



North Pacific Fisheries Commission

NPFC-2026-TCC09-IP07

Submitted by the Secretariat

NPFC 2025 High Seas Boarding and Inspection Overview

Abstract:

This document provides a summary of the high seas boarding activities in the NPFC Convention Area in 2025 and provides statistics on inspections and potential non-compliance encountered and presents data on historic trends since 2018.

Note that references to “violations” and “serious violations” are used throughout the document to denote potential non-compliance as it aligns with the language used in the online reporting system that identifies inspection outcomes as having No Violations, Violations, or Serious Violations.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

2. NPFC Inspection Vessels

3. HSBI Events and Outcomes in 2025

- 3.1 HSBI Events/Outcomes by Inspecting and Inspected Member in 2025
- 3.2 Inspections by Month 2025
- 3.3 Inspections and Outcomes 2025
- 3.4 Active Vessels / Fishing Days and Inspections in 2025
- 3.5 Inspections by Vessel Type
- 3.6 Potential Non-Compliance 2025
- 3.7 2025 Issues

4. Summary 2018-2025

- 4.1 HSBI Events and Outcomes 2018-2025
- 4.2 Potential non-compliance identified by CMM

5. Next Steps for 2026

- 5.1 Annual Report Template
- 5.2 MCS page on NPFC website
- 5.3 Incorporation of Aerial Surveillance Results on MCS Page
- 5.4 HSBI Events page
- 5.5 HSBI dedicated email address
- 5.6 Transshipment mapping Tool

6. Summary

1. Introduction

The NPFC CMM for high seas boarding and inspection procedures was adopted at the third Commission Meeting in 2017 for the purpose of ensuring compliance with the provisions of the Convention and conservation and management measures. The program has expanded significantly in recent years and since 2018, a total of 228 HSBI events have been conducted. Sixty-six at-sea inspections were carried out in 2025 by five Members, and three Members also conducted aerial surveillance in the NPFC Convention Area. Almost 11% of active vessels in the Convention Area were inspected in 2025.

Twenty-one potential violations (in 10 events) were detected in the course of the 66 inspections conducted in 2025, with two considered serious. By comparison, the 2024 HSBI season detected 13 potential violations in 11 of 53 HSBI events.

2. NPFC Inspection Vessels

Seven Members have indicated their intention to participate in the HSBI program and have collectively registered 84 inspection vessels. In 2025 the number of inspection vessels in the Register increased by five from 2024, and 22 sea patrols were reported in the Convention Area in 2025.

Four of the five Members operating in the Convention Area in 2025 requested access to VMS data for patrol planning purposes to support their HSBI missions. Table 1 shows the numbers of inspection vessels registered by Member as of 3 March 2026.

Table 1: NPFC Registered Inspection Vessels

Canada	China	Japan	Korea	Russia	Chinese Taipei	United States	TOTAL
4	26	4	1	16	6	27	84

3. HSBI Events and Outcomes in 2025

3.1 HSBI Event/Outcomes by Inspecting and Inspected Members in 2025

In 2025, 66 high seas inspections were reported by the five Members with an inspection presence. Sixty-five inspections were conducted in the context of at-sea boardings, and an inspection report was completed for the 66th via a radio interview, as weather conditions precluded a boarding. An additional two planned inspections were notified but were later cancelled.

Vessels from all six active fishing Members were inspected in 2025. Table 2 below shows the distribution of inspections by Member, with nine of the 66 inspections conducted by inspecting Members on their own vessels. Two vessels were inspected twice in 2025.

