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| IALA Guideline |

Guideline XXXX

RECRUITMENT, TRAINING and assessment OF VTS PERSONNEL

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Revisions to this IALA Document are to be noted in the table prior to the issue of a revised document.

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# INTRODUCTION

A major factor in the effective delivery of VTS is the competence and experience of its personnel to:

* Provide timely and relevant information on factors that may influence the ship's transit and to assist on-board decision making
* Monitor and manage traffic to ensure the safety and efficiency of ship movements
* Respond to developing unsafe situations to assist the decision-making process on board

Training and certification for VTS personnel is recognised internationally through the following framework:

* **IMO Resolution A.857(20) Guideline for Vessel Traffic Services** – The Resolution states that:
* Contracting Government or Governments or the competent authority should ensure that the VTS authority is provided with sufficient staff, appropriately qualified, suitably trained and capable of performing the tasks required (Paragraph 2.2.2.8); and
* ensure that provisions for the training of VTS operators are available (Paragraph 2.2.2.10)
* **IALA Standard 1050 – Training and Certification** provides the framework for harmonising the training and assessment of VTS Personnel worldwide. There are three key components to this standard:
* Training and Certification of VTS Personnel
* Accreditation of Training Organisations
* Model Courses

# DOCUMENT PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance on recruitment, training and assessment of VTS personnel is harmonised world‐wide in accordance with internationally approved guidelines and IALA Standards.

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| This Guideline is associated with IALA *Recommendation R0103 on Training and Certification of VTS Personnel. Recommendation R0103* is a normative provision of IALA Standard 1050 Training and Certification and shall be conformed with in order to claim compliance to the Standard. |

Competent Authorities are encouraged to implement this guidance, together with the associated model courses as a basis for mandatory training in a manner consistent with their domestic legal framework. This may include establishing appropriate qualifications and training requirements to ensure that VTS personnel are certified.

# ROLES AND RESPONSBILITIES

The following excerpts from IMO Resolution A.857(20) Guidelines for Vessel Traffic Services are relevant to training:

*In planning and establishing a VTS, the Government or the Competent Authority should:*

* *determine the services and level to which the services are to be provided by the VTS, having regard to the objectives of the VTS;*
* *ensure that the VTS Authority is provided with sufficient staff, appropriately qualified, suitably trained and capable of performing the tasks required, taking into consideration the type and level of services to be provided;*
* *establish appropriate qualifications and training requirements for VTS operators, taking into consideration the type and level of services to be provided; and*
* *ensure that provisions for the training of VTS operators are available.*

*In operating a VTS the VTS Authority should:*

* *ensure that the standards set by the Competent Authority for types of service and operator qualifications and equipment are met; and*
* *ensure that the VTS operations are harmonised with, where appropriate, ship reporting and routeing measures, aids to navigation, pilotage and port operations.*

# VTS PERSONNEL

VTS personnel are persons that perform the tasks associated with VTS, trained in VTS operations and are appropriately qualified. They actively contribute to the safe, efficient movement of vessel traffic alongside the bridge team and allied services. While the composition / types of roles for personnel may vary from VTS to VTS the roles generally, consist of:

* VTS Operators
* VTS Manager
* OJT Instructors
* Technical staff

## VTS OPERATOR

VTS Operators are responsible for establishing and maintaining a vessel traffic image, interacting with vessel traffic to improve navigation safety within the VTS area. The VTS Operator is also required to respond to developing situations after considering information available.

The VTS Authority may establish VTS Supervisor positions to assist with managing and co-ordinating the operational activities of the VTS centre.

## VTS MANAGER

The VTS Authority may establish a VTS Manager position. The VTS Manager is responsible for managing and   
co-ordinating the activities of the VTS centre on behalf of the VTS Authority. In some cases, a VTS Manager may have the responsibility for more than one VTS centre and may hold VTS Operator/Supervisor qualifications.

The VTS Manager needs to become familiar with operations of participating vessels in the VTS area, the tasks performed by the VTS personnel, and interactions with allied services.

## TRAIN THE TRAINER (OJT INSTRUCTOR)

The VTS Authority should have VTS personnel trained to provide and coordinate local training at the VTS centre (eg On-the-Job, Update, Adaptation). The Train the Trainer/Instructor should be conversant with the processes and procedures of the VTS centre(s).

