

Competent Authority 3rd Quarter Report

July–September 2021



Prepared by CA Team



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Introduction

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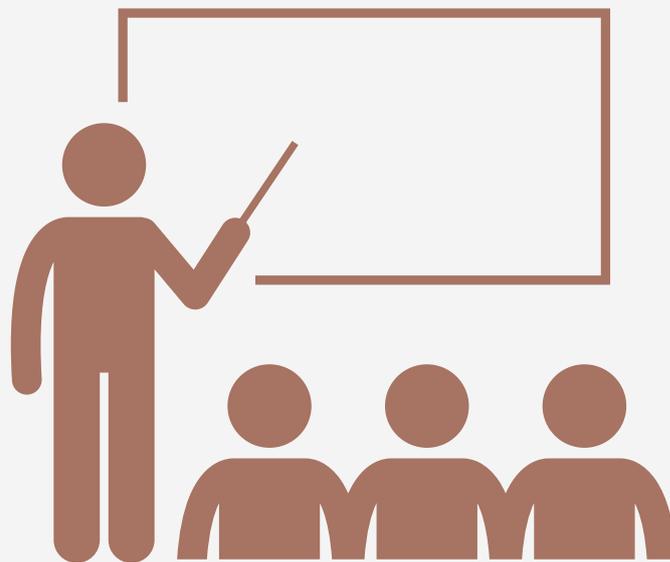
This report highlights Competent Authority undertakings for the 3rd quarter of 2021 (July-September). The last two quarters have resulted in the delivery of projects under the World Bank, including the milestone certification of the fish processing and export regulation. This quarter brought forth further training on the requirements of HACCP pre-requisite programs, catering to fishing vessel and new operators.

In pursuing authorization and accreditation of the RMI CA, the first process is for RMI (MIMRA) to initiate the process of listing. The process of listing will follow through with the response to the EU when RMI completes the questionnaires and submits to the EU for evaluation. The evaluation of these questionnaires will provide a pathway in the next phase of the RMI journey towards fulfilling the requirements for RMI CA accreditation.

Training and Workshops

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Training and workshops continue to play a key role in the Competent Authority in order to provide the knowledge and skills necessary for both the CA officers and the industry. Participation in these workshops and training provides an opportunity for the CA team to collaborate with other CAs and stakeholders on related areas of added value and benefit.



1st virtual global fisheries enforcement training workshop

The topic of this workshop was “Uncovering the Unknowns” in which participants from all around the globe cooperate to eliminate the U’s in Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing. The two-day workshop consisted of presentations by expert keynote speakers and panelists on how they deal with IUU fishing in their countries. The sessions also pointed out the cooperation between countries and the approach taken by each of their countries to combat IUU. The workshop allowed for global MCS practitioners to offer an exchange of information, for presenters to share the challenges they face, and for new and emerging MCS tactics and strategies to be presented. National/regional fisheries authorities were invited to present the following four themes: Cooperation and Partnerships; Risk Assessment and Analysis; Technology as an Enabler; Transparency. RMI Competent Authority officer Tatiana Shoniber listened in on the two-day workshop and was intrigued by the information provided by different countries on dealing with IUU. She was intrigued by the cooperative efforts that fisheries nations implement to protect their waters from IUU fishing. Tatiana is glad to have been a part of this workshop which in turn will help with her capacity building.

Training and Workshops

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Food Safety Certificate Ceremony

After a two-month-long training with Helder Silva on Food Safety training under the World Bank Project, the Competent Authority Officers, along with industry members, celebrated with a certificate ceremony. The ceremony was held to commemorate the participants' hard work and dedication to the training despite their busy schedules. Helder Silva was present during the certificate ceremony via Zoom, where MIMRA Director Glen Joseph and Helder Silva made commentaries and certificates awarded to all the participants.



