



SADC MCSCC

BODY WORN CAMERA OPERATIONAL MANUAL FOR FISHERIES ENFORCEMENT

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
AIS	Automatic Identification System
AWS	Amazon Web Services
BWC	Body Worn Camera
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization (of the United Nations)
FMC	Fisheries Monitoring Centre
IT	Information Technology
MCS	Monitoring, Control and Surveillance
MCSCC	Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Coordination Centre (SADC)
PTT	Push-To-Talk (button on camera)
RFB	Regional Fisheries Body
RFMO	Regional Fisheries Management Organization
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SIF	Stop Illegal Fishing
VMS	Vessel Monitoring System

For more information go to: www.sadcmcscc.org

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Photo: BWC used at a landing site in Tanzania

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of operational manual

This manual was developed by the Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Coordination Centre (MCSCC) of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) as a monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) tool to support enhanced fisheries MCS capability at national and regional level.

It applies to both marine and inland fisheries contexts, improving capacity building, transparency, accountability, and evidence collection during inspections of large and small vessels, landing sites, fish markets, and other points along the value chain.

The manual provides operational guidance for the safe, lawful, and effective use of Body-Worn Cameras (BWC) by fisheries enforcement officers. It includes

- an overview of the equipment and system of the BWC, including its different functions;
- a description of work procedures, as well as users involved in using, managing and supervising the use BWC;
- guidelines to enable operations to be performed in a consistent manner, compliant to all requirements, including where necessary, legal obligations;
- details on the information-sharing protocol for the management of information to be captured, stored and shared with the BWC through the MCSCC, in line with national and regional legal frameworks, and
- practical checklists, logs and other documents to record information in a systematic and consistent manner.

This manual is part of the efforts of the MCSCC to coordinate harmonised MCS procedures throughout the region, in line with objectives of the MCSCC as set in the MCSCC Charter to “establish common operational standards and policies for fisheries monitoring, control and surveillance throughout the SADC region” (Article 6.3).

1.2 Body-worn cameras

BWC are relatively small devices that record interactions between community members (e.g., the public, suspects, and victims) and law enforcement officers. The video and audio recordings from BWC can be used for different purposes:

Record:

One of the primary benefits of BWC is that they can provide an objective record of interactions between law enforcement officers and members of the public/agents and fishers. This can help to improve transparency and accountability in law enforcement and can be useful in cases where there are disputes about the actions of police officers.

Evidence collection:

BWC can be a useful tool in evidence collection. They provide verifiable, time-stamped, geo-referenced video evidence of inspections, catch verification, document checks, and interviews, which can strengthen the evidentiary chain for prosecutions and reduce the risk of disputes. They can capture high-quality audio and video footage that can be used as evidence in investigations and in court, depending on provisions of the national legislation.

Prior to using the BWC, it is therefore important to check national legislation, to understand the needs to use footage or recordings from the BWC as evidence in legal proceedings.

Promoting professional behaviour and reducing corruption:

The use of BWC can also promote better behaviour and communication from both law enforcement officers and members of the public/agents and fishers. Knowing that their actions are being recorded can encourage officers to behave professionally and respectfully and can help to defuse tense situations. By recording enforcement actions, BWC protect both officers and fishers, reducing opportunities for conflict, false allegations and corruption that may occur during and after operations.

Improving public trust:

BWC can improve public trust in law enforcement by providing an objective record of interactions between law enforcement officers and members of the public/agents and fishers. They will also lead to a reduction in complaints against law enforcement officers.

Training/evaluation:

Finally, the use of the BWC through the BWC will support training and evaluation of MCS officers throughout the region, in line with the functions of the MCSCC set in Article 7 of the MCSCC Charter to establish and deliver regional operational fisheries MCS training aligned to international standards (7.3), support institutional and human capacity building to improve national fisheries MCS capability (7. 12), and coordinate and provide advice and support for fishery law enforcement activities (7.9).

BWC allow trainings to take place physically and remotely, from the MCSCC: when live-streamed, BWCs enable remote supervisors at the MCSCC or national FMCs to provide real-time guidance during complex inspections.