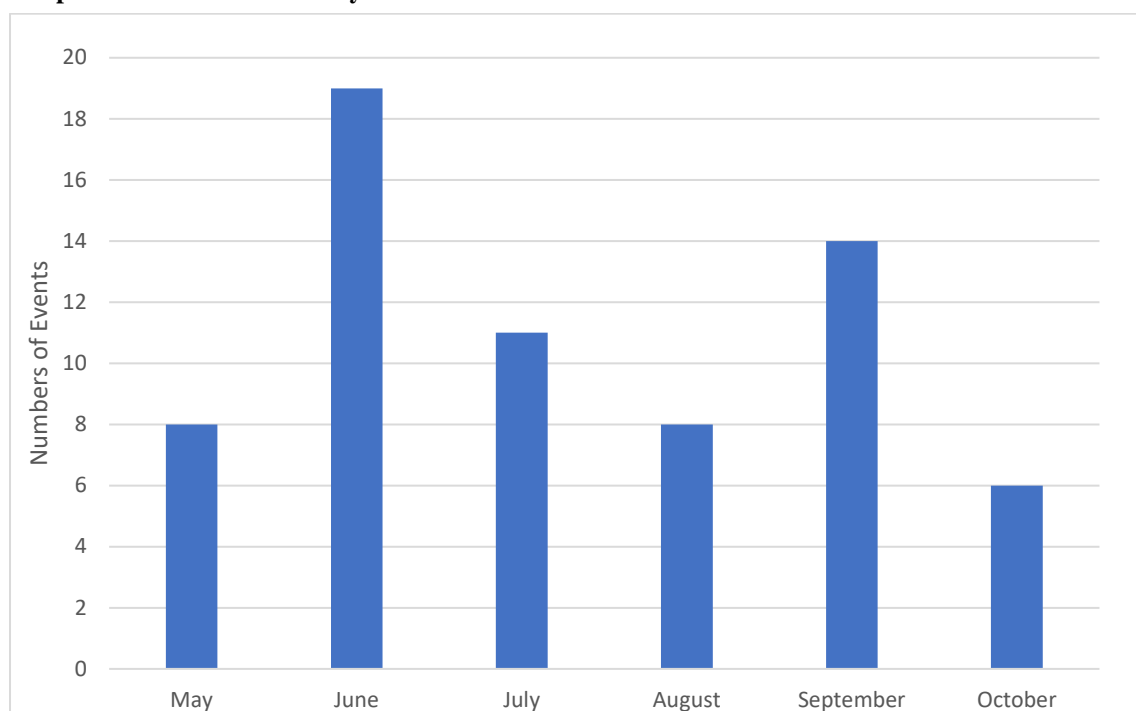
Table 2: 2025 HSBI Events by Inspecting and Inspected Member

Inspecting Member (Total)	Inspected Member					
	China	Japan	Korea	Russia	Chinese Taipei	Vanuatu
Canada (23)	22			1		
China (10)	6	1	2			1
Japan (15)	10		1		2	2
Korea (5)	4	1				
Russia (13)	11	1		1		
TOTAL (66)	53	3	3	2	2	3

3.2 Inspection activity in 2025

Actual entry and exit dates of patrol vessels into and from the Convention Area are not known for all inspecting Members, and the records for when patrol vessels are present are incomplete. Even so, the number of boardings each month appears to track closely with the NPFC fishing season, as shown in Graph 1 below.

Graph 1: 2025 HSBI Events by Month



The locations reported in boarding reports are displayed in Figure 1 below.

