

## CAREERS IN COMPLIANCE

### Working as a coastal British Sea Fishery Officer (BSFO)



#### Background

Compliance is the operational Division of Marine Scotland and is responsible for managing the coastal, sea and air assets of Marine Scotland. Its role is to ensure compliance with legislation and regulations in the marine environment around Scotland. Staff are split between Victoria Quay, Atlantic Quay and 18 Fishery Offices around the coast, and there those at sea who crew the Protection and Research Vessels. There are a number of different roles that you can do as part of Marine Scotland Compliance and each one requires a different level of knowledge and experience.

#### Working on the coast as a Fishery Officer

Initially, there are no formal qualifications required to become a Fishery Officer, but an interest in the Scottish fishing industry is important as training will be given once you join. You will be using a broad range of IT applications, including some bespoke IT software and you need to be organised and

good with people too because it can be very challenging at times.

In addition, at certain times of year, because of the nature of how fish move in different seasons, offices can be busier than usual and it can involve travelling, so a full valid driving licence to drive in the UK is really helpful, especially for some of our more rural locations.

#### Being a British Sea Fishery Officer (BSFO)

If you are a Fishery Officer working in one of coastal offices, you will be responsible for monitoring the fishing industry's compliance with fisheries regulations and management measures. Where non-compliance against regulations and management measures is detected, it is your role to help ensure appropriate enforcement action is taken. Depending on the seriousness of an infringement, action may range from the issue of a warning to an administrative penalty or,



for more serious cases, an onward referral to the Procurator Fiscal for possible prosecution.

An increasing amount of Compliance operations involve multi-agency working across other government and public sector organisations including Police Scotland, the Maritime and Coastal Agency, the Health and Safety Executive and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs. This joined-up working promotes the sharing of information, intelligence and best practice to make sure we do our job in the best way.

## Being a Marine Enforcement Officer (MEO)

BSFOs, who are also Marine Enforcement Officers (MEOs), inspect catches on board vessels, at the point of landing, and at processors' premises to

ensure that the quantities and species landed are accurately declared and recorded, and that landing quota is not exceeded.

In addition to checking catches, inspections are carried out on the records held by registered buyers and sellers of first sale fish (fish offered for sale for the first time), as they must be registered to be able to conduct business. This ensures fairer fish and shellfish prices for all, including being able to trace this fish and shellfish directly to vessels and stocks.

Inspections of catches and fishing gear are carried out on a daily basis to ensure they meet with technical conservation regulations, such as those covering minimum fish landing sizes, net mesh size and gear construction, and catch composition.

