

NIFCA RISK ASSESSMENT MATRIX

MARCH 2026

Objective:

The aim of the Risk Assessment Matrix is to systematically evaluate and manage risks that may impact the Authority’s ability to fulfil its statutory duties, particularly those outlined in the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. By plotting risks based on their likelihood and potential impact, the matrix serves as a visual and strategic tool to prioritise attention and resources toward the most critical threats. It enables NIFCA to classify risks into four categories (acceptable, manageable, serious, and very severe), each with corresponding responses ranging from continued monitoring to the implementation of immediate corrective action. Ultimately, the matrix supports informed decision-making, promotes transparency and accountability, and ensures the sustainability of marine resource management within the district.

NIFCA Risk Assessment Colour Code:

Once risks have been graded, they may then be reflected on a risk matrix, which acts as a useful aid to provide focus on key risk areas. By plotting impact and likelihood on the matrix, an assessment of the overall risk can be made. NIFCA’s risk matrix is as follows:

Risk classification:

- **Acceptable:** risks where any action to further reduce the level of risk would be inefficient, i.e. the cost in time or resource outweigh any potential impact of the risk. Such risks include infrequent events with low impact. These risks are being effectively managed, and are coloured green on the matrix, scored as 1-3.
- **Manageable:** risks which can be reduced within a reasonable timescale, in a cost-effective manner. Any mitigating actions must be monitored and recorded. Manageable risks are coloured yellow on the matrix, scored as 4-7.
- **Serious:** risks which have a serious impact, and detrimental effect on the achievement of objectives. Action plans should be developed to reduce the level of residual risk and reviewed periodically. Serious risks are shown as orange on the matrix, scored as 8-11.
- **Very severe:** risks which could have a potential disastrous effect of the organisation without immediate comprehensive action to reduce the level of risk. Very severe risks are those on the matrix coloured red, scored as 12 or more.



Review:

This document is reviewed twice a year by a working group comprising the Chief Officer, Finance Officer, Admin Officer and Lead Officers for Environmental and Enforcement. The document was introduced in 2010 and has been reviewed twice yearly ever since.

Review date	9 th March 2026
Reviewed by	Chief Officer (CO) Mark Southerton, Finance Officer (FO) Julian Sutton, Admin Officer (AO) Emma Cosimini, Lead IFCO Environmental (LIFCO Env) Alex Aitken, Lead IFCO Enforcement (LIFCO Enf) Nick Weir
Next review due	September 2026

1. Health & Safety Risks

These risks relate to maintaining statutory required/best practice for health and safety and mitigation of incidents at work. Further Actions which require more immediate response are highlighted in blue.

Ref	Responsibility	Risk	Controls	Monitoring Process	Further Action Required	L	I	S
1a	CO LEO (enf) LEO (env)	Inadequate management of health and safety of staff leading to an incident.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health & Safety Policy in place sets out the overall commitment to ensure the management of health & safety is furthered Trained staff in the management of Health and Safety holding IOSH and NEBOSH qualification. Appropriate staff training for all IFCO's with H&S induction and familiarisation training, mandatory health and safety training for sea going duties, refreshed periodically in line with codes of practice. Safety and vessel emergency operation drills routinely undertaken. Competence and development training supporting all NIFCA workstreams. Policies in place covering the use of vehicles, vessels and other higher risk assets and operations. Risk assessments and Standard Operating Procedures along with safety briefings and toolbox talks prior to marine surveys or compliance patrols. Reporting processes in place covering Authority reporting internal near miss and accident and RIDDOR reporting First Aid provision in place for at sea activities, Office provision as well as vehicle. Fire risk assessment and provisions in place. COSHH lockers for the storage of chemicals at the office PPE provision in place for all workstream requirements. Have implemented a policy for non-employees operating from NIFCA vessels to ensure everyone is aware of what they can/ cannot do onboard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly safety equipment-checks take at both office and onboard all marine assets ADT contract provide access inspection; fire alarm & emergency lighting provision will be moved to First Stop Fire. Annual PAT testing and 5 year electrical inspection (2024) Gas heating and boiler annual inspection Northeast Fire provide fire extinguisher service for office and all vessels. StatX fire suppression system annual inspection LOLER inspection carried out on St Aidan for all lifting equipment MCA certifying Authority annual inspection of all the Authority vessels Monthly SMT meetings to raise issues relating to H&S Reporting quarterly the Authority All IFCO's required to have ML5 Seafarers certificate or ENG1 Annual Occupational Health screening (every 2 years) for office staff Review near miss & accident reports Monitor Officer capability re. 4x4 driving and requirement for future training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IOSH training for LEO (Environmental) & refresher for LEO (Enforcement). First Aid training required for all Officers. To consider whether to join NW IFCA in the Safety Climate Tool. Online manual handling sessions for all new starters and annually, and job specific training prior to season starting. 	1	3	7
1b	CO	An aggrieved member of the public becomes abusive leading to an incident in the field.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building relationships, using negotiating and influencing skills. Majority of time enforcement work conducted in pairs. Body cameras and vehicle cameras are used to record video/audio when out on patrol and may be used to gather evidence of incidents. If lone working is required, the Officer will text or ring in at the beginning and end of the day to notify their line manager or designated duty officer/member of staff that they have started or 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reporting to Chief Officer and Lead IFCOs and meeting of the Authority. Near misses as well as accidents & incidents are recorded and reviewed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To renew conflict resolution training. To ask for information on deescalating a situation when lone working and/or contacting police. Best practice. 	2	4	12