VTS Personnel who demonstrate aptitude for training should be encouraged to:

* obtain ability and experience in instructional techniques
* develop and deliver training programmes
* assess competence of the training objective

## TECHNICAL SUPPORT PERSONNEL

The VTS Authority may use internal technical personnel and/or external service providers to support and maintain VTS equipment. The VTS Authority should ensure that the technical personnel have the necessary skills and knowledge required to carry out the work efficiently and effectively.

# SELECTION AND RECRUITMENT

## POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

VTS Authorities are responsible for developing detailed job descriptions for VTS personnel. Position descriptions should focus on the functions and the objectives of that VTS Centre.

## SELECTION PROCESS

The VTS Authority should have policies and processes in place for the selection and recruitment of VTS personnel. This may include minimum entry requirements such as:

* prior skills and knowledge
* maritime experience and education
* personal suitability characteristics
* medical fitness requirements

English is the accepted language of international business, trade and diplomacy. Subsequently there is a very high demand for English. Potential candidates should demonstrate using reliable tests they have attained a sufficient level of the language.

It is important that a VTS authority assess the suitability of the candidates to perform the required VTS tasks. The selection process may include assessing the personal attributes, aptitude testing, assessment of prior learning and satisfying the medical/physical requirements.

### PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

Personal attributes are important in the selection process and can be measured in the following manner:

* personality as a prediction of future behaviour, which should be carried out by a behavioural specialist
* behaviour, which is typically assessed by representatives of the VTS centre. Candidates should at a minimum show an appropriate sense of responsibility, demonstrate independence as well as having a willingness to   
  co-operate with others as part of a team.

### APTITUDE/PSYHOMETRIC TESTING

The VTS Authority should consider personal aptitude and suitability requirements for each candidate, even if they have previous maritime experience.

To assess the applicant’s aptitude and suitability, different types of tests and evaluations may be used, this could include, but not be limited to:

* interviews
* written tests
* practical test or exercise
* psychometric tests

Assessments should be designed to evaluate the suitability of a candidate within a VTS environment by:

* distinguishing among relevant and irrelevant information (eg assess the relative movement of fixed and moving objects)
* combining auditory and visual information
* demonstrating spatial and situational awareness
* demonstrating alertness and decisiveness when required
* carrying out several tasks simultaneously (multi-tasking)
* carrying out routine work without losing situational awareness
* prioritising and deciding what situations require immediate action
* show initiative and make decisions while working within a framework of standards, regulations and structured procedures
* working under conditions of stress
* demonstrating effective participation as a member of a team
* demonstrating appropriate communication and literacy skills (written and oral)

### MEDICAL / PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

The VTS Authority may establish policies, which candidates and VTS personnel need to meet such as medical, hearing and optical requirements.

## SHIFTWORK

People vary in how they cope with shift work depending on their health, fitness, age, lifestyle, and domestic responsibilities - some adapt well, others do not.

In the recruitment process, a candidate should be provided with information about the VTS’s shiftwork environment. Further, if they are successful it may be possible to offer work experience to allow the candidate to make an informed decision to whether shiftwork is suitable for them.

VTS Authorities may establish policies and procedures associated with the management of shift rosters and fatigue management.

# TRAINING

## introduction

Training of VTS personnel follows the STCW format used by IMO for the training of shipboard personnel and sets out the requirements for competency-based training for such personnel.

The levels of competence tables contained in IALA Model Courses are based on the STCW 95 Code and follow a similar format to the IMO Model Courses. The teaching syllabus identifies the level of competence, the knowledge, understanding and proficiency that are required including the methods for demonstrating competency and the criteria by which it should be evaluated.

## RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

Depending on the formal training and experience of a candidate, it is possible that exemptions from a module or subject elements within a VTS Model Course are sought. The training organisation delivering the accredited model course should assess a candidates prior learning.

Various assessment methods are available to provide an accurate measure of the candidate’s prior learning. A combination of methods may be needed to ensure that all aspects of prior learning are taken into account.

When the prior learning assessment indicates the candidate has the necessary competence, then no training is required for that particular subject. However, where the assessment indicates that the competence levels are not being met, then appropriate training should be given.