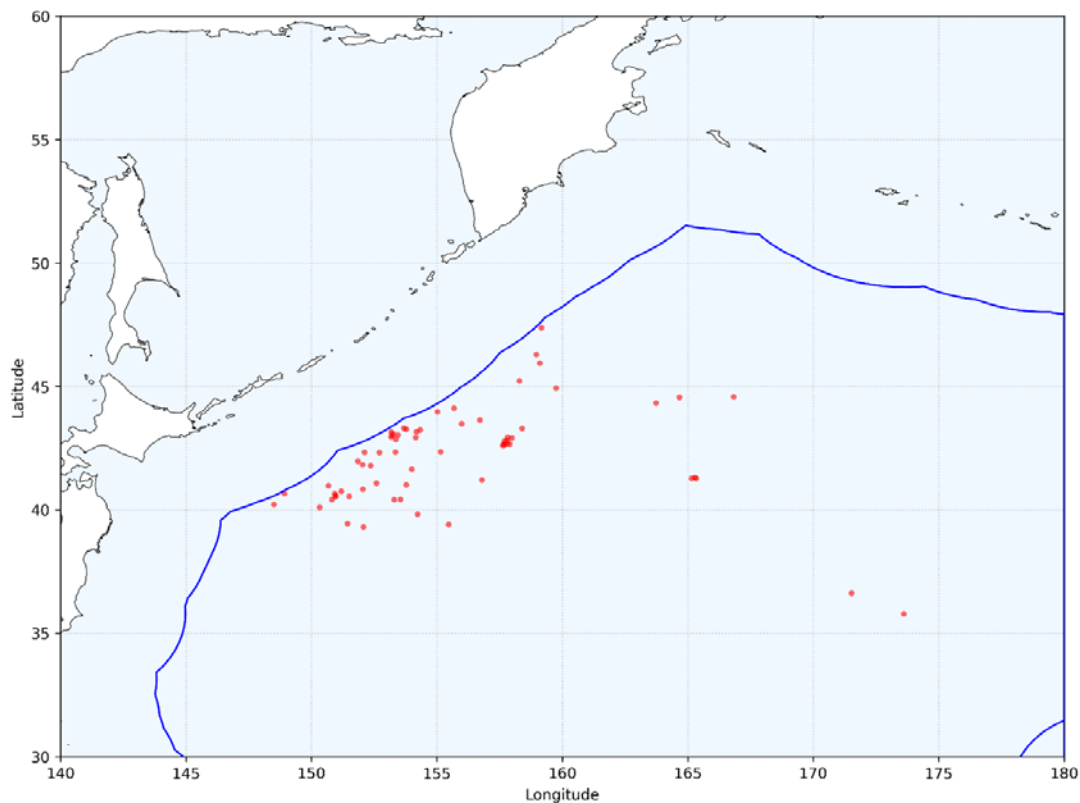


Figure 1: Map of 2025 HSBI Event Locations

3.3 Inspections and Outcomes 2025

Table 3 below shows the breakdown, by Member, of inspections conducted, and the outcomes of the inspections. Potential non-compliance was noted in 10 reports, including one which reported two “serious violations”.

Table 3: 2025 Inspections / Outcomes by Inspecting Member

Inspecting Member	Number of Inspections	Inspection Outcome - by Event		
		“No Violations” Noted	“Violations” Noted	“Serious Violations” Noted
Canada	23	19	3	1
China	10	10	0	0
Japan	15 ¹	9	6	0
Korea	5	5	0	0
Russia	13	13	0	0
Total	66	56	9	1

¹ Fourteen boardings were conducted; however, an inspection report was submitted for a 15th inspection, which was conducted through a radio interview.

3.4 Active Vessels / Fishing Days and Inspections in 2025

Table 4 below shows the number of active vessels for each inspected Member as well as their activity level (fishing days) and the number of inspections conducted on their fleets.

Table 4: Active Vessels/Fishing Days and Inspections by Inspected Member in 2025

Member	Number of Unique Active vessels	Fishing days	# of Inspections
China	179	32,359	53
Japan	98	3,170	3
Korea	6	413	3
Russia	23	358	2
Chinese Taipei	76	3,269	2
Vanuatu	4	203	3
TOTAL	386	39,772	66

3.5 Inspections by Vesel Type

Of the 66 vessels inspected, 57, or > 86% were fishing vessels, eight (12 %) of inspections were conducted on carrier vessels and one research vessel was inspected. With 42 active carrier vessels in 2025, this means that 19% of the carrier vessels were inspected. Of the fishing vessels inspected, the largest proportion (46%) were purse seiners with 26 inspections, followed by jigger /dip / lift net vessels with 22 (39 %).

3.6 Potential Non-Compliance 2025

Of the 21 incidents of potential non-compliance identified in 10 reports during the 2025 HSBI season, two were reported as “serious violations” from one event. Table 5 shows the breakdown of potential violations by type / measure.

Table 5: Breakdown of “Violations” identified through HSBI by CMM in 2025.