The footage can also be reviewed to improve inspection techniques, assess staff performance, and train new staff.

2 Scope

2.1 Users

The use of BWC applies to all fisheries enforcement officers, MCS personnel (incl. vessel inspectors, beach and landing site inspectors, Fisheries Monitoring Centre (FMC) staff, MCS management and Information Technology (IT) staff) involved in using, managing, and storing BWC footage in both coastal and inland fisheries enforcement.

User	Roles and Responsibilities
MCS manager	Supervise and provide capacity building.
SADC MCSCC	Provide capacity building, monitor live feeds, guide operations, archive footage.
Fisheries Officer (Operator)	Operate camera, and ensure recordings cover key events during inspections at sea, on inland waters, at landing sites, and fish markets.
IT Officer	Maintain equipment, connectivity, and cloud storage.

2.2 Regional legislative framework

The BWC are being piloted as a MCS tool of the MCSCC in line with the 2017 “Charter establishing Fisheries Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Coordination Centre (MCSCC)”, which established the MCSCC as an institution that will coordinate measures relating to MCS in the SADC region, and in line with the “Code for Harmonized Fisheries Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) Data and Information Sharing through the Regional Fisheries MCS Coordination Centre (MCSCC)”, referred to as “the Information Code”, which was approved by SADC Ministers responsible for Agriculture and Food Security, Fisheries and Aquaculture on 13th May 2022, and annexed to the MCSCC Charter.

The provisions that SADC Ministers agreed on in this Code provide a tangible base for the use of BWC by MCSCC State Parties.

The Information Code has the objective to “promote the collection, pooling, exchanging and sharing of fisheries data and information between SADC Members States which are party to this Code, through the Regional MCSCC and between the Regional MCSCC Secretariat and relevant RFMO/RFB, or any Non-SADC participating States in accordance with the confidentiality provisions”. The BWC constitute a MCS tool for MCSCC State Parties to help them fulfil their obligation as set in Article 7 to “take all necessary measures to ensure the collection, processing, storage, analyses and dissemination of precise fisheries data and information”.

‘A Body Worn Camera (BWC) Information-sharing guide’, included as Annex 1 to this manual, provides an overview of the most important provisions of the MCSCC Information Code underpinning the use of the BWC, and gives more details on the information-sharing protocol implemented by the MCSCC for the management of BWC information, in line with the confidentiality requirements set by the Information Code.

2.3 National legislative framework

Whilst these guidelines aim to support standardised MCS procedures throughout the SADC region, each national legal framework must be consulted to ensure operational procedures relating to the use of BWC are aligned with domestic law. A generic guidance is given in terms of notification in Annex 5 (Notification protocol for BWC Use).

Typically, this would involve consideration of:

- The Fisheries Act (powers and duties of fisheries officers)
- Criminal law and criminal procedure codes (use of force, admissibility of evidence, chain of custody);
- Legislation on data protection, privacy, and human rights (recording, storage, and use of personal data);
- Law enforcement and policing legislation (powers of arrest, use of technology, surveillance rules);
- Access to information and data retention laws (periods of storage, rights of disclosure, conditions of release);
- Maritime, inland fisheries, or environmental legislation relevant to inspections at sea, ports, landing sites, and markets.

2.4 MCS framework

The use of BWCs should be considered as an integral component of the national and regional MCS framework. Their role is to complement existing MCS tools such as patrols, VMS, AIS, logbooks, observer programmes, port inspections, landing site inspections, market inspection and beach patrols by providing real-time visual and audio footage and evidence.

Integration with other MCS tools: BWC footage can be combined with VMS/AIS tracks, catch certificates, and inspection reports to build comprehensive intelligence packages.

Examples of BWC use in MCS activities include:




- Recording the inspection of fishing gear on small inland vessels to detect illegal nets or catch.
- Filming the weighing of catch at landing sites to ensure declared quantities match actual landings.
- Capturing the condition of catch holds on industrial vessels to verify species composition and hygiene.
- Documenting verification (through FMC support) during the inspection of documents when an inspection or patrol is on-going.
- Recording safety violations or evidence of destructive fishing methods, such as use of explosives or poison.