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| *IALA Guideline 1017 - Assessment of Prior Learning exemptions for VTS model courses ~~Assessment of Training for VTS~~* provides further guidance on the recognition of prior learning. |

## MODEL COURSES

Competent Authorities are encouraged to adopt the IALA Model Courses as part of the basis for mandatory training in a manner consistent with their domestic legal framework.

The basis of VTS training is set out in the following IALA Model Courses:

* V‐103/1 - VTS Operator Training
* V‐103/2 - VTS Supervisor Training
* V‐103/3 - VTS On‐the‐Job Training
* V‐103/4 -VTS On‐the‐Job Training Instructor
* V‐103/5 - Revalidation of VTS Qualifications ~~The Revalidation Process for VTS Qualification and Certification~~.

These courses are designed to produce universally common international standards of training for VTS personnel by taking into account the training previously received and experience. Model courses can be further adapted to meet the training needs of a candidate, and to ensure the course meets the requirements of the Competent/VTS Authority.

All training and assessment of VTS Personnel should be:

* structured in accordance with written programmes, including such methods and media of delivery, procedures, and course material as are necessary to achieve the prescribed standard of competence.
* conducted, monitored, evaluated and supported by persons appropriately qualified.

### V103/1 - VTS OPERATOR MODEL COURSE

The VTS Operator course provides a student with the qualifications to enable them to perform the duties of a VTS Operator. In particular, it provides the curriculum to ensure a student has the requisite understanding and skill sets to:

* provide timely and relevant information on factors that may influence the ship's transit and to assist on-board decision making
* monitor and manage traffic to ensure the safety and efficiency of ship movements.
* respond to developing unsafe situations to assist the decision-making process on board

### V103/2 - VTS SUPERVISOR (MODEL COURSE)

The VTS Supervisor course provides a qualified VTS operator with the additional skills to:

* undertake duties to support the management of the VTS centre
* lead and supervise as appropriate

This course builds upon the qualifications acquired in the V103/1 VTS operator course. A high level refresher programme of key subject areas such as the legislative framework and waterway and traffic management aims to reinforce the critical elements of being a VTS operator.

### ON-THE-JOB (V103/3 MODEL COURSE)

The VTS Authority shall develop the on-the-job training syllabus based on the V103/3 model course, taking into account the requirements of the particular VTS Centre.

The On-the-Job training course provides a VTS Authority with a consistent approach to train new staff to be confident in the specific operations at the VTS centre before being authorised to carry out the duties of a VTS Operator.

This course provides a new trainee with a comprehensive understanding of the:

* local VTS area
* legislative framework they operate within
* equipment used at the VTS centre
* operational and emergency procedures

Practical training is normally conducted on a one-on-one basis with an On-The-Job Instructor.

A task book (training log) should be used to show progress the trainee is making with their training. The task book should show the number of hours allocated and/or the time taken to complete each task. Training times should be dependent on the experience of trainees.

VTS Authorities need to determine when OJT training is undertaken to best meet their operational requirements. For example, OJT training may be completed:

* prior to the trainee attending formal V103/1 VTS operator training
* after a trainee attends formal V103/1 VTS operator training
* in multiple stages, with some training prior to, and after completing formal V103/1 VTS operator training

### V103/4 - OJT INSTRUCTOR

The On-the-Job training (OJT) instructor’s course is designed to provide VTS Authorities with a consistent approach to deliver and assess competency of a new trainee at a VTS centre.

The course ensures that an instructor has the necessary tools to deliver an On-the-Job Training (OJT) programme. In particular, to:

* Create and validate training programmes
* Delivery of training programmes
* Competency assessment and evaluation of a trainees progress
* Development of instructional, coaching and mentoring skills

### V103/5 - REVALIDATION OF VTS QUALIFICATIONS

This course provide a structured means for VTS personnel to reinforce previous VTS training, and maintain a certain level of performance and skills in areas or knowledge which are infrequently used. Revalidation Training should cover generic and area specific elements of competency.

Upon the successful completion of this course, VTS personnel should have demonstrated the skill, knowledge and experience to revalidate their VTS qualifications in order to perform their roles effectively and satisfactory maintain a high level of competence.