			finished. Conflict resolution training has also been given to IFCOs. Access to intelligence to flag up markers on individuals.						
1c	CO	An aggrieved stakeholder becomes abusive leading to an incident – with an office-based member of staff and general office security.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above plus: building relationships, using negotiating and influencing skills. The Authority’s premises has improved CCTV and electronic access providing extra security It is general practice to ensure a minimum of 2 members of staff to be in the office at any time where practicable, the gate can be locked when only one person is in the building. The front door closing system is monitored by staff and reported to MS if it malfunctions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reporting to Chief Officer and the Committee. 		1	2	3	
1d	CO	Unauthorised access to the building via unlocked door/ finding lost keys resulting in unattended visitors or theft of assets. Vehicles damaged goods taken from carpark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-closing door with entry code on the front entrance of the building. Doors are kept locked in the garage unless an Officer(s) is using the room. The building alarm is connected to ADT, if activated ADT will make contact with the designated Officers. Improved CCTV remote access, signage reporting to reception, mesh privacy screen on railings. Additional container purchased to store equipment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reporting to Chief Officer and the Authority. 		1	2	3	
1e	CO LEO (Enf)	Staff unknowingly being followed home by an aggrieved stakeholder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reporting all incidents to the police. Logging dates and times of any vehicles known to be regularly driving past/stationing themselves outside of the NIFCA. Fence privacy screening around the building. 			4	4	16	

2. Financial Risks

These risks relate to all NIFCA finance including budgetary controls, financial transparency and integrity, and personnel management of finance. Further Actions which require more immediate response are highlighted in blue.

Ref	Responsibility	Risk	Controls	Monitoring Process	Further Action Required	L	I	S
2a	CO FO	Accusation of an officer or staff member of dishonesty or fraud leading to loss of reputation of the Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Authority governance including Codes of Conduct in place and all employees have had to complete a declaration of interests form. Financial Regulations and Procedures handbook, including system requiring Officer and Chief Officer approval. Receipts issued for all donations; register kept for transparency. Disciplinary process. Installation of online banking has increased security. The Chief Officer and Senior Management have Authority Barclaycards, usage checked by Chief Officer and the Finance Officer, and all expenditure is reported to the Authority Finance Officer. Card reader increases financial security. Sage 50 has been installed and that will continue to improve accuracy and reduce risk of errors in financial management. A policy for the card reader has been written, by those who use it. Enforcement officers have BPSS security clearance. A. Aitken N. Weir have been added as bank signatories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing monitoring by Chief Officer and Finance Officer. Annual Internal Audit. Admin Officer and Chief Officer added as signatory. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep situation under ongoing review. To introduce a Subsistence allowance and travel policy to ensure purchases are in line with HMRC regulations or, if above, are accurately declared. 	1	3	7
2b	FO reporting to the CO & Finance Committee	Inadequate funding leading to overspending or reduced level of service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Authority precepts upon Northumberland County Council (83.37%) and North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council (16.63%). Should funding be reduced, the Authority would seek to cut back in certain areas and renegotiate upon the level of service provided. Contingency planning between Chief Officer, Finance Officer and Chair has been previously undertaken in that regard and reported to the Authority. . Budget reporting by Finance Officer to Chief Officer as well as meeting at least once a week between Finance Officer and Chief Officer. Under the Marine and Coastal Access Act, throughout the life of IFCA's, additional funding has been awarded by DEFRA for New Burdens which is confirmed to continue until the end of 2026-27. General reserves have increased to be kept at a recommended minimum of 20% of annual budget Base costs and overheads have increased but rigorous planning of the budget continues and there is compliance with Audit recommendations. In addition, the Authority's patrol vessels St. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finance Officer reporting to Chief Officer, and to the Quarterly Meeting of the Authority. Chief Officer is part of the MAFCO group (comprising Chief Officers from all the IFCA's and Defra) that has been (amongst other things) reviewing the position regarding the continuation of New Burdens Funding and additional financial support for the next spending review. 		3	3	13

