



DEFRA to use Cybit BlueFinger satellite tracking system to monitor fishing activity in UK waters until 2012

Cybit, the UK's leading online Telematics Service Provider, has announced a major contract extension in its BlueFinger maritime division with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) acting on behalf of the UK Fisheries Departments. The UK Fisheries Departments will continue to use the BlueFinger satellite tracking system (SAFFIRE) to monitor fishing activity in UK waters until 2012. The UK Fisheries Departments use SAFFIRE to monitor fishing activity by EC and third party country vessels in UK waters, as well as to track all British vessels over 15m in length around the world.

Since 1999, it has been a legal requirement for fishing vessels over 24 metres (over 15m from 2004) in UK waters to report in via satellite every two hours. It is also a legal requirement that the UK Fisheries Departments have in place a platform to enable the monitoring of this fishing activity in UK waters. The SAFFIRE system is used to determine which vessels are not reporting via satellite as well as ensuring closed areas etc are observed; the UK Fisheries Departments in turn will investigate transgressions of these using air support, patrol vessels and land based staff in ports.

The SAFFIRE system also allows the UK Fisheries Departments to validate other fisheries' legislation - for example positional data reports are used to verify a vessels location against the information in their individual log-books, which show where they were fishing and which stocks they have caught. Reports help to

validate that all vessels' satellite positions tally with the information they have recorded in their own log-books. This helps to ensure vessels declare the correct areas of fishing which in turn ensures the correct uptake of quotas.

"We could be tracking anything up to 1000 vessels per day in UK waters," commented Adam Jarrett, UK Project Leader for the Vessel Monitoring System for the Marine and Fisheries Agency. "Cybit's BlueFinger division has and continues to develop a system which is tailored to the UK Fisheries Department's needs - and we are delighted with the results. The system has to be extremely reliable because we have to constantly monitor activity on all vessels over 15 metres in UK waters as well as provide obligations to other Member States and third party countries. The SAFFIRE system has been designed for us to specifically meet these requirements, and that is the reason that we have chosen to extend the contract until 2012."

"The original BlueFinger system was installed in the UK Fisheries Departments in 1999, to meet the new, stringent regulations on fishing management," commented Richard Horsman, Cybit's Chief Executive Officer. "There is now an urgent need within the fishing community to monitor fishing stocks more closely and to ensure quotas are not exceeded. Many species of fish are now threatened with extinction and through using the BlueFinger system the UK Fisheries Departments are able to tell instantly how many boats are fishing and more importantly, where and what they are fishing.

Managing fishing access rights and quotas is an important part of the UK Fisheries Departments work and we are extremely pleased to have developed a system which can help them continue their efforts in this and many other areas."

"The SAFFIRE system is constantly evolving," Adam Jarrett continued. "The data produced now has extensive uses - for example it is used for scientific research to identify fishing patterns and trends. It can also be used to determine fishing activity in areas where telecommunication companies are looking to lay underwater cables. We are delighted to have a system which can aid the departments in such a varied way and look forward to working with Cybit long into the future."

- Tracks every vessel fishing in UK waters in real-time - up to 1000 per day
- Will help eliminate illegal fishing and manage restricted areas
- System also tracks UK fishing vessels wherever they are in the world - monitoring 800 British vessels in total