CMM REFERENCE		
CMM #	DESCRIPTION	#“Violations” Identified
01	(Para.5) Vessel Marking	5
03	(Para 9) Mis-reporting (transshipped fish product not recorded by species)	1

07	(Para 6) Mis-reporting (Small mackerel recorded as sardine)	2
09	(Para 38 (b)) Mis-reporting (Para 38 (l)) Obstruction	2
11	(Para 6) Mis-reporting (Small mackerel recorded as sardine, OFJ catch was recorded as “Squids”)	3
12	(Annex 1, Para.11) MTU not in tamperproof case	2
14	(Para 7) Shark fins not naturally attached	1
15	(Para 8) Dump debris into ocean (Para 10) Inappropriate onboard storage to prohibit discharge into ocean	2
16	(Para 5) Retention of salmon	2
SUB TOTAL		20
Convention Article 13, Para 2	UNFSA Art. 18 Para. 3 iii) No fishing license onboard	1
TOTAL		21

Vessel-marking violations remained the most frequently cited issue in 2025, with five out of the year’s 21 reported violations falling into this category, all of which were related to painting specifications, such as the width of IRCS letters.

In some cases, provisions of multiple CMMs were identified within a single “violation”. For example, mis-reporting was highlighted several times in relation to CMMs 07 and 11, where small mackerel were being frozen in trays together with small sardines, with the tray being recorded as “sardine” with no reference to the mackerel. Likewise, for CMM 03, as these trays of fish were transshipped, the transshipment records allegedly over-reported sardines, with mackerel being under-reported. Other examples involved the mis-reporting of squid without specifying the species and the non- recording of salmon bycatch that had been released.

3.7 2025 Issues

In the TCC08 HSBI overview, issues were identified regarding the use of Boarding Remarks to reflect potential violations. While this area was much improved in the 2025 season, there continue to be occasions where potential non-compliance is described in the “Boarding Remarks “section. In cases where the inspection reports are not uploaded to the HSBI Events page, and thus no inspection outcome is selected, it can be challenging for the Secretariat to determine whether the report indicates potential non-compliance or possibly just commentary to inform future inspections of that vessel.

To accommodate situations where not all inspecting Members use the online portal to submit HSBI reports, it would be useful for the inspection form to include a field indicating whether any potential non-compliance was detected. This would allow the Secretariat to confirm that

references to possible non-compliance in the Boarding Remarks are not intended to indicate that the vessel was cited for a potential violation. The current situation, where reports entered into the HSBI portal indicate an inspection outcome, but those reports that are emailed do not, create challenges to quantify the number of detected “violations”.

In 2018, the HSBI Events page was added to the NPFC website to facilitate the collection of HSBI data. The page allows Members to input details of inspections and upload reports, although currently only in PDF format. It also contains a function that can automatically notify authorities of the inspected vessel when an inspection is planned or has occurred. The inspection party can also upload reports, and the inspected party may use the online system to respond to any reported potential non-compliance.

In 2025, most HSBI reports were received by the Secretariat within the three working day timeframe outlined in paragraph 31 of the HSBI measure; however, in eight cases, reports were not received until up to sixteen days after the inspection. When notifications and inspection-related correspondence are transmitted directly between Members via email, the Secretariat may not be aware of all exchanges unless copied. This can make it difficult to determine whether required reports or related documents have been submitted or if any materials are missing.

In 2025, three of five inspecting Members uploaded 46 reports to the HSBI Events page, flagging the “violations” and “serious violations”; however, all responses from the Inspected Member were shared only via email and none were uploaded into the system. In at least one case, the Secretariat was not copied on the response related to follow-up of serious violations.

4. HSBI Summary 2018-2025

4.1. HSBI Events and Outcomes 2018-2025

Since the program was launched in 2018, 228 inspection activities have been conducted in the NPFC Convention Area. One hundred and forty-nine (or 65%) of those inspections did NOT identify any potential non-compliance, but “violations” or “serious violations” were identified on the remaining seventy-nine events.

Table 6 and Table 7 below show the annual number of HSBI events since 2018 by inspected and inspecting Member/CNCP. With a total of 5 inspections each, Russia and Vanuatu have received the fewest inspections, with China, at 157, has received the most inspections in the 8 years that the HSBI program has been operating in the Convention Area.