			<p>Aidan and RIB Robert Arckless & TT St Aidan brings increased efficiency and savings in terms of running costs and maintenance as well as increasing chartering opportunities and thereby income because of increased capability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic budget increases, as have occurred over the last few years, mitigate the risk of overspend or reduced level of service. • FMP/RDEL funding to support new national policy for FY 26/27 and expected MPA and Sustainable Development grant • Ringfencing financial obligations from the RDEL fund to match employment commitments. • AIFCA supported Spending Review bid up to 2029 submitted to Defra 					
2c	FO	<p>Inadequate financial and budgetary control leading to overspending</p> <p>Exposure to financial risks such as loss of savings during a banking crisis. Increase in charter income causing sales turnover to exceed threshold for VAT (90K) resulting in fines and loss of reputation if Authority is not registered for VAT.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial skills, qualifications and experience of finance officer and use of financial regulations. Members' scrutiny of financial reports provide a quarterly challenge. • Monthly (or more frequently if required) budget meetings between Finance Officer and Chief Officer. Contingency within annual budget. The Authority budget is prepared in detail with member input, with quarterly forecasts and detailed breakdowns of all heads of income and expenditure within the quarterly and annual accounts which are prepared by the Finance Officer working with the Chief Officer to keep spending within budget while monitoring income and Reserves levels. • Preparation for annual audit begins in the third quarter with the Audit Section at Northumberland County Council before the Audit itself the following spring/early summer. The Authority also has reserves to cover any major contingencies which may arise. • If JS sick could seek support from NCC or from a bookkeeping "temping" agency. N.W undertaking Payroll training. • NW and AA added as a signatory to allow backup checks of expenditure if Chief Officer absent for any length of time. • Savings accounts held with smaller banks (ie not "too big to fail") monitored to ensure that total savings at any one institution do not exceed the insured limit of £120k. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual audit and quarterly meetings plus regular liaison between Finance Officer and Chief Officer plus regular liaison with internal audit and members where necessary and Chief Officer where appropriate. • Finance Officer will continue to meet the Chief Officer and other colleagues as applicable to plan for audit and budget controls and consult the Northumberland County Council Internal Audit Team. 		1	2	3

3. Operational Risks

These risks relate to risks which may negatively impact the operational function of NIFCA, including relating to NIFCA vessels/vehicles and information gathering. Further Actions which require more immediate response are highlighted in blue.

Ref	Responsibility	Risk	Controls	Monitoring Process	Further Action Required	L	I	S
3a	CO LIFCO (enf)	Loss of boat, RIBs, vehicles, plant and equipment leading to inability to enforce byelaws and deliver service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vessels are maintained to high levels with routine preventative maintenance carried out Vessels are inspected annually and certified under workboat requirements. Both St Aidan engines have been reconditioned. PV and RIB insurance in place and at correct level - replacement policy in the event of fire or sinking, Mutual assistance could be sought through e.g. North Eastern IFCA and other organisations. Lead-in time for replacement new RIB is 2-3 months for hire, (but procurement and build likely to take years). Leasing during interim period best option. The Authority's existing RIB capability also means there is a supplementary vessel if the patrol boat is out of action. TT St Aidan has been coded and a trailer has giving NIFCA additional sea going ability. NIFCA 4x4 vehicle policy. Maintenance system in place for all vessels and vehicles, vehicle fleet has increased to 3 vehicles. Additional staff resource for vessel/ vehicle maintenance. High risk equipment have SOP for operations as well as separate insurance cover in the event of total loss 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reporting to Patrol Vessel Subcommittee if applicable, Watch Committee, RIB Procurement Subcommittee and main committee meetings of the Authority. Both St Aidan and Robert Arckless have diagnostic engine reporting to identify potential problems . Inspection and servicing of vehicles with SLA for two vehicles. Fuel samples recorded for St Aidan at each refuel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workboat 3 implications for the continued use of TT RIB and Robert Arckless, MBE. 	1	2	3
3b	CO	Intelligence not being securely processed and shared/ disseminated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MMO provided intel system and Authority has trained, prepared and experienced Intel Officers. Continual assistance from MMO Intel Team and MMO Ops Room. CLUE now in use across the enforcement team. MMO Learning Management System host Clue training - Ongoing liaison with the MMO & continue with training as necessary regarding Intel Project so IFCOs fully acquainted. Data Sharing Agreement with the Police including regulated access to PNC. Standard practice for security clearance of all new employees. All IFCOs have attended OSINT training. Officers have received extra training with MCSS from the MMO and resources have been made available for all staff. All enforcement IFCOs have BPSS security checks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intel Officers liaise with LEIFCO, CO, monthly TCG and can seek guidance from the MMO. 		1	4	11

