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**□** ENAV **X** VTS **□** Information

Agenda item 7.3

Technical Domain / Task Number …………………………………

Author(s) / Submitter(s) China Maritime Safety Administration

Proposal for developing a Guideline on Quality Management System for Vessel Traffic Service

# Summary

China MSA has submitted Task register (VTS 51-7.3.2) and draft guideline framework (VTS 51-7.3.2.1) on Quality Management System for Vessel Traffic Service at IALA VTS51, and was included in Provisional 2023-2027 Task Plan (VTS51 -13.3.0.2). On this basis, China MSA continues to submit this proposal and draft guideline to further elaborate the necessity of additional new work items, and provide draft guideline and work plan for discussion.

## Purpose of the document

To discuss and provide draft Guideline on Quality Management System for Vessel Traffic Service for the VTS Committee to consider for inclusion it in the 2023-2027 work plan and further advancement it.

## Related documents

VTS51-7.3.2 Task register proposal 2022-2026-Guideline on quality management system for VTS.

VTS51-7.3.2.1 Guideline of quality management system for vessel traffic services (draft framework)

VTS51-13.3.0.2 WP Provisional 2023 – 2027 Task Plan.

# Background

The quality management system is an effective tool for VTS providers to efficiently manage, operate and drive continuous improvement. It also helps the global VTS to provide a coordinated and unified service. It is established and used by the majority of VTS providers worldwide.[[1]](#footnote-1)

At the same time, IALA also encourages and guides competent authorities to establish and operate quality management systems in relevant recommendations and guidelines, but there is a lack of specific guidance documents on VTS quality management system.

Based on the above considerations, China MSA has submitted the Task Register Proposal and DRAFT GUIDELINE FRAMEWORK at VTS51, and the VTS Committee has included them in the interim work plan of 2023-2027. Members are also invited to continue to provide suggestions for the 2023-2027 work plan.

# Discussion

## The foundation and requirements of developing guideline on QMS for Vessel Traffic Service

1. Although there are unique circumstances surrounding the work that VTS provider undertake, in many ways the overall objectives of all businesses are the same: To perform satisfactorily, meet customer requirements and continuously improve. In the case of the provision of vessel traffic services, the customer is the mariner and the aim is to assist the mariner in making safe and efficient passage. The mariner also requires consistency of vessel traffic delivery from the VTS provider, which can be achieved through the development and maintenance of a Quality Management System (QMS). Therefore, IALA encourage the global AtoN authorities, including VTS providers, to operate under a Quality Management System. IALA also assist the authorities in implementing and maintaining QMS by the following guidance:

* R0132 Quality management for Aids to Navigation authorities
* G1052 Quality Management Systems for Aids to Navigation Service Delivery

1. From the perspective of single VTS operation，it is recommended by IALA that, VTS provider should ensure the on‐going integrity of the QMS through periodic review / audit. From the perspective of global VTS operation, IALA has always been committed to the delivery of vessel traffic services in a consistent and harmonized manner globally. Meanwhile, Vessel Traffic Services implemented by a Competent authority are subject to the IMO Member State Audit Scheme (IMSAS) in view of the fact that all IMO audits from 1 January 2016 is mandatory and should be arranged and carried out in line with the framework and procedures for the IMO Member State Audit Scheme and using the IMO Instruments Implementation Code (III Code) as the audit standard. According to auditing practices and IMO A.1067 (28), A.1070 (28) and IALA relevant guidelines, established QMS will assist Competent authority / VTS provider when preparing for such an audit. Relevant documents include:

* R1013 Auditing and assessing Vessel Traffic Services
* G1101 Auditing and assessing VTS
* G1115 Preparing for an IMO Member State Audit Scheme (IMSAS) on Vessel Traffic Services

1. IALA also published the following documents to assists VTS provider in identifying key aspects that should be considered when developing operational procedures.

* R0127 VTS Operations
* G1141 Operational procedures for delivering VTS

1. Based on the above facts, the VTS quality management system plays an important role in the continuous and effective operation of each VTS provider and the coordinated operation of the global VTS. Although IALA has also issued recommendations and guidelines for AtoN authorities, it is necessary to establish specific guidelines for VTS quality management to better guide member states to establish and implement VTS quality management system due to its unique legal system (including SOLAS convention, IMO resolution, etc.), personnel composition, operation mode, and service mode, In order, the following items shall be specified:

* Scope
* Context of the VTS organization
* The needs of VTS interested parties
* Actions to address VTS risks and opportunities
* VTS quality policy and objectives
* VTS resource management
* VTS knowledge management
* VTS service provision
* Evaluation and review
* VTS records, etc.

## Expected Outcome

1. Objective

The proposed Guideline on VTS QMS is intended to assist the Competent authority / VTS provider in implementing and maintaining QMS. It is not intended to formulate a template for VTS QMS.

1. Model and scope

The proposed VTS QMS guide chooses ISO 9001:2015 as the model, focuses on the unique characteristics of VTS and other services, and expounds the application scope, objectives and policies, organizational structure, risk management, resource management, performance evaluation and other quality management system elements. (See enclosure 1 for details)

1. Document categorize

According to the IALA document structure, the proposed VTS QMS guideline is proposed under the IALA Recommendation R0132 and alongside the G1052.

## Road map

1. Preparation

It is recommended that the preparatory work, such as the questionnaire, be initiated at the same time as the VTS Committee submits its project proposal to the Council. China MSA has designed a questionnaire for this topic (enclosure 2) to collect the establishment, reference standards, operation of VTS QMS in various countries, as well as the needs and suggestions for VTS QMS guidelines.

1. Implementation

The task is expected to be completed within four sessions

# References

1. SOLAS
2. IMO Resolutions A.1158(32) GUIDELINES FOR VESSEL TRAFFIC SERVICES
3. ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management Systems-Requirements
4. IALA R0132, G1052
5. IALA R1013, G1101, G1115
6. IALA R0127, G1141
7. A Global View of Vessel Traffic Services - Preliminary Results from the IALA VTS Questionnaire (2016)

# Action requested of the Committee

The Committee is requested to:

1. Consider the need to a new output in 2023 – 2027 Task Plan for developing a Guideline on Quality Management in VTS operation
2. Consider the associated attachments and take action, as appropriate.

# enclosures

1. Draft of Guideline on Quality Management System for Vessel Traffic Service
2. Questionnaire for VTS QMS

1. From “A Global View of Vessel Traffic Services - Preliminary Results from the IALA VTS Questionnaire (2016)” [↑](#footnote-ref-1)