3 Equipment Overview


3.1 Material included

Each BWC kit includes camera unit with Wi-Fi/3G/4G capability, spare battery, mounting straps, ear plugs with microphone, charging unit, and secure access to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Coordination Centre (MCSCC) cloud server. Functions include live-streaming, recording, geo-tagging, and encryption.

3.2 Functions of the buttons

Elements	Function	Picture
Power on/off button	<u>Press</u> : to switch on/off the camera	Left-side view 
SOS button	<u>Short press</u> : to send alarm to the supervisor who is watching the livestream of the recording. <u>Long press</u> : to connect to the network and record an emergency situation.	View from above 
Recording button 1	<u>Single press</u> : to start recording. <u>Double press</u> : to stop recording. <u>Long press</u> : to start recording in hidden mode (without any noise).	View from above 
PTT button	<u>Press and hold</u> : to talk to the supervisor who is watching the livestream of the recording without earphones.	Left-side view

Elements	Function	Picture
	Earphones will have their own PTT button.	
Snap-shot button	<u>Press</u> : to take a still picture.	Left-side view 
Recording button 2	<u>Short press</u> : to start recording.	 Front view
Camera light button	<u>Short press</u> : to switch on light in the front. <u>Long press</u> : to switch on infrared light in the front.	Right-side view 
Audio up and warning light button	<u>Short press</u> : to increase volume. <u>Long press</u> : to activate silent mode. <u>Double press</u> : to switch on warning light in front.	Right-side view 

Elements	Function	Picture
Audio down and sound recording	<p><u>Short press</u>: to decrease volume.</p> <p><u>Long press</u>: to start audio recording.</p>	<p>Right-side view</p> 

3.3 IT system and information-sharing protocol

The BWC programme relies on a secure, cloud-based IT infrastructure to ensure the timely, reliable, and legally compliant management of recordings. The system is hosted on Amazon Web Services (AWS), which provides encrypted storage, high availability, and scalable capacity to support both marine and inland fisheries enforcement operations.

Automatic upload:

All BWC recordings are automatically uploaded to the AWS cloud once the device is connected to the network. This eliminates the risk of manual tampering or loss of files and ensures that recordings are stored securely and promptly after operations.

Country-specific access:

Each SADC member state is allocated a separate, secure environment within the AWS platform. Countries may only access their own recordings and associated metadata. National fisheries authorities are responsible for managing access rights within their jurisdiction in accordance with their national legislation on data protection, law enforcement, and evidence management.

Regional oversight and remote support:

The SADC MCSCC can access national BWC recordings only upon formal request from the relevant country. This may occur when technical, analytical, or investigative support is required. Such access is strictly regulated, logged, in line with the SADC Information Code, ensuring that sovereignty and confidentiality are respected.

Security and encryption:

All recordings are encrypted during transmission and storage. Access is protected through role-based authentication and multi-factor security protocols.

Integration with national frameworks:

Although the AWS cloud provides a common infrastructure, each country must integrate the system into its national evidence-handling and IT frameworks. This includes ensuring consistency with local legislation on digital evidence, data protection, and judicial processes.



Photo: BWC used during a net inspection in Madagascar.

4 Operating procedures

4.1 Pre-operation checks

Before any patrol, inspection, or enforcement activity, officers must complete a set of pre-operation checks to ensure that the BWC is functioning correctly and safely mounted. These checks are critical to guarantee the integrity of recordings, the safety of the officer, and the reliability of evidence.

The following steps should be carried out in sequence:

- Fully charge the camera batteries and carry a spare where possible.
- Clean the camera lens to ensure a clear image.
- Check and, if necessary, reset the date and time on the device.
- Fit and adjust the harness securely to the officer's body.
- Clip the camera onto the harness in a stable position on the upper chest, ensuring the lens is forward-facing.
- Attach the push-to-talk (PTT) button in an accessible position on the officer's uniform.
- Insert the earpiece/earplug and confirm it is working.
- Route the earpiece cables neatly within the harness to avoid entanglement.
- Test both video and audio recording functions.
- Confirm network connectivity (Wi-Fi, 3G, or 4G).
- Establish a connection with the operations room prior to engagement to confirm video and audio are transmitting correctly.
- Notify the MCSCC of the operation's commencement (if support is needed).