3c	CO	IFCOs following incorrect procedures/ unprofessional conduct, resulting in wrongful action/ complaint.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEIFCO (Enforcement) attends National Inshore Maritime Enforcement Group, with remit to identify, develop and share best practice. • Enforcement IFCO's attend periodic AIFCA competent officer training . • Joint Training held with other agencies to share best practice. • The Authority seeks advise from a leading maritime solicitor to ensure changes in legislation are explored fully with appropriate training for staff. • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open communications between NIFCA and stakeholders to inform the Authority of problematic conduct. • Published complaints policy on Authority website. • DEFRA conduct and Ops report to inform Authority of performance. 		1	4	11
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4. Environmental Risks

These risks relate to fisheries, stock status, environmental degradation and other environmental risks management. Further Actions which require more immediate response are highlighted in blue.

Ref	Responsibility	Risk	Controls	Monitoring Process	Further Action Required	L	I	S
4a	CO LIFCO (Env) LIFCO (Enf)	Stocks collapse	<p>General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Risk Register in place, accounting for this risk Linked to annual stock reports for crab and lobster to support sustainability and nephrops surveys Suite of byelaws enforced by a dedicated NIFCA team Work under national FMPs <p>Potting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permit scheme in place for commercial and recreational fishers Pot limits and daily bag limits for recreational users Escape gaps required in recreational pots Conservation measures include prohibition on taking berried females, soft animals, or animal parts Minimum landing sizes for lobster, brown crab, velvet crab, and nephrops (gauges provided) Ongoing internal and CEFAS stock assessments Monthly catch returns feed into Fisheries Management Plans V-notch project restarted in 2024 Lobster MCRS has increased to 88mm. <p>Trawling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permit required across the full district Gear restrictions in place Monthly returns and landings closely monitored Main target species quota-managed by MMO Spatial restrictions and prohibited areas enforced <p>Dredging</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scallop dredging is fully prohibited in the NIFCA district <p>Hand Gathering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Routine activity monitoring throughout the district Code of conduct developed to reduce pressure on smaller periwinkles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring in place for key fisheries Work with Cefas to monitor key stocks Risk monitored in more detail and for each fishery in the Environmental Risk Register Officers have received training from Cefas for coastal health and monitoring for adverse die-off events – increased awareness in the team. 		1	4	11
4b		Degradation of environmentally sensitive areas due to fishing activity.	<p>NIFCA Byelaws</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NIFCA has a suite of byelaws aimed at conserving exploited stocks and habitats. These byelaws enable the regulation of fisheries interacting with sensitive areas. They are reviewed periodically to ensure continued protection. NIFCA can implement emergency byelaws in response to unforeseen risks. <p>MPA Assessments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MPA assessments have been carried out for all commercial feature-fishery interactions Monitoring and control plans are in place for all interactions, reviewed annually. Triggers for new or reassessments are in place through this process, including for new 		1	4	11

