

Compelling Needs for a Revision of IMO Resolution A.857(20) Guidelines for Vessel Traffic Services

Introduction

The Resolution is over 18 years old and was written:

- prior to last SOLAS amendment relating to VTS (textual change in 1997 and adopted in 1999);
- prior to modern technologies;
- at a time when VTS was in its infancy. VTS is now a mature and established partner in the maritime domain with respect to its role, function and interaction with other services;
- at a time when the globalisation of maritime shipping had just commenced and the impact on VTS (functions, responsibilities, etc.) was unclear

Discussion

Noting the comments from Council 62 that there must be compelling needs to seek amendments to the resolution, it was agreed at VTS42 that a review of IMO Resolution A.857(20) was required to ensure that it continues to provide an effective IMO instrument with a clear and concise framework to:

- Minimise the risks associated with inconsistent interaction between VTS and the bridge and the potential for confusion between the master and VTSO.
- Assists Contracting Governments and Competent Authorities implement VTS in a manner so as to meet their obligations under SOLAS Chapter V, Regulation 12 and implement and deliver VTS globally in a consistent and harmonised manner.
- Reflect technological and operational changes that have occurred since the existing Resolution came into effect and caters for emerging needs and developments
- Ensure the international framework for VTS continues to meet its objectives.

Some key components identified where amendments/changes are required include:

- VTS Qualifications, Training and Certification – Mandatory Training
- Recognition of IALA Standards relating to VTS in international instruments
- Types of Service (INS, TOS and NAS)
- Operation of VTS outside territorial seas
- VTS and Future Developments
- Administrative amendments
- Role of Competent Authority / VTS Authority

Key components and associated compelling need/s for inclusion in the proposed submission for IMO Resolution A.857(20) to be updated as an unplanned output are summarised below:

Component	Compelling Need/s	Consequence of not changing
VTS Qualifications, Training and Certification – Mandatory Training	The structure and terminology used within the Resolution is now either in conflict with or constraining the necessary continued development of modern IALA training Recommendations, Model Courses and Guidelines.	Higher risk of incidents/accidents occurring due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inconsistent interaction between VTS and the bridge • inadequate VTS personnel competence and skills

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	<p>Training requirements and certification for VTS personnel should be mandatory in accordance with the IALA Standards relating to VTS.</p> <p>This would provide the framework for Contracting Governments and Competent Authorities to ensure that VTS personnel are qualified, suitably trained and capable of delivering VTS.</p> <p><i>Note: A conclusion of the 12th VTS Symposium (VTS2012) was that there is a compelling need for mandatory training for VTS operators in order to ensure a consistent and harmonised delivery of VTS.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> non-harmonised international consistency of vessel traffic service delivery
Recognition of IALA VTS guidance in IMO instruments ¹	<p>The Resolution needs to recognise the IALA Standards relating to VTS for the implementation and globally harmonised and consistent delivery of VTS.</p> <p><i>Note: The Resolution currently references the IALA VTS Manual but should reference the IALA Standards relating to VTS.</i></p>	<p>Higher risk of incidents/accidents occurring due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracting governments or competent authorities not being aware of internationally approved guidance for VTS leading to differing vessel traffic services procedures between VTSs Confusion to masters of vessels moving from one vessel traffic service area to another as a result of differing vessel traffic services procedures between VTSs Obligations of contracting governments to adopt standards not clearly identified
VTS Services (INS, TOS and NAS)	<p>The guidance provided in the existing Resolution concerning the services rendered by a VTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is subjective and open to broad interpretation and, as a result, is a source of continuous debate Constrain VTS authorities in the provision of present and future or additional services in their area of attention. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The differentiation between services is unlikely to be recognised and lead to confusion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> within and between Competent Authorities and VTS authorities between ship and shore VTS authorities may be constrained by the current structure with formally defined primary services, in the provision of present and

¹ Currently IALA Recommendations and Guidelines, in the near future this is expected to be incorporated under the IALA Standards relating to VTS

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	<p><u>Note:</u></p> <p><i>The mariner expects to be informed, managed and advised irrespective of any services formally declared. VTS fulfils these expectations through the provision of information, warnings, advice and instructions.</i></p> <p><i>Evidence suggests that, irrespective of the type(s) of service promulgated, the VTS invariably delivers elements of INS, TOS and NAS to achieve its objectives.</i></p>	future or additional services in their area of attention.
Operation of VTS beyond territorial Seas	<p>There is a need for guidance regarding the status of services rendered by VTS beyond the territorial seas in a manner consistent with SOLAS Chapter V, Regulation 12.</p> <p><u>Note:</u></p> <p><i>Coastal States are increasingly implementing VTS in high traffic density areas outside their territorial waters in order to ensure the safety, security, efficiency of navigation and the protection of the marine environment due to increasing alternative utilisation demands of maritime space.</i></p> <p><i>The IALA VTS Questionnaire 2016 identified that at least 25% of VTSSs are now providing services beyond the territorial sea</i></p>	The safety, security, efficiency of navigation and the protection of the marine environment in these areas cannot be assured in the same manner as within territorial sea.
VTS and Future Developments	The current resolution does not provide a framework to accommodate the development and adoption of emerging developments such as VTS related Maritime Service Portfolios and e-navigation	<p>VTS authorities may be constrained in the provision of present, future or additional services in their area of attention.</p> <p>Interoperability issues.</p> <p>Dis-harmonisation in service provision</p>
Administrative amendments	<p>The Resolution refers to a number of references which are now incorrect or no longer in place. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SOLAS V/8.2 compared to SOLAS Regulation V/12 	The Resolution continues to provide out of date references

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of the requirements to be met and the procedures to be followed in the VTS area in the World VTS Guide. • Levels of Service is referred to but is not defined 	
Role of Competent Authority / VTS Authority	<p>The current Resolution is overly prescriptive on the responsibilities of the Competent Authority and VTS Authority.</p> <p>It does not recognise that circumstances may differ due to international/national law, geographical characteristics, traffic density / diversity, accessibility and environmental conditions.</p>	<p>The current Resolution hinders rather than assists authorities in establishing effective VTS.</p> <p>The responsibilities, role and position of the VTS authority in a certain area may be affected by the lack of this recognition.</p>