Training and Workshops

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Reimaanlok Program

Occasionally , Competent Authority officers are able to extend their capacities to other MIMRA divisions in need of help. Ms.Lyla Lemari (CA officer) joined the Coastal Division dive team to do a marine survey at Namdrik Atoll. On July 10, 2021, a MIMRA marine survey team was dispatched to Namdrik Atoll to conduct Step 7: Monitoring, Evaluation & Adaptive Management, of the Reimaanlok process (Marine Survey Assessment). The goal was to revisit the locations (inner and outer reef) of the previous study to monitor any changes to fish abundance, benthic substrates, and coral composition. The data will be analyzed and compared to Namdrik Atoll's previous baseline study done in 2013. After surveying the targeted sites, the team went on shore to meet with the local community for consultation, and to brief the local council and community on what was found in the inner and outer reef compared to previous dive surveys. The experience is a exemplary showcasing of the unique marine environments in the Marshall Islands, and how said environments can change over periods of time.

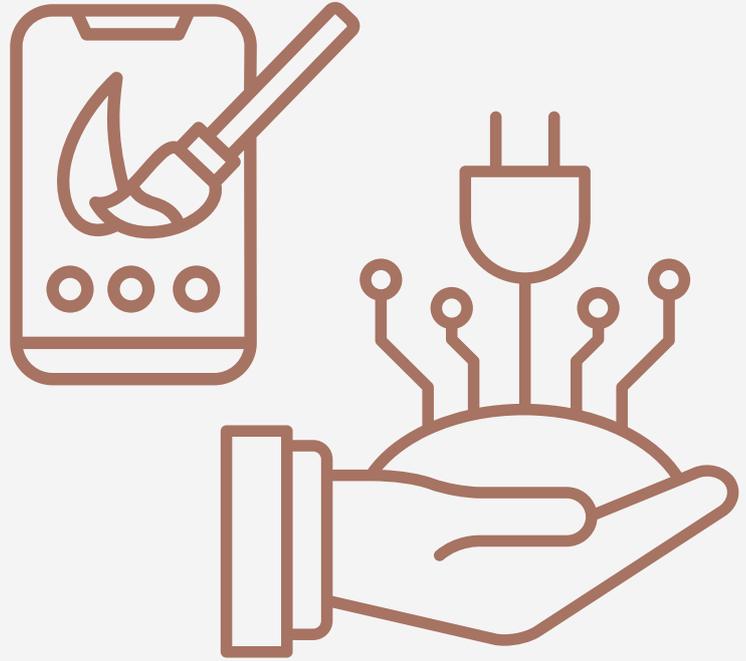


Training and Workshops

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Canva Training

Tatiana was invited to participate in a Digital Design Training to further enhance her publishing and designing skills for the Competent Authority quarterly newsletters and reports. The training, coordinated by FFA, demonstrated the capabilities of the Canva platform, which is an online platform used for digital designs to make presentations, flyers, logos, posters, videos, reports, etc. This training had participants from various fisheries administrations across the Pacific, many of whom were communication officers interested in creating designs for their sector and portraying messages in an eye-catching way. Tatiana, an already established user of Canva, was able to hone her craft through this workshop and conclusively will implement the practices she learned for the Competent Authority newsletters and reports.

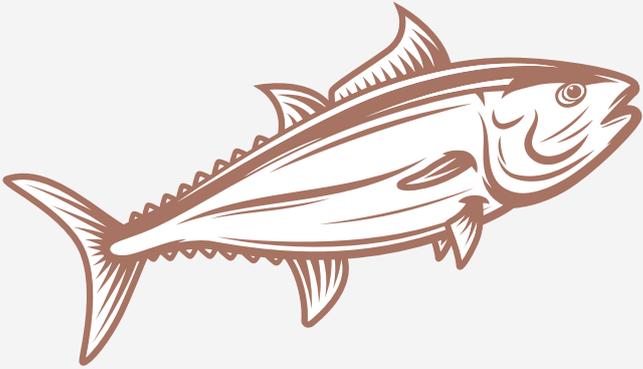


Electronic Monitoring Presentation

Tatiana sat in on FFA's Electronic Monitoring for longline vessels to understand how longline vessels are being monitored. She was tasked to understand MIMRA's systems to get an idea for implementing a Competent Authority module. FFA countries are still setting arrangements with long lines to use EM technologies. RMI has begun trialing a system for photographic evidence for EM records and data management. Implementations are still in the pipeline and will continue forward. Tatiana was able to better understand how the Competent Authority can use the information provided by EM data as longlines are one of the main targets of inspection by the Competent Authority.