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NIFCA is fully engaged with Defra's Revised Approach to managing fisheries in European Marine Sites and has assessed most feature/fishery interactions. All red risk interactions have been addressed through management, and ongoing work aligns with national MPA legislation. <p>Monitoring & Control Plans</p> <p>These plans are reviewed annually to ensure activity remains below impact thresholds. If thresholds are breached, further assessments are triggered, potentially resulting in new management measures.</p> <p>Environmental Risk Register</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This register identifies potential risks to sensitive areas and informs where monitoring should be prioritised. It is developed alongside the Compliance and Enforcement Strategy to ensure targeted enforcement in key areas. <p>Annual Research Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The research plan brings together findings from all sources to guide the Environmental Team's work, address knowledge gaps, and continue monitoring. Research is carried out in collaboration with Newcastle University and Natural England. <p>Partnership Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This work is supported by Natural England and other stakeholders. 	<p>fishing activities or new information on the condition of the habitat.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk monitored in more detail in the Environmental Risk Register 				
4c	CO LIFCO (Env)	Fisheries in the District impacted by the activities of developers/ non-fishing industry. Insufficient time to fully consider environmental impact assessments for inshore development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NIFCA is a statutory consultee in the Marine Licence process for marine area plans or projects requiring a licence. A dedicated officer reviews licence applications, summarises them, and consults with the Environmental Team, Chief Officer, and NIFCA members as needed. The Environmental Team provides input and agreement on consultation responses. NIFCA works alongside other consultees such as Natural England and the Environment Agency. The process may involve meetings with applicants and the Marine Management Organisation (MMO). NIFCA maintains an Environmental Risk Register for the district, which is regularly reviewed. IFCOs sit on the Local Standing Environmental Group (LSEG). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set process for responding to consultations, can obtain further information from developers if required Higher risk consultations circulated to members for comment IFCA/MMO liaison meeting to discuss key issues relating to marine licences Meetings with other statutory regulators (NE/EA) where required 		1	3	7
4d	CO	Climate change and inshore fisheries plus Authority carbon footprint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NIFCA climate change policy in development. This lists areas where NIFCA can reduce energy consumption, carbon footprint, and waste. All staff/Officers have undertaken climate change training and we are now logging data for carbon footprint analysis. NIFCA are also reviewing how to incorporate climate change impacts into fisheries management and how climate change will impact the local fishing industry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Climate Change and Energy Use policy will be kept under review once developed. Metrics such as NIFCA's carbon footprint will be calculated and monitored. Keep up to date with Coastal Health and Livelihoods national project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue policy development and review. 	2	2	6

4e	CO & Enviro team	Failure to properly fulfil responsibility including role in respect of European Marine Site, Marine Conservation Zones,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close liaison with Defra and other IFCA's including in respect of MPAs, Technical Advisory Group, Chief Officers Group and Association of IFCA's . • Strong communication between officers particularly Environmental IFCOs and Chief Officer and with Authority members. • Regular meetings and communication between the Environmental team and Natural England, Northumberland Marine Nature Partnership. Maintain relationship with the University for project work. Full liaison with Natural England and the Marine Management Organisation nationally. • Continue to keep under review the outputs from stakeholder meetings and online consultations. • Regular monitoring of MPAs including SPAs, SACs and MCZs in the district. Continue work for EMS Revised Approach to Fisheries Management to complete all MPA assessments and update M and C plans. Maintain awareness of evolution of work in MPAs. MCZ management measures have been implemented. • Review management in Coquet to St Mary's MCZ in line with the conclusions of the assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular discussions between the Authority Environmental Team and Chief Officer and also particularly with Natural England/Authority member and MNP Implementation Officer and reporting upon meetings to the Authority. • Technical and Scientific meetings of officers and members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intertidal assessments are currently outstanding. 	1	3	7
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5. Governance Risks

These risks relate to NIFCA memberships, partnership working, national and local policy, staff management and impacts of statutory governance changes. Further Actions which require more immediate response are highlighted in blue.