A pre-operation check-list template is available in Annex 2.

4.2 Before starting operations

Before commencing any patrol, inspection, or enforcement action, the officer must ensure that the BWC is activated correctly and that the start of the operation is documented on the recording. The following steps should be followed:

Activate recording:

Press the record button to begin continuous video and audio capture. Confirm visually (indicator light) and audibly (beep/vibration) that the device is recording.

Verbal Introduction:

Clearly state on the recording: the date and time, the location (if possible), the purpose of the operation (e.g. vessel inspection, market inspection, landing site monitoring) and the names of officers participating in the operation.

Notification of subjects:

Inform the Master of the vessel, market representative, or other primary subjects that the interaction is being recorded. The notification protocol should follow the approved standard wording (See Annex 5: Notification Protocol for BWC Use).

Legal requirements for notification may differ by country: in some jurisdictions, notification is mandatory, while in others it is recommended as best practice for transparency and accountability. Officers must always comply with their national legislation.

Confirmation:

Ensure the camera is positioned correctly (lens unobstructed, angle appropriate) before beginning interaction.

4.3 During the operations

Once the BWC has been activated, officers must ensure that their conduct and movements allow for clear, uninterrupted, and reliable recording of the inspection or enforcement activity.

Positioning:

The camera should be mounted securely at upper chest height, with the lens level and forward-facing. Officers should maintain steady body movements to avoid blurred images.

Movement and handling:

Hands and equipment should not obstruct the lens. Gestures should be minimised, and officers should maintain a stable posture. Avoid standing too close to people or behind objects; instead, position yourself to capture the entire scene clearly.

Panoramic recording:

When entering inspection areas, perform a slow body rotation, pausing briefly at key points of interest. This allows the recording to capture a full panorama of the environment, such as a ship's bridge, fish holds, small vessel decks, landing site facilities, or market stalls. Ensure camera angles remain clear and unobstructed.

Document handling:

When recording documents, hold them at chest height, tilt to reduce glare, and pause to allow clarity of text. Pages should be turned slowly so the camera can capture all relevant content.

Interaction:

Face individuals when speaking to ensure audio clarity. Maintain an appropriate distance and avoid obstructing the camera's view of the interaction.

Moving in inspection areas:

Move slowly and deliberately. Pause at key points of interest and avoid bumping the camera against structures, equipment, or people. This applies on board vessels, along jetties, at landing sites, markets, or riverbanks.

Specific scenarios:

- On a vessel's bridge: begin with a panorama, then focus on navigation and monitoring instruments.
- On small inland vessels: record the deck, fishing gear, and catch storage areas.
- At landing sites: capture an overview of the site, weighing areas, and offloading activities.
- In fish markets: document the general layout, product displays, and handling practices.

Good practices:

Provide short narration of key events or observations to enhance evidentiary value. Avoid overexposure to bright light, and when in doubt, record more rather than less.

Recommended restricted actions:

Do not switch off the camera during active operations unless explicitly authorised. Officers must never deliberately obstruct the lens, tamper with recordings, or use the camera to intimidate individuals.

4.4 Post-use

After completing any inspection or enforcement activity, officers must follow post-use procedures to safeguard the integrity of BWC footage, ensure accountability, and maintain the equipment in good working condition.

Video upload and data transfer:

All video and audio recordings must be uploaded as soon as possible after the operation. Officers should connect the BWC to the designated secure server or docking station. No footage may be deleted, altered, or copied to personal devices. Data management must follow chain-of-custody protocols and national laws must be consulted to ensure compliance with legislation.

Incident reporting:

Where an incident, violation, or unusual occurrence has been recorded, officers must complete an incident report immediately after the upload. The report should include:

- Date, time, and location of the incident.
- Names of officers present.
- Description of the event and actions taken.

- Reference to the specific BWC file(s).
- Any supporting evidence or witness details.

A standard incident report template is provided in the Annex 4.