Training and Workshops

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Science Committee Meeting

The Oceanic division of MIMRA was invited to join in on the WCPFC SC17. The WCPFC SC17 workshop had numerous agenda items, many of which were scientifically-intensive information interpreted for a managerial understanding. After taking the Stock Assessment Workshop, Tatiana was able to understand the graphs presented by the Science Committee. She found it interesting that SPC has 3,000+ models to conduct studies on stocks. The participating countries' various opinions of the information provided by the SC proved beneficial towards gaining details.

PNA Compliance-FIMS

The Competent Authority Officers learned about the FIMS compliance module on the FIMS system. The PNA members are able to access this module and share information regarding incidents that happened in their waters. The module alerts members of any illegal activities conducted by a vessel, and is a good tool for legal officers to notify others of detentions or penalties.

RMI CDS Meeting

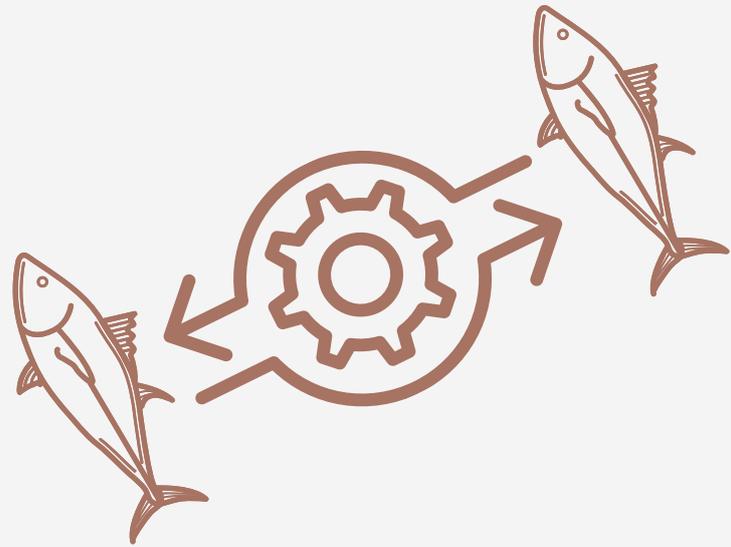
The Competent Authority division held a zoom meeting with FFA to discuss e-reporting and CDS tools used by MIMRA. CA Officer Tatiana reported on functions of tools such as FIMS, TUFMAN 2, RIMF 2, and MIMFIS. Ms. Yaniba, FFA CDS Technical advisor, had a preview of the tools utilized by MIMRA and provided feedback and comments on where gaps exist and where further work will be required on the CA/CDs front going forward when the RMI industries expand to the EU market. FFA stands ready to assist RMI CA and Oceanic on related work on the CDS front going forward.

Training and Workshops

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RMI Virtual Food Systems Summit Dialogue

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Commerce invited MIMRA to the RMI virtual Food Systems Summit Dialogues on Green Foods, Nutrition, Health & Food Safety, and Blue foods. MIMRA was set out to present on the topic of Blue foods and the Competent Authority division briefed to the participants of their role in the RMI's food system. The purpose of the dialogue was to examine if there is access to safe and nutritious food, sustainable consumption patterns, nature-positive production, advance equitable livelihoods, and resilience to vulnerabilities, shock, and stress. The Competent Authority ensures food safety through inspections, desk audits, water testing, organoleptic testing & histamine testing. The Competent Authority and the Ministry of Health must ensure operators or vendors exercise food safety measures, for the quality and safety of the fish products distributed for sale.