## ACCREDIATION OF VTS MODEL COURSES

A training organisation intending to provide VTS training should apply for accreditation to the Competent Authority of the country, in which it is located. The Competent Authority or an authority designated and approved by the Competent Authority should carry out an audit in order to ensure that the IALA standards as well as any other requirements are met by the training organisation.

The purpose of approval is to ensure that VTS training courses deliver consistent training for VTS personnel in accordance with IALA Recommendation V-103 and the respective Model Courses. It is also important that the Model Courses be delivered under an approved quality system (eg Training Management System).

A list of all training organisations accredited to deliver VTS model courses are available on the IALA website.

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| *IALA Guideline 1014 - Accreditation and Approval Process for VTS Training* sets out the process by which VTS Training Courses can be accredited. |

## USE OF SIMULATORS

Simulators offer an excellent interactive environment where the skills and competencies are practiced and VTS personnel assessed. Wherever practical, simulation exercises should be used in the training programme.

VTS simulation provides a dynamic environment that can be used to train in the operation of equipment, procedural knowledge, reactive capabilities and emergency response. The realism and complexity of the exercises should increase as the training proceeds. If the capabilities, limitations and possible errors of the equipment used should be part of the simulator training.

Scenarios which rarely occur may also be integrated in simulator training, in order to improve readiness for such situations.

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| *IALA Guideline 1027 – Simulation in VTS training* contains information about the design and implementation of VTS exercises using a simulator. |

# QUALIFICATIONS for INSTRUCTORS AND ASSESSORS

Competent Authorities should ensure that instructors and assessors are appropriately qualified and experienced for the particular training and assessment of competence. Such qualifications and experience should be incorporated in the quality standards. Appropriate training in teaching techniques, training and assessment methods and possibly practices should be offered to the instructors and assessors on a regular basis.

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| *IALA Guideline 1103 – Train the trainer* assists individuals with the preparation of and development of training courses.  *IALA V103/4 On-the-Job Training Instructor model course* provides a structure to ensure trainers have competency to deliver VTS training courses. |

## INSTRUCTORS

Any person conducting VTS training should:

* have a detailed understanding of the training programme and of the specific training objectives for the type of training being conducted
* be qualified in the task for which training is being conducted
* have a balance of professional and teaching qualifications
* if conducting training with the use of a simulator:
* have received guidance in instructional techniques involving the use of simulators, and
* have gained practical and operational experience on the simulator being used.

## ASSESSORS

Any person conducting assessment of competence of VTS personnel during training should:

* have a good level of knowledge and understanding of the competence to be assessed
* be qualified in the task for which the assessment is being made
* have received guidance in assessment methods and practices
* have gained practical assessment experience
* if conducting assessment involving the use of simulators, have gained practical instruction on the type of simulator under the supervision, to the satisfaction of an experienced assessor

# QUALIFICATION AND CERTIFICATION

## QUALIFICATION

Qualification is the education, knowledge, skill, experience or any other attribute which the VTS Authority has determined desirable for performing the duties of the relevant position. VTS qualifications should be based on the principle that satisfactory results are obtained on completion of the IALA VTS Model Courses.

VTS personnel should only be considered competent when appropriately trained and qualified for their VTS duties. This includes:

* satisfactorily completing generic V103/1 VTS operator training approved by a Competent Authority
* satisfactorily completing V103/4 On-the-Job training at the VTS where the person is employed
* undergoing periodic assessments and revalidation training to ensure competence is maintained; and
* being in possession of appropriate certification.

VTS qualifications should be periodically revalidated to ensure the operational performance of the operator is maintained.

## CERTIFICATION

Certification is the paper, or education, or training that suggests that a person is qualified to perform the duties of that job. Typically participants will receive a certificate as recognition for successfully completing a course.

## VTS COURSE CERTIFICATE

A Course Certificate is a document awarded by the accredited VTS training organisation, to indicate that a participant has successful completed of their VTS training Course. The course certificate should include:

* the candidate’s full name
* the country in which it was awarded
* signature of the issuing Authority and the training organisation
* the relevant course
* date of birth and/or unique identification information
* the date of award
* the unique serial number of the course certificate

The use of the IALA logo on a VTS model course certificate recognises that the Competent Authority has accredited the delivery of that VTS model course by a training organisation.