Table 6: HSBI Events by Inspected Member/CNCP 2018-2025

YEAR	Total Events	Inspected Member						
		China	Japan	Korea	Russia	Chinese Taipei	Vanuatu	Panama
2018	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
2019	36	26	1	1	1	5	0	2
2020	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
2021	36	19	1	4	2	8	1	1
2022	9	6	0	1	0	2	0	0
2023	24	11	4	3	0	2	1	3
2024	53	38	9	2	0	4	0	-
2025	66	53	3	3	2	2	3	-
Total	228	157	18	14	5	23	5	6

Of the 228 at sea inspections completed since 2018, 86, or 38% have been conducted by the United States followed by Japan with 60, or 26% of inspections.

Table 7: HSBI Events by Inspecting Member 2018-2025

YEAR	Total Events	Inspecting Member					
		Canada	China	Japan	Korea	Russia	USA
2018	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
2019	36	0	0	3	0	0	33
2020	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
2021	36	0	1	3	0	0	32
2022	9	0	0	9	0	0	0
2023	24	7	5	12	0	0	0
2024	53	9	9	18	0	0	17
2025	66	23	10	15	5	13	0
Total	228	39	25	60	5	13	86

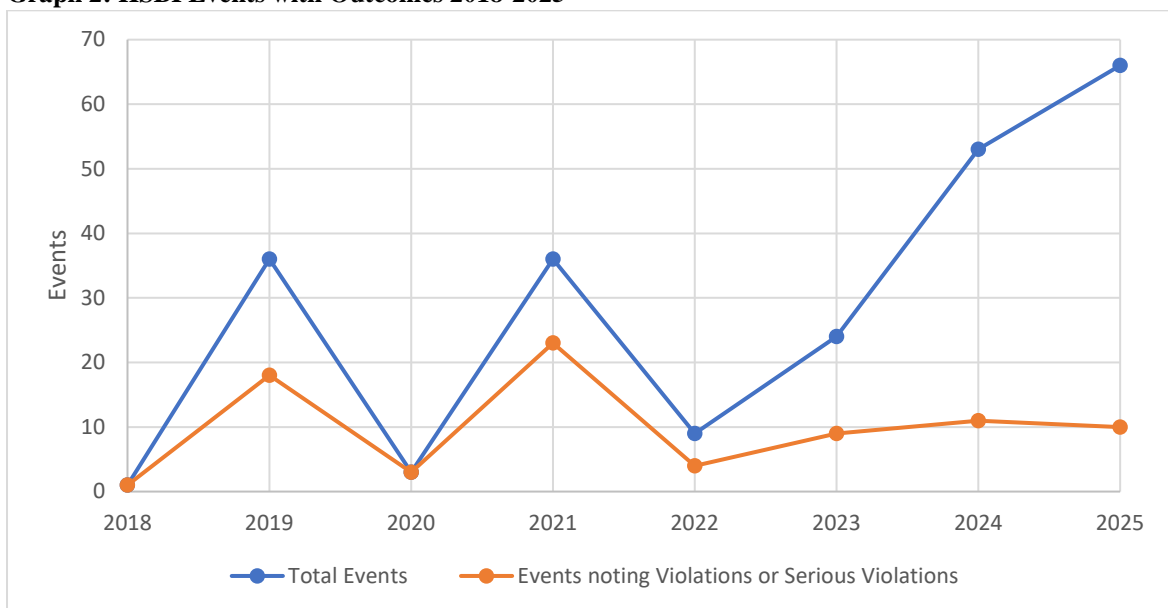
Table 8 below shows the total events and outcomes for the period 2018-2025. Graph 2 illustrates the inspection outcomes over the same period. While the number of inspections has increased significantly since 2023, the number of events identifying potential non-compliance has not shown the same increase.