Secure storage of equipment:

Once data has been uploaded and verified, BWCs and accessories must be cleaned, checked for faults, and stored securely. Equipment should be kept in a lockable cabinet or designated storage room with restricted access. Officers are responsible for ensuring that devices are returned, charged if required, and prepared for the next deployment.



Photo: BWC used during a vessel inspection in Namibia.

5 Maintenance

To ensure the reliability and longevity of Body Worn Cameras (BWC), proper care and maintenance must be carried out after every operation.

Battery life:

The camera must be fully charged before using it for the first time, or before using it for a long time. It should be charged every two months to avoid battery failure.

Cleaning:

After use, wipe the camera, harness, and accessories with a clean, dry cloth. If necessary, use a mild disinfectant to remove dirt. Avoid abrasive cleaners or immersing the device in water.

Secure storage:

All BWCs and accessories must be stored in a designated secure storage area, such as a lockable cabinet or equipment room with restricted access. Devices should be placed on the charging dock or connected to the charger to ensure readiness for the next deployment.

Fault reporting:

Any malfunction, physical damage, or irregular performance must be reported immediately to the designated IT officer or equipment custodian. Officers should not attempt unauthorised repairs. A logbook or digital fault log must be maintained.

Replacement of parts:

Straps, harnesses, earplugs, and other accessories that show signs of wear should be replaced to maintain safe and effective use.

Periodic checks:

IT or technical staff should conduct scheduled maintenance checks (e.g., quarterly) to ensure software updates, system security, and hardware integrity.

6 Evidence handling and data management

The evidentiary value of BWC footage is dependent on strict adherence to procedures that ensure legality, reliability, and integrity. Officers must treat all BWC recordings as potential evidence (unless used only for training purposes), and all actions must comply not only with regional protocols (e.g., SADC MCSCC Code for Information Sharing) but also with national legislation, including criminal procedure, fisheries law, and data protection requirements.

Automatic upload and storage:

Immediately after each operation, all recordings must be uploaded to the designated secure storage system or national evidence server. Where systems are linked to the SADC MCSCC cloud, uploads must be verified and logged. Under no circumstances may an officer delete, edit, or copy recordings to unauthorised devices.

Chain of custody:

Maintaining the chain of custody is critical for admissibility in court. Each recording must be assigned a unique reference number and linked to the corresponding operation log. Access, transfer, or review of files must be recorded in an evidence register. National rules of criminal procedure should be followed for sealing, transferring, and certifying evidence. If procedures are unclear, it may be wise to seek support from a police officer if the video footage is going to be used in court.

Data protection and confidentiality:

Recordings often capture personal information, commercially sensitive data, or images of individuals not directly related to the violation under investigation. National data protection legislation must therefore be applied, balancing transparency with privacy rights. Officers must ensure that footage is shared only with authorised personnel and solely for training, enforcement or judicial purposes.

Retention and disposal:

The minimum and maximum retention periods for BWC recordings must align with national legislation and prosecutorial requirements. Footage that forms part of a criminal case must be retained until the case is concluded, including appeals. Non-essential footage may be deleted or archived after the legally defined retention period.

Access control

Only authorised officers, IT staff, prosecutors, and judicial authorities may access BWC recordings. Access rights must be role-based and compliant with both national law and the SADC MCSCC Information Sharing Code.

Use in court:

When BWC recordings are used as evidence, officers must be prepared to testify to the authenticity of the footage and the chain of custody. This includes confirming that the footage was obtained in compliance with national legal frameworks and that no tampering or unauthorised handling occurred.

Integration with national frameworks:

Since SADC member states have different legal traditions and procedural requirements, each state must ensure that this protocol is reviewed and integrated into its own fisheries legislation, criminal law, and evidence laws. In case of conflict between regional guidance and national law, the latter prevails.



Photo: BWC used during a landing inspection in Namibia.

7 Risks and risk mitigation

The introduction of BWC in fisheries enforcement offers significant benefits in terms of transparency, accountability, and evidence collection. However, the use of such technology also presents certain risks and challenges that must be recognised and mitigated.

