

**Question for written answer E-005152/2014
to the Commission**

Rule 117

Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PPE)

Subject: Interpretation of Regulation (EU) No 404/2011 in connection with the position error of satellite-tracking devices installed on board fishing vessels

According to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 404/2011 of 8 April 2011 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 establishing a Community control system for ensuring compliance with the rules of the Common Fisheries Policy,¹ especially Article 19, satellite-tracking devices installed on board EU fishing vessels ensure the automatic transmission of data to fisheries monitoring centres. Article 19(1)(b) states that devices shall transmit data relating, among other things, to 'the most recent geographical position of the fishing vessel, with a position error which shall be less than 500 metres, with a confidence interval of 99 %'. In Greece, fishermen are complaining that large fines are being wrongly imposed for fisheries offences in connection with the use of gear within prohibited distances from mainland or island shores based on the vessel monitoring system (VMS). However, those measurements differ from permissible legal fishing limits by an average of 200 metres, i.e. a distance which is covered by the permissible position error.

In view of the above and given the importance of fisheries to Greece and the possibility that large fines are being wrongly imposed, thereby damaging economic activity and productivity, especially in island and coastal areas, will the Commission say:

1. Is the position error included before fines are imposed?
2. How does it interpret Article 19(1)(b) so as to safeguard the uniform and fair application of the spirit and purpose of the directive?
3. Has a report been prepared on the application of this regulation in general and Article 19(1)(b) in particular or is one planned?
4. Has it received similar complaints from other Member States?

¹ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2011:112:0001:0153:EN:PDF>.