

BEST PRACTICE

The marking and identification of fishing vessels

Based on the FAO Standard Specifications for the Marking and Identification of Fishing Vessels

MARKING

Fishing vessels shall be marked with their IRCS, called the vessel marking:

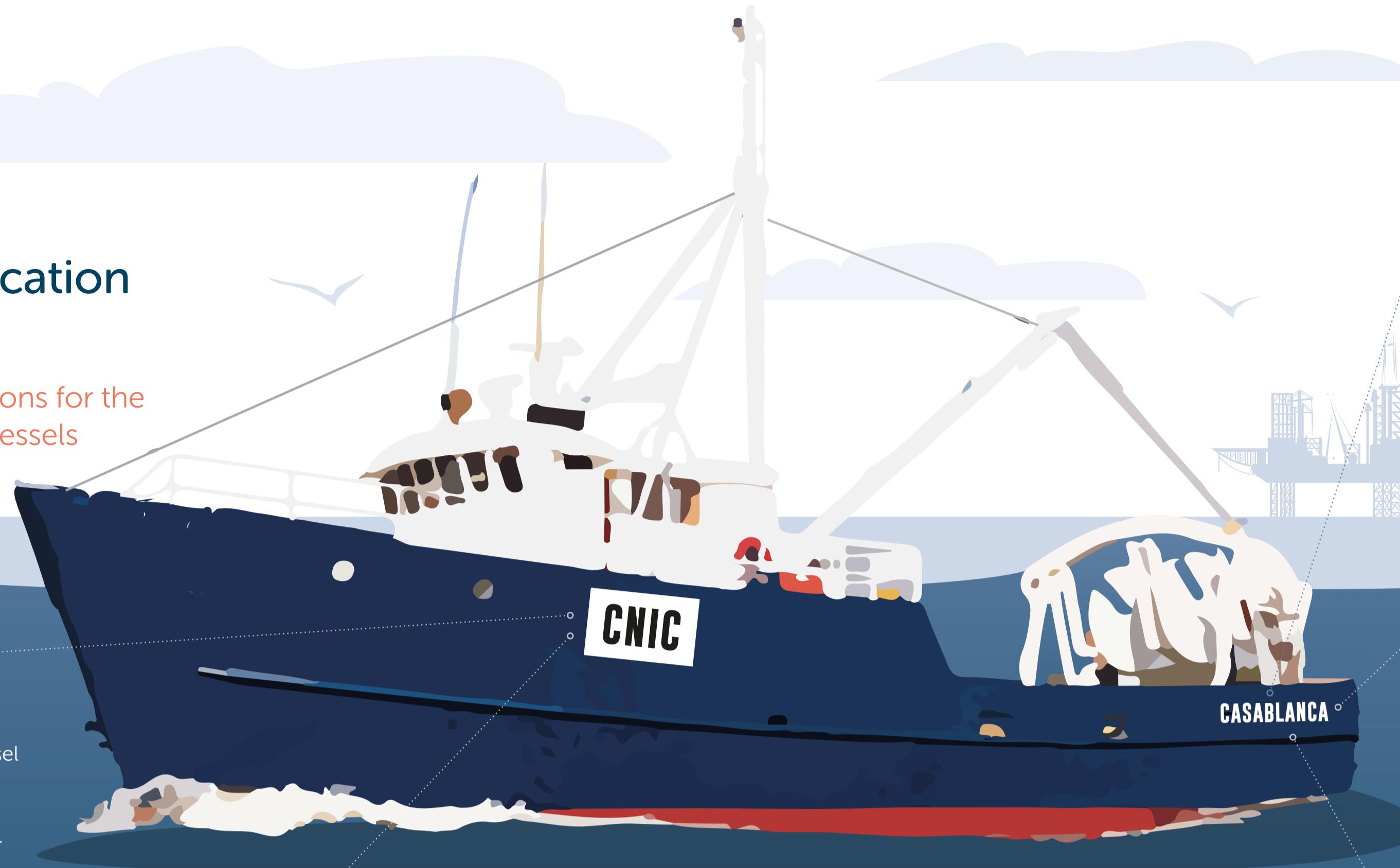
- ✓ this vessel marking, the vessel name or identification mark and the port of registry should be the only vessel identifiers consisting of letters and numbers to be painted on the hull or superstructure
- ✓ the numbers 1 and 0 should be avoided in licence or registration numbers to prevent confusion with the letters I and O
- ✓ any fishing craft carried onboard another fishing vessel and used for fishing operations should bear the same markings as the vessel they are carried on
- ✗ too many identifiers on the hull or superstructure make it challenging to identify the vessel clearly at sea
- ✗ vessel is marked with identifiers that do not match details on the vessel registry or authorised vessel list



DISPLAY

The vessel marking should always be prominently displayed on:

- ✓ the port and starboard side of the vessel's hull or superstructure so that the marking can be sighted from another vessel or from the air
- ✓ a deck (any horizontal surface, including the top of the wheelhouse) with the top of the writing pointing towards the bow, or if the vessel is undocked on a board which can be seen clearly from the air
- ✓ the vessel's sail, if one exists
- ✓ if the vessel markings are ever obscured by an awning or vessel cover, this should also carry the vessel markings
- ✗ markings only visible from one angle
- ✗ markings not clearly visible from the air



The international radio-call sign (IRCS) allocated to a fishing vessel should correspond to the flag State of the vessel and match the series provided below:

COUNTRY	INTERNATIONAL RADIO CALL SIGN
Antigua and Barbuda	V2A-V2Z
Bahamas	C6A-C6Z
Barbados	8PA-8PZ
Belize	V3A-V3Z
Brazil	15 series*
Colombia	5JA-5JZ, 5KA-5KZ, HJA-HJZ, HKA-HKZ
Costa Rica	TEA-TEZ, TIA-TIZ
Cuba	CLA-CLZ, CMA-CMZ, COA-COZ, T4A-T4Z
Dominica	J7A-J7Z
Dominican Republic	HIA-HIZ
European Union	Various
France	38 series*
Grenada	J3A-J3Z
Guatemala	TDA-TDZ, TGA-TGZ
Guinea	3XA-3XZ
Guyana	8RA-8RZ
Haiti	4VA-4VZ, HHA-HHZ
Honduras	HOA-HQZ, HRA-HRZ
Jamaica	6YA-6YZ
Japan	29 series*
Republic of Korea	6KA-6KZ, 6LA-6LZ, 6MA-6MZ, 6NA-6NZ, D7A-D7Z, D8A-D8Z, D9A-D9Z, DSA-DSZ, DTA-DTZ, HLA-HLZ
Mexico	19 series*
Netherlands	11 series*
Nicaragua	H6A-H6Z, H7A-H7Z, HTA-HTZ, YNA-YNZ
Panama	3EA-3EZ, 3FA-3FZ, H3A-H3Z, H8A-H8Z, H9A-H9Z, HOA-HOZ, HPA-HPZ
Saint Kitts and Nevis	V4A-V4Z
Saint Lucia	J6A-J6Z
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	J8A-J8Z
Spain	11 series*
Suriname	PZA-PZZ
Trinidad and Tobago	9YA-9YZ, 9ZA-9ZZ
United Kingdom	93 series*
United States of America	90 series*
Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela	4MA-4MZ, YVA-YVZ, YWA-YWZ, YXA-YXZ, YYA-YYZ

* For countries with more than 10 series assigned, please check www.itu.int/en/ITU-R/terrestrial/fmd/Pages/call_sign_series.aspx for a full list.



PLACEMENT

The vessel markings should be placed:

- ✓ on the vessel's side or superstructure, as high as possible above the waterline and avoid areas such as the flare of the bow and stern
- ✓ where they are not obscured by fishing gear, either when stowed or in use
- ✓ away from areas which are prone to damage or discolouration, such as scuppers or outlets
- ✗ markings placed too low and obscured by the waterline



LEGIBILITY

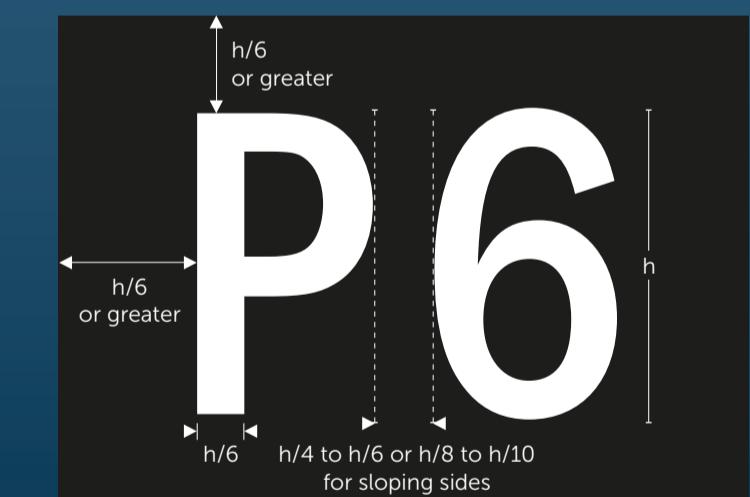
The vessel marking should be:

- ✓ painted using marine paint
- ✓ white on a black background or black on a white background
- ✓ always maintained in good condition
- ✓ block letters and numbers should be used
- ✗ markings not clearly visible due to lack of contrast
- ✗ markings not clearly visible due to small or unclear characters
- ✗ markings not clearly visible due to fading



PROPORTIONALITY

The vessel markings should be:



Length overall (LOA):	Height of letters/numbers should be not less than:
25 m and over	1.0 m
20 ≥ 25 m	0.8 m
15 ≥ 20 m	0.6 m
12 ≥ 15 m	0.4 m
5 ≥ 12 m	0.3 m
< 5 m	0.1 m

Supported by the Caribbean Billfish Project