Ref	Responsibility	Risk	Controls	Monitoring Process	Further Action Required	L	I	S
5a	CO reporting to the Watch Committee	Failure to regulate in accordance with legislation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membership of Association of IFCA's, Chief Officer Group meetings, MAFCO and networking through other IFCA's, updates from Parliament, DEFRA and SAGB. Chief Officer analysis with advice from Lead Enforcement and Environmental IFCO's with updates from NIMEG and TAG. Admin staff scanning the internet on a regular basis. Internal communication framework. Complete required MPA Assessments (HRAs and MCZ for all feature/ fishery interactions), follow any resultant conclusions & identify appropriate regulation. Regulate under national legislation for MPAs. Full consultation including with the MMO is undertaken and also with Natural England, particularly re Habitats Regulations and other stakeholders. Close/joint working with the MMO. Access to legal advice from Andrew Jackson solicitors. Knowledge and industry experience within membership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rota meetings. Close working with Admin staff. Staff meetings. Quarterly reporting to Committee of the Authority. Senior IFCO's of the Authority now attend the MMO's TCG meetings and TAG meetings and NIMEG. AIFCA, COG and MAFCO meetings attended by Chief or Lead Officers. Continue the implementation/ development of monitoring & control plans & monitor potential/ actual consequences of Fisheries Act. 		2	3	10
5b	CO LIFCOs	DEFRA or MMO objects to proposed new byelaw leading to management difficulties experienced by the Authority.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In developing byelaw proposals, legal expertise is sought and reference made to Defra Guidance to IFCA's on making byelaws. On-going liaison with the MMO. Enhanced IFCA byelaw-making process (including specific provision for consultation and Impact Assessments) should reduce the risk of Defra or MMO objection to a proposed new byelaw. Close working with other IFCA's and Association regarding National (Boilerplate) Byelaws where these may be required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All relevant staff and the Authority. To maintain communication with the MMO/Defra and NIFCA legal advice. Progressing fixed engine byelaw. Reviewing management in Coquet to St Mary's MCZ. Ensure consultation progress is robust and adapted to capture all stakeholder's input. 		1	3	7
5c	CO	Failure to adequately manage the continuation of the NIFCA and all duties under the implementation of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IFCA duties and remit including the continuation of the Authority and its duties under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 are fulfilled by the Authority. MOUs with partner agencies are followed & Joint Working Arrangement (JWA) in place, ensuring compliance with the provisions of MaCAA 2009 and act upon outputs. High Level Objectives, Outcomes and Performance Indicators (and continue to do so for revised Success Criteria) as well as guidance to IFCA's from Defra, the IFCA has also established its Annual Plan and Annual Report which are followed in managing its role plus Annual Research Plan & Report and Environmental and Compliance Enforcement Risk Matrices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is built into the High-Level Objectives for the IFCA in the Annual Plan and as confirmed in the revised Success Criteria. Progress and attainment of objectives should be monitored continuously and reported upon quarterly to the meeting of the Authority and in the Authority Annual Report. All necessary training for Officers and Staff to be undertaken and act upon guidance from the membership and Defra and Association of IFCA's 		1	3	7

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following review of “Employment Contracts, Performance Review and Reward (ECPR&R)” the Authority has fully implemented a staff Grading Structure which is kept under review. Four yearly national IFCA Conduct and Operations Review with findings acted upon by NIFCA & the Association. 					
5d	Chair CO	Inadequate or inappropriate governance leading to inappropriate decision-making and loss of reputation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members are appointed by NCC, NTC, MMO and 3 statutory members. Also reference to Authority Constitution, Standing Orders and Members' Code of Conduct. Currently have a full membership. NIFCA have policies and procedures to deal with misconduct of members and employees. Declarations of Interest are also completed by all Members and Staff. Control is also maintained by transparency of operation and an appropriate chain of command to ensure the correct approval for actions is obtained where required. Introduced and distributed a Staff handbook and Member handbook. All new Members appointed to NIFCA receive the New Members Information Pack and the provision of training. Additional educational and training online sessions provided by the AIFCA, hosted on NIFCA website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Audit. Quarterly Authority meetings and Extraordinary General/Emergency meetings if required. IFCOs report to Lead Enforcement IFCO (and Chief Officer when required). A secure system of emailing and data storage is also maintained by the Authority with all personnel having personal NIFCA email addresses. KPIs are used to guide staff appraisals which contribute to enhanced working and feeds into governance decisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance documents, policies, staff and Member handbooks to be kept under review. To consider introduction of schedule of delegations list (Eastern IFCA). Review of Constitution and Standing Orders. Review training opportunities for Clerk position. 	1	3	7
5e	CO AO	Failure to keep policies and training up to date, leading to mishandling of information and complaint from employee or applicant.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly reviewed primarily by Admin Officer in liaison with the Chief Officer. Regular attendance at online Employment Law updates to keep abreast of changing legislation and industry practice and implement changes where necessary. Regular review of relevant training needs by line managers and referral where appropriate. Prevention of Sexual Harassment and GDPR training undertaken by all staff in 2025. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular liaison by Admin Officer with the Chief Officer. Keep under review the need for implementation of new policies and/or training. Continue to review recruitment procedure to ensure equality and diversity is at the forefront of procedure including regarding making necessary adaptations to interview/assessments. 	←	2	3	10
5f	CO	Breakdown in relations with other agencies including Marine Management Organisation, Environment Agency, Natural England and other IFCAs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MoUs and regular liaison with all partner organisations and stakeholders including surveys of views and properly responding to any queries or complaints and reporting as appropriate to membership. In addition Joint Working arrangements locally with MMO, EA and NE. In addition the Authority has MoUs with the Tweed Commission, and Newcastle University. Also the Authority's compliments, comments and complaints system.. Chief & Lead IFCOs attend MMOs TCG Meetings . NIFCA attendance at TAG and NIMEG. Four yearly conduct and operations review takes place allowing partner agencies to comment on IFCAs. The Authority works with AIFCA and also interacts with partner organisations and stakeholders appropriately on social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders and other agencies can contact the Authority office and also attend NIFCA public meetings. A record is kept of any complaints or other comments requiring action and the Authority office in particular will remain proactive to foresee as much as possible likely areas which need to be dealt with to prevent any breakdown in relations. The Authority continues to engage with all stakeholders. 		1	2	3

