by radio/email for further action.

The position of scientific observer requires that periods of up to five weeks be spent at sea onboard vessels of the commercial fleet, although this may vary if conditions dictate.



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Additional Information: *(continued)*

During this period the main catch of the vessel is randomly sampled and biological information collected including sex, maturity and measurements of fish and squid in the catch.

These essential data contribute to regulation of squid and fin-fish fisheries upon which the Island's revenue depends. A synopsis of these data is passed to shore by radio or email regularly for further analysis and stock assessment in the Fisheries Department.

Living conditions aboard vessels of the fishing fleet may be variable. Usually, a single cabin is allocated to the observer for the period onboard, but sometimes especially on some small vessels it may be necessary to share accommodation with one of the ship's officers. Standards of cleanliness also vary and the observer is expected to contend with such adverse conditions, within reason. Smoking is widely prevalent on most fishing vessels, taking place on deck, factory deck, and mess rooms. The sleeping cabin should be a smoke free area, but the observer may encounter smoking in other areas of the fishing vessel. Observers are generally treated well aboard all vessels and have, throughout the years, earned the respect of many of the regular captains and crew.

The safety and security of Falkland Islands Fisheries Department (FIFD) observers is taken seriously and FIFD makes every effort to ensure the job is done safely. All observers should have completed a basic sea survival (STCW95) course before starting their employment, and all vessels that observers are placed on are checked for their safety equipment/procedures and suitability prior to being boarded by an observer. This is regularly checked and verified. Life jacket and sea survival suit are issued when starting the job. It should be borne in mind that the observer him/herself should also be pro-active in safeguarding their security and safety whilst onboard by making themselves familiar about safety procedures, escape routes etc.

Following a period at sea, a short leave (1 day per fortnight at sea, with a maximum of 2 days) is granted, which is additional to the contract leave allowance. Upon return to the office, samples brought ashore will have to be processed, and a trip report completed (2- 3 days). Thereafter the observer is on standby for placement aboard another vessel of the fleet.

Subject to activities within the fishery and patrol vessel's movements, the number of days spent at sea may amount to around 160 per annum.



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Person Specification:	Scientific Fisheries Observer		
Criteria	Essential	Desirable	Assessment Method
Education and Training:			
BSc or equivalent in a biological or zoological subject or other relevant subject	✓		A
Completion of a basic sea survival (STCW95) course	✓		A
Further degree such as MSc or PhD in relevant subject		✓	A
Proven track record in the field and a good understanding of the FI ecosystem		✓	A
Knowledge, Skills and Experience:			
Ability to communicate well in English at all levels as well as issue and understand written and verbal instructions	✓		A/I/R
Capacity to write detailed and comprehensive reports using appropriate software packages such as Microsoft Word and Excel	✓		A/R
Fully able to plan for work at sea of approximately one month in duration, thereby ensuring all protocols are adhered to	✓		I/R
Have the capacity to take a leading role in biological sampling and analyses whilst at sea	✓		A/I/R
Proven experience of working effectively within a team	✓		I/R
Eye for detail and good decision-making skills	✓		A/I/R
Experience in sampling techniques and strategies, laboratory work, work on research or fishing vessels		✓	A/I
Second language, preferably Spanish		✓	A/I
Ability to competently use databases and statistical packages		✓	A/I/R
Personal Attributes:			
Flexible approach to working hours. (Observers are expected to work 7 days a week whilst at sea, often at unsocial hours)	✓		I/R
Enthusiastic and passionate approach to work	✓		I/R



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Person Specification:	Scientific Fisheries Observer		
Criteria	Essential	Desirable	Assessment Method
Personal Attributes:			
As a representative of the department, you will be expected to maintain a professional appearance and deal with people in a diplomatic manner	✓		I/R
Ability to work alone, sometimes under adverse weather conditions	✓		I/R
Forward-thinking and proactive		✓	I/R
Evidence of specialist scientific interest		✓	A/I

Method of Assessment:

A - Application Form

I - Selection Interview

R - Reference