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| From: VTS Committee | ARM14-7.6.1 |
| To: ARM Committee | 7 October 2021 |

LIAISON NOTE

# NAVGUIDE – Chapter 5 Vessel Traffic Services (VTS)

# INTRODUCTION

The VTS Committee has been requested by ARM Committee to review Chapter 5 on Vessel Traffic Services of the IALA NAVGUIDE, which is planned to be issued in 2022.

# COMMENTS

The VTS Committee has reviewed the existing section on Vessel Traffic Services of the IALA NAVGUIDE, see Annex.

We have noted that VTS is mentioned in other chapters too of the NAVGUIDE. As a revised version of IMO resolution A.857(20) on Guidelines for Vessel Traffic Services is up for approval at IMO Assembly in December 2021, we would appreciate if the ARM Committee could send the draft revised version to VTS52 for further review. By doing this we would guarantee that old expressions and definitions are not being used in the revised NAVGUIDE.

We would also welcome that the NAVGUIDE is developed to be in digital format as has been done with the VTS Manual in 2021 with a very positive response.

# ACTION REQUESTED

ARM Committee is requested to note and include the reviewed chapter 5 on VTS for the 2022 edition of the IALA NAVGUIDE.

ANNEX

# Proposed Chapter 5 - Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) for IALA NAVGUIDE (2022 edition)

## 5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a first point of reference, basic information and guidance on where more detailed guidance related to a Vessel Traffic Service may be obtained.

## 5.2 Background

SOLAS Chapter V Regulation 12 (Vessel Traffic Services) states, inter alia, that:

*Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) contribute to safety of life at sea, safety and efficiency of navigation and protection of the marine environment, adjacent shore areas, work sites and offshore installations from possible adverse effects of maritime traffic.*

*Contracting Governments undertake to arrange for the establishment of VTS where, in their opinion, the volume of traffic or the degree of risk justifies such services. Contracting Governments planning and implementing VTS shall, wherever possible, follow the guidelines developed by the Organization. The current guideline is IMO Resolution A.857(20), Guidelines for Vessel Traffic Services (VTS).*

IMO Resolution A.XXX(32) Guidelines for Vessel Traffic Services states that Contracting Governments should take account of applicable IMO instruments and refer to the relevant international guidance prepared and published by appropriate international organizations, of which IALA is recognized as an important contributor to IMO's role and responsibilities relating to VTS.

## 5.3 Definition of VTS

A VTS, as defined by IMO Resolution A.857(20), Guidelines for Vessel Traffic Services, is:

“A service implemented by a competent authority, designed to improve the safety and efficiency of vessel traffic and to protect the environment. The service should have the capability to interact with the traffic and respond to traffic situations developing in the VTS area.”

## 5.4 Purpose of VTS

The purpose of VTS is to contribute to the safety of life at sea, improve the safety and efficiency of navigation and support the protection of the environment within a VTS area by mitigating the development of unsafe situations through:

* Provision of timely and relevant information on factors that may influence ship movements and assist onboard decision-making.
* Monitoring and managing ship traffic to ensure the safety and efficiency of ship movements.
* Responding to developing unsafe situations.

## 5.5 Benefits of VTS

The benefits of implementing a VTS are, beside that it should improve the safety and efficiency of navigation in the VTS area and support the protection of the environment, that it allows identification and monitoring of vessels, strategic planning of ship movements and provision of navigational information and assistance. It can also assist allied services in e.g. prevention of pollution and coordination of pollution/emergency response.

## 5.6 IALA VTS Manual

The IALA VTS Manual is acknowledged by the VTS community as being the most comprehensive guide to VTS as well as a point of reference for further detailed study.

The VTS Manual assists Contracting Governments, Competent Authorities for VTS and VTS providers in harmonizing the delivery of VTS worldwide by providing a comprehensive overview on all aspects relating to the provision of VTS. In particular, the Manual provides guidance on:

* The regulatory and legal framework for implementing and operating VTS.
* The obligations of Contracting Governments and Flag States.
* IALA Standards relating to the implementation and operation of VTS and their associated Recommendations, Guidelines and Model Courses.

The Manual is also aimed at a wide readership to encompass all who are in any way involved with the policy for provision, operation and effectiveness of VTS, including those with management responsibility at national level and those who deliver services to the mariner.

The VTS Manual provides further information on, for example:

* Regulatory and legal framework of VTS
* VTS Implementation
* VTS Operations
* VTS Communications
* Auditing and Assessing in VTS
* Additional Services
* Data and Information Management
* VTS Technologies
* Training and Assessment for VTS Personnel

The VTS Manual is intended to complement IALA documentation relating to VTS. It is not intended to replicate the information and guidance in these documents or be prescriptive about the practices described within them. Rather, it provides a roadmap to assist authorities meet their obligations for the establishment and operation of VTS in a consistent manner.

The VTS Manual is available in digital format and will be updated regularly when new or revised documents have been approved. The latest version of the VTS Manual can be downloaded at <https://www.iala-aism.org/product-category/publications/manuals/>.