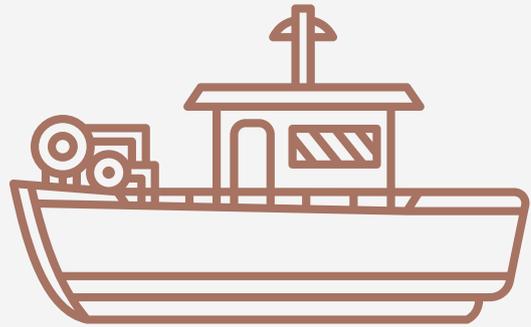
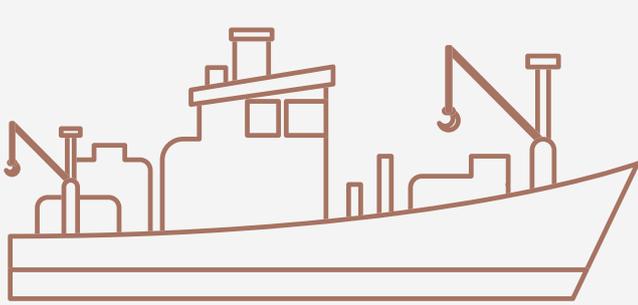


Fish4ACP Zoom

The Competent Authority had a zoom meeting with Maria Sahib, a consultant under FISH4ACP project, on the CA areas of activity that can be accommodated under the CA upgrading strategy. The CA relayed to Maria several suggestions, including training and capacity building for CA officers and for the industry, which will continue to be an ongoing effort as the CA and the industry progresses.

Training and Workshops

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Industry & Fishing Vessel Operators Training

The Competent Authority hosted a three-day workshop for the industry on GMP/SSOP/HACCP for fishing vessels and extended scope for new RMI operators to understand food safety requirements. Dexter Martinez, PPF Quality Assurance Manager, was tasked by the CA to deliver the training due to his many years of experience working with the fish processing industry. The workshop provided concepts of good manufacturing, hygiene, and sanitation practices and HACCP principles, and how to train vessel operators/crew in implementing requirements towards the concepts. The training also provided tours of two Majuro processing facilities: Marshall Islands Fishing Venture Inc., and Pan Pacific Foods Inc., which helped participants visualize the concepts taught to them e.g. GMP/SSOP/HACCP implementation in factories. In turn, the industry can create these documented procedures for vessels and intended operators to start the process of meeting export market requirements for those intending to export to the EU. Participants from Pan Pacific Foods Inc., Marshall Islands Fishing Venture Inc., Pacific International Inc., MISCO Market, Koo's Fishing Company Ltd., & MIMRA Outer Islands Fish Market Center, participated in this workshop to move forward in RMI's efforts towards exporting to the EU market initiatives and improvement of overall RMI food safety and export certification standards.



Training and Workshops

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Participation in the International Atomic Expert Assistance (IAEA) Training Workshop and Bilateral Conference

The CA participated in the Virtual Bilateral Consultations for the Marshall Islands on the Technical Cooperation Programme in Asia and the Pacific on the Occasion of the 65th Regular Session of the IAEA General Conference. The issues highlighted and discussed in this General conference are;

- i) Progress of the ongoing Technical Programme (2020-2021): implementation, national coordination, monitoring, and completion;
- ii) The proposed TC Programme for the cycle 2022-2023: covering national, regional, and interregional projects;
- iii) Strategic technical cooperation activities, including the national radiation safety infrastructure development as well as the status of the Country Programme Framework (CPF); and
- iv) Other matters of mutual interests.

1. Introductory Remarks was delivered

Ms. Jane Gerardo-Abaya

Director

Division for Asia and the Pacific

Department of Technical Cooperation

1. Opening Remarks delivered by

Mr. Gashaw Wolde

Section Head

Division for Asia and the Pacific

Department of Technical Cooperation

1. Remarks from RMI delivered by

Ms. Anjanette Kattil

Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

RMI

The CA also participated in the training workshop on Developing National Radioactivity Monitoring Capacity. Topics of training and discussion were;

- Radioecology
- In-situ Caesium Extraction from seawater
- Radiation dose calculations
- Stakeholder engagement
- The fish market monitoring program

The training was delivered by Arpana, Australian Radiation Protection, and Nuclear Safety Agency. The RMI national coordinators were Ms. Candice Guavis and Mr. Tuvuki Ketedromo. The training focused on the types of radiation, sources of radiation, and dose calculation including demonstration of caesium from seawater. Further work will involve a fish marketing monitoring program for the CA to work on sampling and submission of its fish for testing.