Table 8: HSBI Events /Outcomes 2018-2025

Year	Total Events	Inspection Outcome- By Event		
		“No Violations” Noted	“Violations” Noted	“Serious Violations” Noted
2018	1	0	1	0
2019	36	18	18	0
2020	3	0	0	3
2021	36	13	10	13
2022	9	5	0	4
2023	24	15	9	0
2024	53	42	8	3
2025	66	56	9	1
Total	228	149	55	24

Graph 2 illustrates the inspection outcomes over the same period. While the number of inspections has increased significantly since 2023, the number of events identifying potential non-compliance has not shown the same increase.

Graph 2: HSBI Events with Outcomes 2018-2025



In some situations, multiple “violations” are detected during an inspection. In such cases, the number of “violations” may exceed the number of outcomes identified as

“violations” or “serious violations”. For example, in 2025, there were ten events noting “violations”. Twenty-one “violations” (2 serious) were identified in these ten events. In Table 9 below, the number of “violations” identified each year is presented, along with a breakdown of how many were recorded as “violations” as opposed to “serious violations”.

Table 9: Number of “Violations “2018-2025²

Year	#HSBI Events	“Violations”	“Serious Violations”	Total Violations
2018	1	1	0	1
2019	36	34	0	34
2020	3	0	9	9
2021	36	15	18	33
2022	9	0	10	10
2023	24	13	0	13
2024	53	10	3	13
2025	66	19	2	21
Total	228	92	42	134

4.2. Potential non-compliance identified by CMM

Of the 134 incidents of potential non-compliance that have been identified since 2018, the majority were related to the vessel registry and markings (CMM-01) (36%).

Table 10: Potential Non-Compliance by CMM 2018 to 2025

“VIOLATIONS” IDENTIFIED IN HSBI REPORTS BY CMM 2018-2025		
CMM#	CMM REFERENCE	# “VIOLATIONS” IDENTIFIED
01	Vessel Registry: Maintain Vessel Registry	1
	Vessel Registry: Vessel marking	44(+5) ³
03	Transshipment: Not allowed without registration	1
	Transshipment: Reporting of bycatch and unregulated species	2(+1)
	Transshipment: Record of transshipment declarations	2
	Transshipment: Without advance notification	1

² The number and types of violations reflect the numbers reported on HSBI reports or updated following post-inspection investigations.

³ 2025 “violations” are identified in brackets; so in the case of vessel marking, there have been 44 related violations, 5 of which were newly identified in 2025.

	Transshipment: Stored separately and readily identifiable	1
04	Vessels without Nationality: Two flags	1
07	Mackerel: No VMS onboard while fishing for Chub Mackerel	2
	Mackerel: Mis- reporting	2(+2)
08	Pacific Saury: Fishing after the date of the closure	2
	Pacific Saury: Retain all the catch on board	1
09	HSBI: Without license, permit or authorization	5
	HSBI: Failure to maintain records of catch	19
	HSBI: Mis- reporting	1(+1)
	HSBI: Intentional taking/retention of species in contravention of any CMM	6
	HSBI: Significant violation of catch limits or quotas	3
	HSBI: Using prohibited fishing gear	1
	HSBI: Falsifying or intentionally concealing the markings	1
	HSBI: Obstruction	1(+1)
	HSBI: Multiple violations	3
	HSBI: Vessel refused boarding and inspection	13
11	Sardines and Squids Mis- reporting	3(+3)
12	VMS: Failure to transmit VMS data.	5
	VMS: MTU not tamperproof	2(+2)
14	Sharks: fins not naturally attached	1(+1)
15	Marine Pollution: Prohibition on release of plastics	5(+2)
16	Salmon: Retention of salmon	2(+2)
Conv. Art.13 Para. 2	No fishing license onboard	1(+1)
	Other	2
	TOTAL	134(+21)

5. Next Steps for 2026

5.1 Annual Report Template

Members with an inspection presence in the Convention Area currently report on their activities annually in section 3.8 of the Annual Report – Patrol Effort. The existing template requests the following data points:

1. # of air/sea patrols
2. Area of coverage
3. Alleged # of violations

However, some Members do not report the area of coverage, and in some cases, the “number of sea patrols” has been interpreted differently—for example, some Members report the number of “overall missions for the year, while others report the number of inspections conducted. This inconsistency in reporting means that comparability across reports is not ensured, reducing the availability of data for analysis. It will therefore be useful to harmonize these reporting elements.

