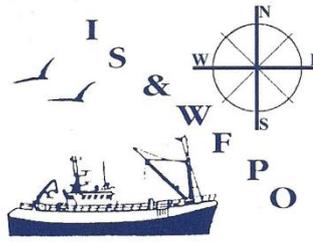


# *Irish South and West Fish Producers' Organisation Ltd.*



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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **“ 200 Jobs lost in the Irish Fishing Industry “**

The *Irish South and West Fish Producers Organisation Ltd.* notes that over 200 jobs were lost this week in the Irish Fishing Industry with the coming into force of Statutory Instrument 640 of 2007 which requires all fishing vessels between 15-24m to have a Fishing Vessel Safety Certificate in order to continue fishing from the 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2010.

While acknowledging the objective of the Regulations i.e. to ensure the Safety of all those on board fishing vessels, was a laudable one; the Organisation is of the opinion that the mechanism being used to achieve this in the category of vessels between 15-18 metres is not the correct one. Eibhlín O’Sullivan ( CEO of the IS&WFPO Ltd.) in expressing the despair being felt by the smaller 15-18 metre vessels in this category who had been unable obtain a Certificate stated: **“These are fishermen who have fished all their lives who would be able to continue fishing for another ten or twenty years but now no longer have the means to do so. A number did not even apply for the survey to obtain the necessary Certificate as they have no means of obtaining the financing necessary to get through the survey process”.**

**“No one appreciates the importance of Safety more than this Organisation and our members, however, given that the same standards are being applied to 24 metre vessels as to 15 metre vessels, which in reality are used for very different types of fishing and encounter different environmental conditions, the standards being applied are not appropriate for these smaller vessels”.**

Minister Noel Dempsey (the Minister responsible for implementing the Regulations) has been requested on a number of occasions to create another category for 15-18 metre vessels which would see more appropriate criteria, being used in the survey process but he has not done so.

There are approximately 99 vessels in the 15-24 metre category and as of last Monday 63 had applied to undertake the survey. This leaves at least 36 vessels who ceased fishing as of the 1<sup>st</sup> of October.

Speaking on behalf of the IS&WFPO, Eibhlín O’ Sullivan continued **“the loss of 200 jobs in the current economic climate is devastating to any industry but none more so than the fishing industry which tends to be a generational one. We estimate these 200 jobs off shore translate into a further 600 on shore jobs which will be lost as a result of these vessels ceasing fishing. It is a sad sight to see these vessels tied to the pier knowing the men who have worked aboard them all their lives no longer have a place to work”.**

It should be noted that while these 15-18 metre vessels are now being placed in the same category as the 18-24 metre vessels for the purpose of these Regulations, they were unable to apply for Decommissioning in the Schemes run in 2008 and 2009 as these were only available to vessels over 18 metres..

ENDS