Official Control Undertakings

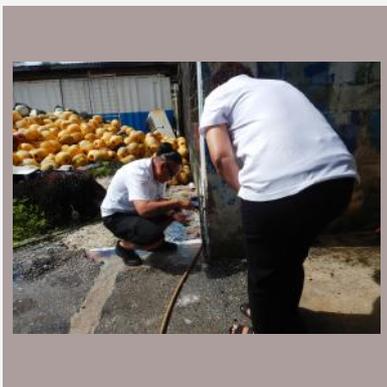
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Official control activities are the core of the CA activities, thus mentoring, training and practical undertaking is important to provide the CA with real-time information on the status of the facilities, products, and services used to ensure safe food production. These activities were spread out during the quarter, highlighted below:

MIFV & PPF Water Testing, Organoleptic, and Histamine Testing



Aquina and Tatiana conducted water test sampling, organoleptic, and histamine testing at Marshall Island Fishing Venture Inc. and Pan Pacific Foods Inc. The water sampling was conducted in different areas of the facilities with samples from five sampling sites from each facility. Organoleptic testing was conducted at MIFV during live operation of fish handling. The CA team observed the different methodologies MIFV and PPF used for histamine testing, and noted the differences such as the longer duration in using the fluorometric method than the Elisa method for histamine testing. All results were within required levels, even reaching very low histamine levels.



PII Inspection & Water Testing

Lyla and Aquina carried out water sampling on three different sites at the PII containerized dock site and submitted it to EPA for testing. As a CA, it is important to know the quality and the safety of water used in contact with fish. No Organoleptic evaluation was carried out as there were no offloading and containerization at the time of the visit.



Development of the Sampling and Inspection Plan

Lyla and Tatiana were tasked to provide a sampling and inspection plan, drawn from the National Control Plan as a means of having a clear schedule detailing the company, type of activity, how often the activity is carried out, and mechanism to execute. This will form part of the work alongside electronic monitoring and reporting.

Projects

100%

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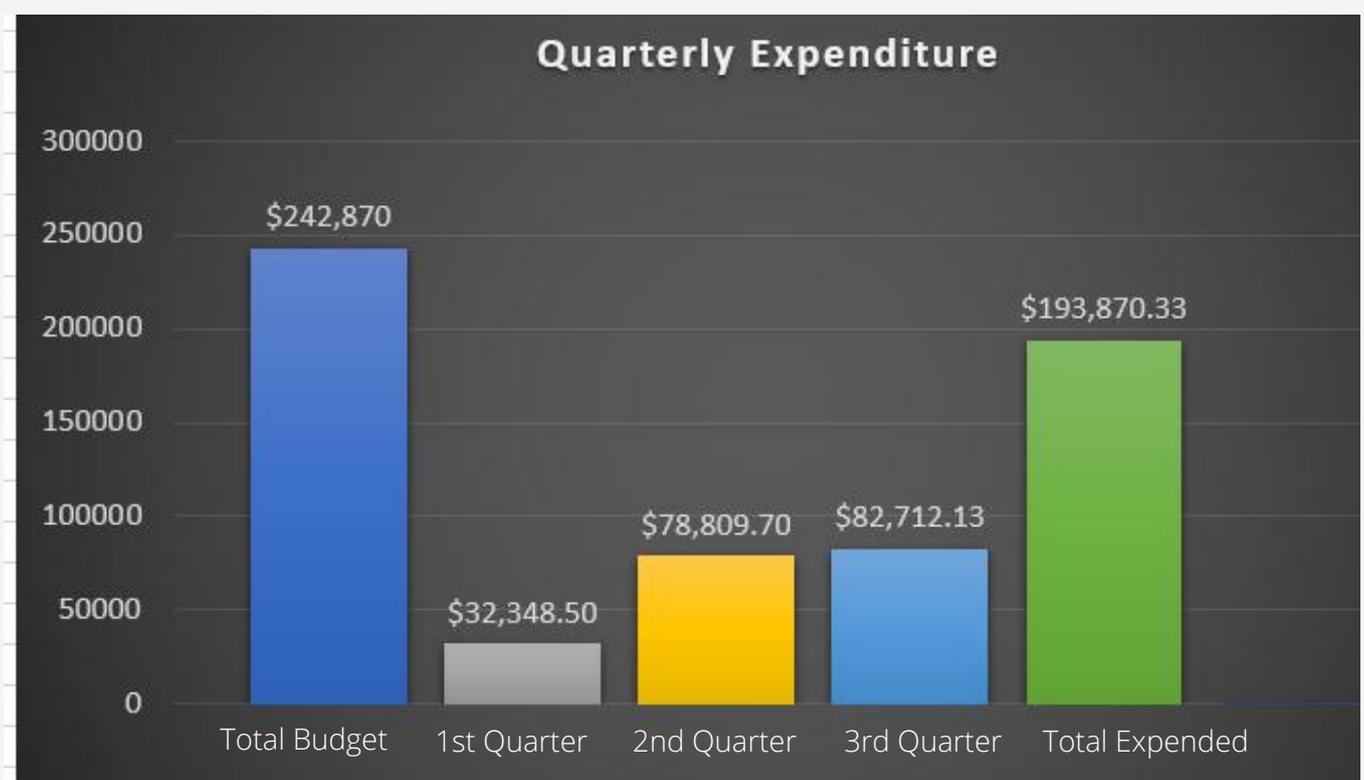
World Bank CA Projects

