



Transitional Support for Responsible Fishing Vessel Standard RFVS Certified Vessels Transitioning from RFVS Issue 1 to Issue 2

Issue 1.0

22-June-2022

About This Document

This document is intended to help all RFVS Certified Members (CMs) certified under the RFVS Issue 1.0, potential new applicants for the RFVS program, and RFVS approved Certification Bodies (CB) / RFVS Approved auditors to understand how the revised RFVS Issue 2.0 will affect a CM's business, the transition time period, and audit process.

This document compares the Issue 1.0 of the RFVS (published 2020) against the new Issue 2.0 (published 22-June-2022) and contains information on what changes have been implemented, how those affect the audit process, and what to expect following the publication of Issue 2.0.

All new RFVS applicants will be audited against the new RFVS Issue 2.0 once it becomes effective.

What is New or has Changed?

RFVS has made several extensive changes and additions to the existing Standard (Issue 1.0) that will affect all CM:

1. Modified clauses to the RFVS audit criteria to clarify requirements related to family members on board vessel, the difference between labor recruiter and labor providers, and required evidence for proof of payment to crewmembers.
2. Addition of new clauses to support RFVS alignment with the SSCI At Sea Operations benchmark.
3. The inclusion of a whole new category of vessel (Tender/Support Vessel to catching Fleets) has been added to the scope of the standard.

This information is detailed in Appendix 1.

When Will These Changes Come into Effect?

Upon publication of Issue 2.0 of the RFVS there will be a transition period to allow both current CMs and new applicants to the RFVS program to adjust to the new standard requirements.


Current CMs or those applicants that are undergoing assessment under Issue 1.0 of the RFVS will have **1 year** to understand and apply the revisions prior to any required assessment against Issue 2.0. This will entail the need for CMs and applicants in assessment to conduct a self-assessment against the new or amended RFVS criteria to ensure that they have the required evidence in place to prove compliance to the new requirements.

Note- If a CM cannot meet the new RFVS criteria requirements within the 1 year time frame they should contact both their CB and GSA to either discuss a possible time extension to allow them more time to do so or they can maintain their certification to RFVS Issue 1 for the remaining duration of their current certificate

If a CM's re-certification or annual surveillance audit falls between June 2022 and June 2023, the CM should be applying under Issue 2.0. GSA aims to have all RFVS vessels certified to the new Issue 2.0 standard by June 2023.

New applicants to the RFVS program will have **1 month** from the release of the new standard to understand updates and the requirements until the new standard become effective in xx (Month) 2022. After that date GSA will accept their application and pass onto an approved certification body to conduct an audit of their vessel(s) to the requirements of this new standard.

Disclaimer: *This transitional support document is intended as guidance only. Following this document is not a fully comprehensive way of preparing for an audit against the new Issue of the RFVS. GSA advises, that in addition, all certificate holders read the RFVS Issue 2.0 in full and evaluate the updated processes and procedures specific to your company. If you are unsure of any details on any of the subjects covered, please consult the relevant RFVS Issue 2.0 program documents (www.bspcertification.org/standards) or contact the RFVS team at GSA (programintegrity@globalseafood.org)*

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Appendix 1 - New/Amended Clauses and New Vessel Scope Clauses

1. New Vessel Scope – To incorporate Tender/Supply Vessel

Definition of a Tender Vessel

Fish tender vessel means a vessel that commercially supplies, stores, refrigerates, or transports fish, fish products, or materials directly related to fishing or the preparation of fish to or from a fishing, fish processing, or fish tender vessel or a fish processing facility. (46 U.S.C.A. §2101(11c))

Core Principle 1 (CP1)

Section 1- 1.0; 1.3; 1.7; 1.11; 1.12 **Section 2-** 1.20 **Section 3-** 1.26 Section 4 1.28 Section 5 1.31

Core Principle 2 (CP2)

Section 1- 2.4; 2.7; 2.24 **Section 2-** 2.29; 2.30; 2.31; 2.38; 2.46; 2.47; 2.51.1; 2.56; 2.59; 2.60; 2.60.1; 2.61; 2.62

In total 25 Clauses have been amended to incorporate this category of vessels.

2. Clauses to be Inserted into the RFVS Program – To Align with the SSCI At Sea Operations Benchmark

1.2.2 – Is a new clause that explicitly restricts falsification of records.

2.4.3/2.4.3.1/2.4.3.2 – Three new clauses provide strict guidance on the acceptable forms of voluntary prison labor.

2.9.1 – Is a new clause that restricts any loans to crew members.

2.13.2 – Is a new clause that provides further guidance on how crew wages should be paid.

2.17.1 – Is a new clause that requires records of all disciplinary action be maintained.

2.18.2 – Is a new clause that stipulates requirements when changes to crew contracts occur.


2.26.1 – Is a new clause that forbids any forced, bonded, trafficked or involuntary prison labor.

2.27 – Stipulates that vessel operators shall be required to notify workers of their right to collective bargaining.

2.27.1/2.27.2 – Are new clauses that provide further detail on the rights to collective bargaining onboard.

3. Addition of a Clause Requirement to Support the New Zero Tolerance Policy Requirements Adopted by the RFVS program

1.0 - Addition of the need to have a remediation policy in place in the event that the new GSA RFVS Zero Tolerance Policy is not complied with.

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4. Labour Recruiter and Labour Provider differences clarification


2.13 – Original clause has been amended

2.13.1 – Addition of a new clause on the requirements for crew employed through a labour provider

5. Clarification Requirements for Young Family Members On Board Vessels

2.28.6 – Is a new Clause- stating when it would be acceptable to have a young family member on board a fishing vessel

2.28.6.1 – Is a new Clause- stating at what age and for how long a family member will be able to conduct a specific work task on board the vessel

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