Technical:

Challenge: equipment malfunction, poor battery life, damaged devices due to exposure to water, rain, or dust.

Mitigation: regular maintenance, use of protective casings, spare batteries carried on patrol, and replacement of faulty units.

Operational:

Challenge: officers forgetting to activate or improperly using the camera, resulting in incomplete evidence.

Mitigation: mandatory pre-operation checks, regular refresher training, and supervisory spot checks.

Challenge: restricted movement or reduced situational awareness while focusing on camera operation.

Mitigation: clear SOPs emphasising safe handling, training on how to move and interact naturally while recording.

Legal:

Challenge: non-compliance with national legislation on privacy, data protection, or admissibility of evidence.

Mitigation: align BWC use with national fisheries laws, criminal procedure codes, and data protection frameworks; provide legal training to officers; consult prosecutors in developing protocols.

Data management:

Challenge: unauthorised access, editing, or deletion of recordings undermining evidentiary value.

Mitigation: secure servers with encryption, role-based access controls, strict chain-of-custody documentation, and disciplinary penalties for breaches.

Human factors and ethical:

Challenge: misuse of BWCs for intimidation, personal purposes, or selective recording.

Mitigation: clear disciplinary provisions, regular audits of footage, and embedding a culture of accountability.

Challenge: concerns from fishing communities or market operators about constant surveillance.

Mitigation: transparent communication, clear notification protocols, and adherence to data minimisation principles (record only what is necessary).

Institutional:

Challenge: lack of inter-agency coordination, resulting in duplication or mismanagement of footage.

Mitigation: use of the SADC MCSCC Information Sharing Code, memoranda of understanding (MoUs), and national inter-agency protocols.



Photo: BWC used during a vessel inspection in South Africa.

8 Annexes:

8.1 Annex 1: SADC MCSCC information sharing guide

On 13 May 2022, the Joint Meeting of SADC Ministers of Agriculture and Food Security, Fisheries and Aquaculture in Lilongwe, Malawi approved *The Code for Harmonized Fisheries MCS Data and Information-Sharing Through the MCSCC*, known as the 'MCSCC Information Code'. This Code is an Annex to the Charter Establishing the SADC MCSCC and interpreted and applied together as a single legally binding instrument by Parties to the Charter. *The objective of this Code is to promote the collection, pooling, exchanging and sharing of fisheries data and information between SADC Members States through the MCSCC and between the MCSCC Secretariat and relevant regional fisheries bodies and any non-SADC participating States in accordance with the confidentiality provisions.*

The provisions that SADC Ministers agreed on in this Code provide a tangible base for the use of BWC by MCSCC State Parties. This guide provides an overview of the most important provisions of the MCSCC Information Code underpinning the use of the BWC and gives more details on the information-sharing protocol implemented by the MCSCC for the management of BWC information, in line with the confidentiality requirements set by the Information Code.

Handling of information from BWC cameras

1. Data collection and storage:

As described in the BWC operational manual, information recorded by BWC officers as part of their operations are recorded through the software "SmartEye" and uploaded onto a secured virtual cloud server. The MCSCC currently uses AWS-Amazon for this purpose, for its proved experience as a secure server, which also houses servers for the American Defense Force, and for its large storage capability. Access the server is protected by secure passwords and Multi-Factor Authentication and whoever the administrator from the MCSCC controls who has access to the server.

Only the MCSCC will have access to all recordings from body-worn cameras used by officers in the MCSCC State Parties. Each MCSCC State Party will only have access to recordings from their own national officers.

The centralized compilation of information by the MCSCC through a secure server implements Article 5 of the MCSCC Information Code, which mandates the MCSCC to establish a regional fisheries information system populated by fisheries data and information supplied by States Parties. The BWC is a tool that shall support State Parties in implementing their obligations under the MCSCC Code, who are "encouraged to equip themselves with devices for observation and adopt standardized methods including the use of data from research, MCS and other

related fishery activities to inform the regional fisheries data and information system” (Article 5.3).