All World Bank funded CA projects components under PROP have concluded with 100% completion.

Budget

The CA budget under the World Bank has concluded for the first phase of the project. As of this report, eighty (80%) percent of its budget has been expended. The second phase of funding for the CA under the World Bank is yet to be determined in the next phase of the project.

Activity	Budget	1st QTR	2nd QTR	3rd QTR	Total Expended
Lab assessment	\$ 23,000.00	\$ 7,825.62	\$ 7,825.62	\$ 4,930.50	\$ 20,581.74
CA Regulation Review	\$ 22,545.00	\$ -	\$ 7,903.00	\$ 9,637.00	\$ 17,540.00
Protocol/Standards Review	\$ 15,325.00	\$ 1,295.80	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,295.80
CA Workshops	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 6,484.13	\$ 3,356.52	\$ -	\$ 9,840.65
CA Auditor Training	\$ 12,000.00	\$ -	\$ 8,750.32	\$ 8,285.50	\$ 17,035.82
CA Attachements	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 8,060.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 8,060.00
Food Safety Training and Workshop	\$ 90,000.00	\$ 8,682.95	\$40,045.29	\$40,445.13	\$ 89,173.37
Lab Scoping Consultancy	\$ 40,000.00		\$10,928.95	\$19,414.00	\$ 30,342.95
Total	\$ 242,870.00	\$ 32,348.50	\$ 78,809.70	\$ 82,712.13	\$ 193,870.33



Quarter Review Status

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Item No.	Area of Program	Implementation Status	Comments
1	Meetings and Participation IAEA General Conference for the ASIA and Pacific - Fish4ACP Zoom Meetings - RMI Food Safety Summit Dialogue - PNA compliance-FIMS meet - Science Committee meetings - Electronic Monitoring - Food safety Certificate Ceremony, acknowledging those that have participated in the two-month food safety training under the world bank project	100%	General meetings and participation in collaboration with other relevant stakeholders

Quarter Review Status

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Item No.	Area of Program	Implementation Status	Comments
2	<p>Training and Workshop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Industry and CA GHP, SSOP, and HACCP basics training - FFA Regional CA Training - IEA Radiology training under Arpanza - Tatiana's Digital Canva training to assist Newsletter and reports presentation - 	100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Basic HACCP, GMP, and SSOP training was carried out to new operators and particularly the vessels operators as well as a sit-in by the CA officers to understand the concepts and what is required of the operator and the CA role in all these. - Regional CA Training was also carried out three days a week over the course of two weeks involving all CAs. Training delivered by Cushla Hogarth and Jope Tamani. -Radiology training by Arpanza (Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency) was also provided.
3	<p>Laboratory</p> <p>EPA lab assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Service level Agreement/Letter of Designation with external labs 	50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assessment of the proposed labs that will be designated by the CA to carry out testing of fishery products while waiting for MIMRA lab have been done. However, the designated administrative arrangements are yet to be concluded. - This process is expected for completion in the 4th quarter of 2021.