## RECOGNITION OF CERTIFICATES

Where suitable reciprocal arrangements apply, the Competent Authority of one Country or State should recognise a VTS course certificate of another Country or State provided that the:

* certificate has been issued in accordance with *Recommendation R0103 on Training and Certification of VTS Personnel*
* Competent Authority is satisfied with the training arrangements of the other Country or State concerned.

## VALIDITY

A qualification should be valid until either:

* an assessment indicates that the holder has fallen below the standards, including medical requirements, set by the Competent Authority for qualifications
* there is a break in service, for whatever reason, for a period defined by the Competent Authority, or
* the maximum time period for undertaking revalidation training has been reached.

## MAINTAINING TRAINING RECORDS

The VTS Authority should maintain training records for each VTS personnel:

* On-the-Job training at each VTS at which the holder is employed, the name of the OJT assessor and the date the training was completed
* VTS training courses (eg VTS Operator, Supervisor, OJT Instructor) successfully completed including the name of the organisation where the course was undertaken
* regular assessment records and the result thereof
* any break in service defined by the Competent/VTS Authority
* revalidation records including the name of the organisation at which the Certificate was revalidated, the signature of the person responsible for the revalidation, and the date of revalidation
* any other relevant course, or training successfully completed (eg first aid training)

VTS course certificates and certification logs should be in the official language or languages of the awarding country. If the language used is not English, the text should include a translation into that language.

The Competent Authority / VTS Authority may consider issuing a VTS certification log as a means to formally record course certificates and training activities of VTS personnel. The log should include (but not be limited to):

* the holders full name
* the country in which it was awarded
* date of birth and/or unique identification information
* the date of issue
* a unique serial number
* brief details of the VTS course certificate(s) held, including their serial number.

# MAINTAINING THE QUALFICATIONS

## OVERVIEW

Refresher Training should be undertaken to ensure that VTS Personnel maintain their qualifications to a satisfactory level of operational performance.

The flowchart below describes the steps necessary in order to enable the revalidation of a VTS qualification.

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REVALIDATION TRAINING

1. Process for the revalidation of VTS qualifications

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| *Notes on Figure 2:*   1. *Performance assessments should be carried out at regular intervals, preferably annually.* 2. *It is recommended that Revalidation Training be carried out at intervals of not exceeding five years.* 3. *Updating Training and Adaptation Training should be carried out when deemed necessary.* |

Prior to the commencement of any Refresher Training programme, VTS personnel should be provided with written information regarding the training and their rights (for example, review the exercise, how to ask for a second opinion, appeal etc.). This information should include:

1. The date, time and location where the training will be given

2. The name of the instructor(s)

3. Whether an assessment will be part of the procedure and what level of performance is expected

4. The consequences of not passing the assessment

## PERIODIC PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

It is essential that once VTS personnel are suitably qualified and trained, their performance must be observed and monitored to ensure that the established standards continues to be met.

A VTS Supervisor or Manager should carry out performance assessments on VTS Personnel at regular intervals, preferably annually, to ensure their qualifications continue to be met. This regular assessment may take the form of performance monitoring/review or appraisal.

Where the qualifications standards set by the VTS Authority are not being met, then updating training with these individuals or any other measure as deemed appropriate should be considered to help maintain their qualifications.

## ONGOING REFRESHER TRAINING

Refresher training assists with maintaining a satisfactory level of operational performance in order to retain, develop and increase their competency. In turn, this will assist in ensuring the safety and efficiency of navigation in a designated VTS area.

The VTS Authority should implement a process for refresher training to ensure that VTS personnel maintain their qualifications.

### ADAPTATION TRAINING

Adaptation Training should be carried out whenever significant changes are expected, or when changes have been made concerning equipment, regulations, operational procedures or any other matter relevant to the performance of VTS personnel.

It is recommended that Adaptation Training should be completed, if possible, before the change(s) takes place.

A programme of Adaptation Training should be developed on a case-by-case basis taking full account of the nature of the specific change(s). In developing an Adaptation Training programme, a training needs analysis should be undertaken to determine the nature of the planned change in order to design, develop and implement the required training and to subsequently assess the performance of VTS personnel. The training should consist of a structured scheme of work and/or detailed lesson/training plans for each subject area with clear learning goals based on the results of the training needs analysis.