			and at meetings in the district and responds in a timely fashion to queries/ comments raised online and in the public arena. Consultation process allows best possible response together with use of the NIFCA website and publicity via social media.					
5g	CO	Insufficient members attending an authority meeting preventing time limited or other urgent business eg. Regarding audits being approved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Giving members sufficient notice of meetings. Trying to agree in advance of the meeting with as many members as possible that they can attend. At least one Councillor and one MMO appointed member must attend each official IFCA meeting. Hold meetings at County Hall and NTC and other suitable venues as well and members able to dial-in to meetings, where applicable. Members to give reasons for non-attendance for approval by meeting? Sending out calendar invitations to members to ensure clear communication re. meeting dates and to allow easy reference to planned member attendance. Member appraisals and Annual Report. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CO liaises through Admin Officer with key members particularly Chair/ Vice Chair in advance of meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create member survey to capture thoughts of members and increase engagement. 	1	4	11
5h	CO	Legislative changes including the Fisheries Act & Environment Act and any national fisheries legislation implemented under these.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular checking of all relevant media including “They Work for You” from Parliament, Fishing News and CMS. Also working closely with the Association of IFCA’s, COG and MAFCO and reporting on all relevant matters to Authority Members and IFCOs/ Staff. Early engagement with Defra to highlight risks associated with national management locally and keep membership updated on progress. Communication with fisheries stakeholders on any changes and feedback their responses to Defra. Highlight any social, economic, or environmental impacts associated with national management changes to Defra. Attendance at Implementation Group by LEIFCO. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular checking and reporting to/review at Authority Technical and Scientific meetings. Continued communication with local fishing industry and Defra 		4	2	9
5i	CO AO FO	Breach of Data Protection Act and General Data Protection Regulation with possible financial and reputational impact to the Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Authority has developed a suite of policies for GDPR. Assistance is offered by Northumberland County Council and legal help could also be sought if required. The Chief Officer will meet regularly on this subject with the Admin Officer (Authority DPO) and Finance Officer. All staff have received updated GDPR training in 2025. Current contracts with external organisations updated to adhere to GDPR and data policy now on website. Disposing of confidential paperwork shredding. A Data Sharing Agreement between each IFCA and the MMO and Northumbria Police is now in place. IFCO Rick Willis will be the Data Sharing Officer for the Data Sharing Agreement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DPO and Chief Officer to keep up to date regarding GDPR and update staff where necessary. 		2	4	12

6. Reputational Risks

These risks relate to situations where reputational damage may occur and considers interactions from NIFCA members, staff and other persons online, in digital communications, print and in person. Further Actions which require more immediate response are highlighted in blue.

Ref	Respon- sibility	Risk	Controls	Monitoring Process	Further Action Required	L	I	S
6a	CO	Failure to fully engage with stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The officers meet regularly with fishers in the district. Meetings continue with fisher forums, recreational sea anglers and other stakeholders in the district. Information is received through the membership and from stakeholders on any areas of concern which there may be and will be acted on as appropriate. The website and social media continues to be improved to increase outreach. Subcommittees will consider specific issues. Regular liaison with GLA, MMO, EA and NE including through the local Joint Working Arrangement (JWA). There is also regular liaison with Newcastle University School of Marine Science and the Tweed Commission. The Authority has a dedicated officer dealing with Social Media platforms as well as maintaining a website. Attending public events in person or virtually. The Authority has online consultation process to facilitate better engagement. A fully comprehensive stakeholder list is also in place together with the Authority Promotion and Communications Plan upon which there is assistance from Amy Maughan PR & Communications. Periodic newsletter and fisher focus newsletters, plus information sheets where required Notices in the district and produced minimum size cards and foreign language transcription for posters. Fishers Forums with commercial fishers and continued engagement with recreational fishers with the enhancement of our RSA Strategy and all of this is ongoing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By meetings and other means of communication and reporting to members and assistance of PR Adviser. Continually updating and distributing NIFCA information and publicity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review internal procedure for consultations. 	1	3	7
6b	CO AO	Risk of reputational damage to NIFCA via social media misuse by staff/ members/ public /stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social media checked daily reported to Chief Officer/Admin team. The above are responded to appropriately and as quickly as possible. Social media policy introduced to reduce the number of users for and to keep the tone of any social media presence consistent. One IT now hosting NIFCA domain. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daily checking of Facebook and report to Chief Officer for response 		2	3	10