Quarter Review Status

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Item No.	Area of Program	Implementation Status	Comments
4	Stakeholder Awareness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Customs - Industry 	50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is ample Industry consultation, but now for the need to work on other stakeholder consultation like customs to bring awareness for the market access and CA requirements - Also noting the awareness to the bilateral fishing vessels partners on new RMI CA requirements. - This is anticipated for completion in the 4th Quarter 2021
5	Official Control Undertakings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sampling of water, products, and organoleptic assessment - Sampling and inspection plans completed - Electronic forms - Inspection 	50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No inspection was carried out this quarter except the water and product testing. - Delays in completing electronic inspection forms, in the trialing stage - Sampling and inspection plans were drawn up but implementation was not carried out.
6	EU Questionnaire <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finalization of the Questionnaire - Submission of the Questionnaire to the EU 	100%	<p>EU Questionnaires were completed and submitted to the EU.</p>

Quarter Review Status

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Item No.	Area of Program	Implementation Status	Comments
7	CA Projects Under World Bank - 3X packages	100%	All delivered and project closed
8	Records Management and Files - Inspection Records/reviewed and up to date - Staffing records of training up to date including CVs.	80%	- No inspection for this quarter - Staff files and all training and mentoring files to be updated.
9	Reports - Quarterly newsletter - Quarterly report	100%	EU Questionnaires were completed and submitted to the EU.
10	CA Admins -Team meetings - CA admin purchases	80%	- No Team meetings were held this quarter 2021. - Most CA admin items have been purchased except for the field thermometer and chlorine test kit, field hats, and certification stamps.
	Overall Performance	73%	Performance for this quarter is at 73%

Summary of CA Undertakings

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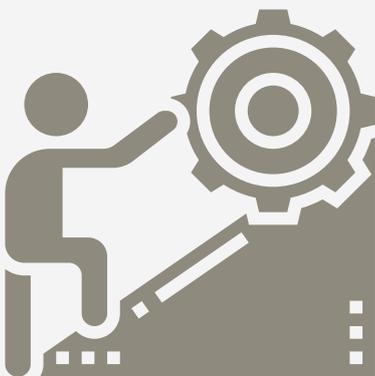
Training & Workshops	Official Control Undertakings	Reports	Meetings & Participation
4	3	3	7



Achievements

Two of the CA milestone achievements in this quarter are the submission of the EU questionnaires and the conclusion of the 3x packages for the world bank projects.

Also noteworthy is the certification of the fish processing and export regulation in the last quarter.



Challenges

- Setbacks in some areas related to the completion of the CA electronic forms include delay in the development of the CA database, as well as work on the CDS and customs front related to the integration of the CA work collaboration. This will be progressed in the fourth quarter of 2021.
- Delays in testing results from the only testing lab in RMI, as no samples can currently be sent overseas due to Covid-19.

Recommendations

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With the submission of the RMI EU Questionnaires for the process of listing to export to EU, preparation must now be done to answer queries the EU will have or more information that they will require to enable their evaluation.

Customs and Bilateral fishing partners presentations or meetings need to be expedited, including work on the CA central database linking Customs on imports and exports and on catch certification.

Official advise to the industry on the transitional period for the Fish Processing and Export Regulations and the requirements pertaining to the transitional period and process after the transition has ended.

Sampling and Inspection to be continued in the next quarter as an important component of the CA work plan and schedule.

Continued mentoring for CA officers on HACCP Food safety systems and its processes.

Acknowledgements

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2021

MIMRA Management and the Board

Prop World Bank Team

Fisheries Industry

Competent Authority Team

We thank you for your continued support in our efforts to establish the Competent Authority Division.

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