Updates to the Annual Report template will be proposed for 2027 to improve data collection by possibly requesting additional details such as active inspection vessels, entry, exit dates, number of inspections and outcomes for sea patrols, and inclusive dates, missions flown, vessels observed and incident of non-compliance encountered for aerial surveillance.

These changes are proposed to improve the availability of data for analysis. For example, currently the annual report collects the number of square nautical miles covered by aerial and sea patrols as well as the number of potential violations identified. However, there is no consistent data available on when patrol vessels are present in the Convention Area to reflect “inspection seasons”. Collection of the additional data fields for both HSBI and aerial surveillance patrols will allow more comprehensive analyses of MCS efforts in the Convention Area in future.

5.2 MCS page on NPFC website

Throughout 2025 a number of updates were planned and are in process for the NPFC Compliance pages, including the archiving of the HSBI Implementation plan and the creation of a new monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) page with public and Member only sections, including a secure page for reporting aerial surveillance results.

5.3 Incorporation of Aerial Surveillance Results on HSBI Events Page

Three Members reported having conducted 47 aerial surveillance patrols in the Convention Area in 2025, observing fishing activity and transshipment events in 2025, with 10 incidents of potential non-compliance identified.

TCC07 (paragraph 85 in TCC07 Final report) requested “*that the Secretariat establish a mechanism for reporting aerial surveillance results on the HSBI page if the proposed amendment to CMM2023-12 On the VMS to clearly include aerial surveillance is adopted by the Commission.*”

This project has been completed and is now available for Members conducting aerial surveillance to record results on the Members page on the NPFC site: [Aerial Surveillance Potential Non-Compliance Events | NPFC](#). As with the HSBI Events page, the interface is configured to be available only to the Member conducting the aerial mission, the Member of the fishing vessel, and the Secretariat.

5.4 HSBI Events page

At TCC08, the Secretariat explained the challenges associated with receiving HSBI reports in PDF format for manual entry into the NPFC database and advised that they would be examining enhancements to HSBI Events page to facilitate direct entry of reports and associated notifications.

Some Members indicated a preference to continue to transmit notifications, reports and responses through emails. In 2025, only three of the five active Members uploaded their HSBI reports into the HSBI Events page. Efforts will continue in 2026 to improve the user interface with the HSBI Events page, including consideration of aligning the language to describe outcomes (e.g. “violation”, “serious violations”) with language in use in inspection forms (potential non-compliance).

5.5 HSBI dedicated email address

A dedicated email address - hsbi@npfc.int - has been established for receiving HSBI reports and related correspondence. This centralized inbox helps limit unnecessary access to sensitive information contained in inspection reports and improves the tracking of submissions and responses regarding potential non-compliance.

Members who prefer to use email for HSBI notifications and report sharing are encouraged to use this dedicated address.

5.6 Transshipment Mapping Tool

The transshipment mapping tool was launched in 2025; however, given that the API data transfer process was not completed until August, it would have been challenging for MCS practitioners to use it for patrol planning purposes prior to that time. However, with the 1 April 2026 requirement to report all transshipment data via the online Transshipping reporting system, it is expected that the mapping application should become a valuable patrol panning tool throughout 2026 and beyond.

6. Summary

In 2025, five Members deployed nine patrol vessels, inspecting almost 11% of the active fishing vessels in the Convention Area. Sixty-six inspections were carried out over the May – October period, with no violations” detected in 56 (85%) of these. Of the remaining 10 events (identifying twenty-one violations), one of these events identified two “serious violations” involving misreporting and obstruction.

As in previous years, most of the “violations” identified related to potential vessel registry offences, however other areas of potential non-compliance were identified, including misreporting, retaining salmon, marine pollution and obstruction.

While the number of “serious violations” rose in 2025, the overall number of inspections with “no violations” identified continued a 3 year upward trend. ⁽⁹⁾