7. Functional Risks

These risks relate to risks which can affect the functionality of the NIFCA including employee management and office infrastructure. Further Actions which require more immediate response are highlighted in blue.

Ref	Responsibility	Risk	Controls	Monitoring Process	Further Action Required	L	I	S
7a	CO	Loss of staff (e.g. long term sick, or turnover) leading to a loss of skills, knowledge and experience and reduced capacity to deliver the service. Impact assessed based upon losing 2 staff.	<p>Current controls:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain good level of IFCOs and Admin support at all times. Employees trained to cover elements of multiple roles where roles are held by single recruits: eg. maintenance support, finance/banking/payroll, marine licensing/MPA work. Guides are in place to support role cover in absence: eg. Financial Regulations, Admin Guide etc. Ability to work remotely in place. Employee Assistance Programme available to all staff to improve wellbeing. <p>In the event of loss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workload redistribution between remaining staff. Recruitment of additional resource e.g. part-time/temporary staff (notice periods range from 6 weeks to 3 months). Re-training of existing staff to do tasks of others. Liaison with other Authorities to get staff from them on a temporary or permanent basis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rota meetings with other IFCOs. Close working with Chief Officer, Finance Officer and Admin staff. “Certificate of Fitness” and return to work interview conducted following period of absence, if necessary, to ensure fitness to return to work. Annual Occupational Health checks for all Officers and checks every 2 years for office staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of Crisis Management Plan related to staff. 	2	2	6
7b	AO	Loss of building e.g. through fire leading to inability to deliver service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IT back-up provided by One IT Website back-up by Urban River. All staff can work from home, so in the event of a fire, working could continue as normal. Temporary accommodation could be sought from NCC. Most files are now electronic. Have a fireproof safe for the most important documents. Insurance held on the boat or electronically. Fire awareness/ H&S policies & training for all staff. Safe and secure disposal of surplus files/paper. Staff can work from home and WFH policy is in place. Fire Management Plan and support provided by 1Stop Fire Prevention Periodic testing of all fire safety equipment Admin staff also undertaken fire awareness training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reporting to Chief Officer. Fire risk assessment reviewed annually. 		1	2	3
7c	AO FO	Information technology failure leading to loss of data and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SLA with One IT, providing daily data back-up, internet security and telephone system. All One IT systems are also backed-up daily and stored in two separate locations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitored by One IT Support IT Manager through SLA. Monitored daily by employees working on the system and reported 		1	4	11

		affecting the Authority's ability to function.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replacing computers is ongoing – IT asset replacement program in place to ensure all IT hardware is acceptable. 	to One IT.				
7d	CO AO	Emails/Website being hacked or in some other way interfered with maliciously	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong/ secure passwords for emails and website login to reduce the possibility of a manual hack. Urban River are available to deal with this. Vigilance of unusual activity on the email/website - report immediately to the Chief Officer/Admin Officer. Two-stage authentication system for accessing NIFCA emails, reducing the chance of a hack. Passwords changed/users removed and updated when there is a change of staff to ensure only present staff can login to the website to make changes. Online Data security training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daily checking of the website/ emails and liaison as appropriate with Urban River/One IT. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the use of AI and consider a policy for safe use of AI. Consider use of Co-Pilot in place of Chat GPT. 	1	4	11
7e	CO	Inadequate team management leads to discontent of employees/ turnover	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current management structure in place since 1/1/23. Appraisal system in place for line management. Regular one-to-ones offered to all employees. Employee onboarding system for new recruits and job specific training given to all. Annual employee satisfaction survey. Employee exit interview conducted at end of service. Employee Survey completed 2025. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular meetings/ liaison with Chief Officer reporting to Chair and members. Policy/ employment law updates attended regularly and training sought where required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider change to appraisal system, including introduction of regular one-to-one system to pick up issues faster. All line managers to attend Grievance training. 	1	3	7