2. Requirements from State Parties for effective information-sharing:

According to Article 7 of the Information Code, “Each State Party shall take all necessary measures to ensure the collection, processing, storage, analyses and dissemination of precise fisheries data and information”. To facilitate information collection and sharing through the BWC, this includes:

- establishing the necessary information systems (SmartEye software in monitoring room), Article 7.a.
- adopting regulations that do not obstruct the sharing of information through the BWC, Article 7.b.
- ensuring the necessary capacity to share fisheries data and MCS information in real time or near real time and automatically without alteration, Article 7.c.
- appointing designated focal points in each State for consistent communication and data transfer through the BWC, Article 7.g.

3. Confidentiality of information received through the BWC:

The regional fisheries information system hosting the BWC will be used by the MCSCC following the terms and conditions of the MCSCC Information Code, Article 24.

The clauses of Article 24 ensure that the MCSCC will not disclose data transmitted by State Parties through the BWC to any other third parties, without prior specific written consent of the party providing such information. The MCSCC is however given the powers to disclose information for the purpose of investigation or court trial when requested by a public prosecutor or Tribunal.

As all information received from State Parties, the MCSCC abides by the obligation to treat all MCS information received as confidential, and to use it only for the purpose of this Code, unless the information is or becomes in the public domain without breach of the Code, and if the release of information is done without breach of the Code.

The MCSCC Information Code – underpinning the use of body-worn cameras throughout the region

The BWC are a MCS tool that can support MCSCC State Parties to fulfil their obligations under the MCSCC Information Code, and to establish information-sharing procedures based on a high standard of practices.

This includes supporting high standards of inspections, aligned to international standards. Article 12 of the MCSCC Code sets that State Parties shall share information contained in inspection report information with the Regional MCSCC as

per Annex C of the FAO Port State Measures Agreement and the at-sea inspection report, including evidence of infractions as confidential information.

BWC could also support State Parties in sharing fisheries information requested under the MCSCC Information Code with the MCSCC, including observer and joint patrol reports (Articles 16 and 17).

Using BWC on shared water bodies will also be a great asset to support transboundary cooperation amongst State Parties.

The MCSCC Information-sharing Code ensures that data collected through BWC and shared to the MCSCC will be handled and stored securely and confidentially, with the goal of contributing to the vision of the 2001 SADC Protocol on Fisheries. It ensures that BWC intelligence can be used in real-time operations, remote training of MCS officers, long-term monitoring, and legal proceedings, while protecting sensitive information and supporting coordinated, multi-agency enforcement.

8.2 Annex 2: Pre-operation checklist

Date/Time: _____

Officer Name(s): _____

Operation Purpose: _____

Equipment Preparation

- ☐ Batteries fully charged (spare carried if available)
- ☐ Camera lens cleaned
- ☐ Date and time confirmed/set correctly
- ☐ Harness fitted and adjusted securely
- ☐ Camera clipped on harness at upper chest, lens facing forward
- ☐ Push-to-talk (PTT) button clipped in accessible position
- ☐ Earpiece/earplug inserted and functioning
- ☐ Earpiece cables routed neatly through harness (no entanglement)

Functional Tests

- ☐ Video recording tested
- ☐ Audio recording tested
- ☐ Network connectivity confirmed (Wi-Fi / 3G / 4G)

Operational Readiness

- ☐ Connection with operations room tested (video + audio verified)
- ☐ MCSCC notified of operation start
- ☐ Operation logged (officers' names, date, time, purpose)

Officer Signature: _____

8.3 Annex 3: Operation log

This log should be completed for each operation in which Body Worn Cameras (BWCs) are used. It records essential details including who participated, when the operation took place, and its purpose. The log must be signed by the officer in charge to verify accuracy.

