

INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL TUNA COMMISSION

90TH MEETING

La Jolla (USA)
27 June – 1 July 2016

PROPOSAL IATTC-90 I-1

SUBMITTED BY THE UNITED STATES

RESOLUTION ON IMPROVING OBSERVER SAFETY AT SEA

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

Rationale: Observer programs collect data essential to the functions of the Commission and the safety of observers is critical to their ability to perform their duties. There are no established requirements for safety equipment for IATTC observer programs and there is variability in these requirements for the national observer programs. The Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission adopted minimum standards to improve observer safety at sea at its meeting in December 2015.

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC):

Taking into account that observers collect data that is essential to the functions of the Commission and that the safety of observers is critical to their ability to perform their duties;

Recognizing that longline, purse seine, and transshipment vessels are required to carry observers under resolutions of the IATTC;

Concerned that there are no established safety equipment requirements for IATTC observer programs and there is variability in these requirements in the national observer programs;

Considering that consistent safety requirements should apply to all observers operating within the legal and institutional framework of the IATTC;

Agrees that:

1. All IATTC observer programs including the IATTC Regional Observer Program for transshipment vessels, the national observer programs for longline vessels, and any future observer program required by the IATTC shall ensure that observers will be provided before any

boarding for a trip with (1) an approved independent two-way communication satellite device, and (2) a waterproof personal lifesaving beacon.¹

2. All IATTC observer programs must have a designated officer or officers responsible for monitoring the signal from the approved independent two-way satellite communication device at all times.
3. All IATTC observer programs must have an established procedure for a designated officer or other authorized persons to initiate contact with the observer, the vessel, and, if necessary, the appropriate enforcement authority of the member or cooperating non-member with jurisdiction over the vessel; this procedure must clearly describe the steps that must be taken in the event of various emergencies.
4. This Resolution shall go into effect January 1, 2018.

¹ Noting that this may consist of a single device such as “Satellite Emergency Notification Device” or it may be a combination of an independent satellite-based system such as a Satellite phone plus a portable lifesaving beacon.