Remote Electronic Monitoring (REM) in Pelagic fishing

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Sustainable Fisheries Management

- A key aim of fisheries management is ensure that fish stocks are managed sustainably and responsibly. Many of the rules and regulations we have in place are intended to deliver this.

- Monitoring and enforcement are a key component of fisheries management. We have a range of existing tools, including observers, VMS, aerial surveillance, Marine Protection Vessels etc

- As our management evolves, our monitoring tools also need to evolve.

- REM is a proven tool that can support multiple outcomes:
  - Compliance and Enforcement
  - Scientific evidence
  - Marine Spatial planning and decision making

Scotland's Fisheries Management Strategy 2020-2030

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Delivering confidence and accountability in our seafood products

- Pelagic fishing tends to be known as a clean fishery – low levels of bycatch and specific targeting of species

- The issues that exist between the landing obligation and mixed (usually whitefish) fisheries, don't tend to occur in the pelagic fishery

- In 2024, the Scottish Parliament passed a law requiring all pelagic vessels fishing in Scottish waters, and all Scottish pelagic vessels wherever they fish, to carry REM on board

- We are currently in a 'lead-in' period, with vessels being kitted out with equipment, and system test trips underway

- From March 2026, the mandatory requirement fully kicks in

REM

Key components:
- Cameras (CCTV)
- GPS
- Winch sensors
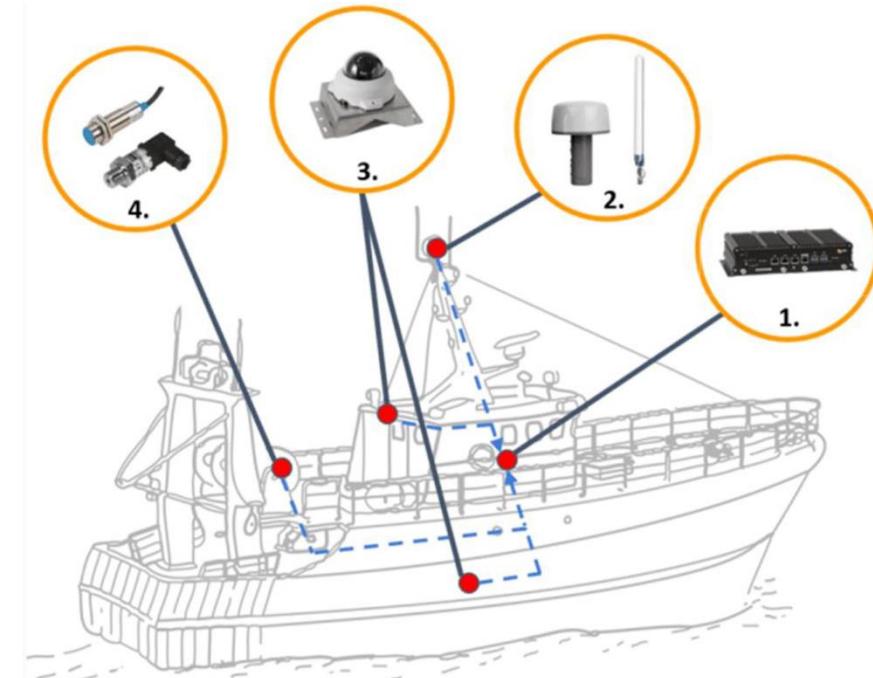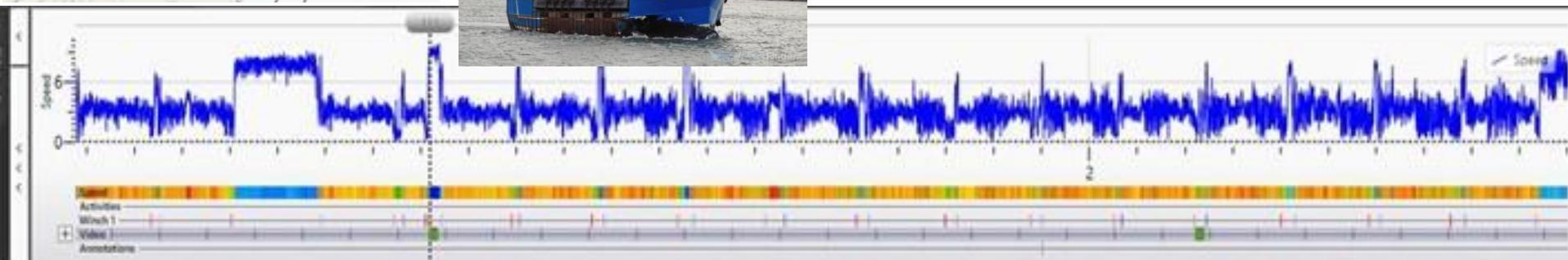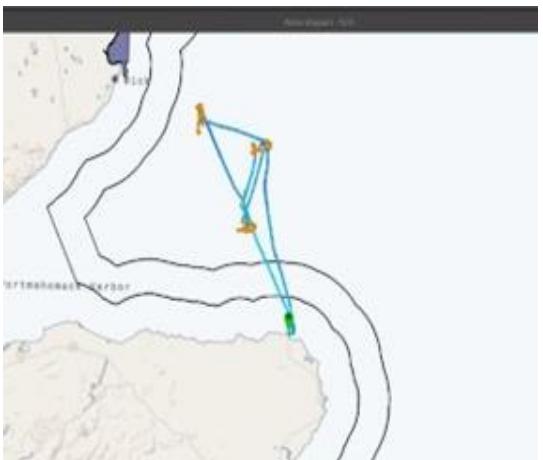
- Improve fishing data to help the fishing industry
- Confidence and accountability for industry, Government, consumers

Key considerations and challenges

- New technology, we are still learning and the technology is still evolving

- Industry buy-in can be difficult but the end product is much improved if industry can input their expertise

- Scotland is a first mover, but going forward need to ensure that we are joining up with others – interoperability of systems is important

- REM doesn't solve everything, still need to have sensible and workable regulations in place

- REM can mean different things, it's important that it's used proportionately and that the components used reflect the monitoring needs. There is no one size fits all.