Date	Time	Officer(s) Involved	Purpose of Operation	Signature (Officer in Charge)

8.4 Annex 4: Incident report template with BWC Log

1. General Information

Date of Report: _____

Name(s) of Officer(s): _____

Location of Operation: _____

2. Incident Details

Date and Time of Incident: _____

Type of Incident (tick one):

☐ Fisheries Violation

☐ Safety / Security Incident

☐ Interference with Officer

☐ Technical Failure

☐ Other (specify): _____

Description of Incident (factual, objective):

3. Actions Taken

Immediate actions by officers: _____

Enforcement measures applied (if any): _____

4. Evidence Reference

BWC File Name(s) / Reference No(s): _____

Other evidence collected (documents, samples, photos): _____

5. Witnesses / Persons Involved

Names and contact information: _____

6. Recommendations / Follow-up

Suggested actions (e.g., further investigation, prosecution, technical repair):

Officer Signature: _____ Date: _____

8.5 Annex 5: Notification protocol for BWC Use

This protocol is to ensure that individuals subject to fisheries inspections are clearly informed when they are being recorded on a BWC, in compliance with principles of transparency, accountability, and data protection.

Procedure

The officer must provide notification immediately after activating the BWC, before or at the start of the inspection/interaction. The notification must be captured on the BWC recording to demonstrate compliance.

Officers should use the following wording (or an approved national equivalent):
“For your information, I am wearing a body worn camera. This inspection will be recorded in both video and audio for training, official monitoring, evidence, and safety purposes.”

Optional Additions (depending on national law or policy):

Depending on national law and policy, it may be necessary to also say:
“The recording will be stored securely and used only for official purposes.”

Situational Adaptation

- **On vessels (marine or inland):** Inform the Master or person in charge before the inspection begins.
- **At landing sites and markets:** Announce clearly at the start of the inspection to the group or primary representatives present.
- **During document checks or interviews:** Inform the individual directly when beginning the exchange.

Recording of Notification

- The notification must be spoken clearly, ensuring the BWC microphone captures the statement.

8.6 Annex 6: Evidence register template (BWC Recordings)

This template may be used to maintain the chain of custody for Body Worn Camera (BWC) recordings. Each recording must be assigned a unique reference number and linked to the corresponding operation log. All access, transfers, and storage details should be documented in this register in accordance with national legislation.

Evidence Ref. No.	Date and Time of Recording	Operation Log Ref.	Officer Name (Recorder)	Location	Brief Description of Content	Storage Location / Server Ref.	Access / Transfer Record (Date, By Whom, Purpose)	Remarks

8.7 Annex 7: Training requirements

The successful use of BWCs depends on training programmes that build the capacity of fisheries enforcement officers, IT staff, and supervisors to operate the equipment lawfully, effectively, and confidently. Training must also ensure compliance with national legislation and alignment with regional frameworks such as the SADC MCSCC.

Initial training:

All officers must complete mandatory induction training before being authorised to use BWCs. Training should cover:

- Technical operation of the camera, accessories, and live-streaming functions.
- Correct mounting, positioning, and handling during inspections.
- Pre-operation, during-operation, and post-operation procedures.
- Uploading, data transfer, and secure storage protocols.
- Evidence handling and chain-of-custody requirements.

Legal and ethical training:

Officers must be trained in the national legal framework governing fisheries enforcement, criminal procedure, privacy rights, and data protection. They should understand:

- When and how to notify individuals that recording is taking place.
- What types of footage are admissible in court.
- Restrictions on personal or unauthorised use of BWC recordings.

Scenario exercises:

Practical field exercises must simulate real inspection and enforcement scenarios, including both marine (e.g., boarding large vessels, catch inspections, bridge panoramas) and inland contexts (e.g., inspecting small fishing boats, landing sites, and fish markets). Scenarios should emphasise:

- Safe and discreet use of the BWC while performing inspections.
- Capturing full panoramas and close-ups relevant for evidence.
- Recording in challenging environments (e.g., crowded markets, moving vessels, poor light).

Refresher training:

Refresher courses should update officers on equipment upgrades, changes in legislation, and lessons learned from past operations. Advanced training may include:

- Giving evidence in court based on BWC footage.
- Using footage for intelligence analysis and case-building.
- Supervisory responsibilities in reviewing and auditing footage.

IT and data management training:

Designated staff and evidence custodians must receive specialised training in secure uploading, encryption, data archiving, and access control systems.



The Southern African Development Community Fisheries Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Coordination Centre (MCSCC) is supporting national efforts to stop illegal fishing in the region.

For more information go to:

www.sadc.int