The VTS Authority would need to identify as part of the training analysis who would be best positioned to develop and deliver the Adaptation Training. This may be in-house, a Training Organisation, a service provider (eg company installing VTS equipment), or a combination of various parties.

### UPDATE TRAINING

Updating Training provides a structured means for an individual to regain or re-acquiring professional knowledge and skills as well as to reinforce previous training. This may be required due to a number of reasons:

* After a break in service
* After a VTS qualification or endorsement has expired
* Following an unsatisfactory outcome of an operational performance assessment or proficiency check of a VTS personnel following Revalidation Training
* Upon request of a VTS Operator
* When deemed necessary by the Competent and/or VTS authority

After an event that triggers a requirement for Updating Training, a training needs analysis should be undertaken to determine any performance gaps, and identify training goals and the associated levels of performance to be achieved. The results from the analysis should be used when developing the individuals training programme.

Updating Training will be an individually tailored covering generic and/or area specific elements of competency. For example, this may include the repetition, in full or components of IALA Model Course V-103/1 and/or V-103/3 as appropriate.

After a break in service of three months or more, a VTS Authority should consider undertaking a training needs analysis to identify whether Update Training is required, taking into account the complexity of the VTS area and their duties.

The training needs analysis will form the basis of the Updating Training which should be specified in, and be communicated to the VTS Operator prior to the training commencing.

Prior to the update training commencing, VTS personnel should be provided with the objectives of the training programme, the duration and format of the training.

### CONTINUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

VTS Authorities are recommended to develop a programme of ongoing Continual Professional Development to ensure that the standard of training is maintained.

Continual Professional Development may consist of the following areas:

* Review and analysis of lessons learned from local VTS operations
* Regular updates of regulatory, procedural and technological developments
* Continual development through familiarisation trips on vessels with pilots or other stakeholders
* Visits to allied services, adjacent VTS centres or other similar organisations
* Attendance and participation in relevant emergency or procedural exercises.

Further, VTS personnel should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own personal continued professional development as a core component of their role.

## FORMAL REVALIDATION TRAINING

Revalidation Training provides a structured means to ensure the holder of a VTS qualification maintains their professional currency, reinforcement of previous training, and providing for continuous professional development.

Revalidation of a VTS qualification may be required when:

* The VTS qualification or VTS certification log is approaching its expiry date
* There are changes in the physical environment of the VTS, or tasks which necessitate additional training for VTS personnel
* There is a break in service, unsatisfactory operational performance or other circumstances leading to a reduced level of competence

A structured training programme should be implement to enable the continual professional development of the individual and the maintenance of the VTS qualification. IALA have developed V103/5 Model Course to assist with revalidation.

The Competent Authority should determine the frequency of the Revalidation Training programme. However, it is recommended that Revalidation Training should be carried out at intervals not exceeding five years.

# VTS CAREER PROGRESSION

The formal recognition of VTS qualifications provides the foundation for a professional framework similar to that adopted by the shipping and pilotage industry. The regular validation of these qualifications seeks to create quality standards comparable to other professions.

Additionally, there is scope for career progression with VTS personnel being able to make continued use of the skills and experience gained, in either VTS, or other maritime environments (See example in Figure 2).

**RECRUITMENT**

**VTS AUTHORITY**

**OJT**

**OPERATOR**

**SUPERVISOR**

**INSTRUCTORS**

**MANAGER**

**SOURCES**

PORT/HARBOUR

ADMINISTRATION

COAST GUARD

PILOTAGE

MERCHANT NAVY

NON-MARITIME

OTHER VTS AUTHORITIES

VTS TRAINING ORGANISATIONS

VTS CONSULTANCY

NATIONAL / INTERNATIONAL

MARITIME ADMINISTRATIONS

1. Career progression

# DEFINITIONS

The definitions of terms used in this Guideline can be found in the International Dictionary of Marine Aids to Navigation (IALA Dictionary) at <http://www.iala-aism.org/wiki/dictionary> and were checked as correct at the time of going to print. Where conflict arises, the IALA Dictionary should be considered as the authoritative source of definitions used in IALA documents.

# ACRONYMS

[Acronym] [Acronym]

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