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|  | VTS42-8.6.1 (VTS41-12.2.2) |
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# Review/Update IMO Resolution A.857(20)

**Proposed Approach**

# Purpose

The purpose of this document is to communicate the proposed approach for the review/update of A.857(20) Guidelines for VTS (Task 1.4.2) by the VTS Committee.

The document highlights the key issues for VTS Committee members to consider intersessionally for further development at VTS42.

# Discussion

2.1 The following points are considered to be relatively uncontroversial and can be included without further detailed debate:

1. Review all references and correct as necessary (e.g. Change SOLAS V/8.2 to SOLAS Regulation V/12).
2. Annex 2 be deleted - "Guidelines on Recruitment, Qualification and Training of VT Operators". It is suggested that in its place, incorporate a very short section outlining the need for institute accreditation, course approval, operator training, maintenance of qualifications and recruitment as an additional section in the main body of the resolution, cross-referring to IALA documentation and standards.

* Care to be taken to keep this at very high-level to ensure that maximum flexibility exists for IALA documentation to be revised and updated without having to make recourse to IMO for further amendments of the new resolution).
* Rationale: When Resolution was issued in 1997, IALA V-103 and model courses did not exist. These and other IALA documents set out the detailed requirements and the Resolution should be worded to give them validity.

2.2 The following points have also been identified for possible inclusion in the review/update of A.857(20):

* 1. Resolution as a whole is in need of restructuring. Similar issues are addressed in different parts of the resolution and there is a lack of coherency.
  2. Update of the Resolution should be aligned as appropriate to existing policy set out by IMO and in SOLAS.
  3. It is an objective of IALA to set out common VTS standards and procedures for VTS for adoption in all VTS worldwide. The IALA VTS Strategy (Goal 2) is “Worldwide harmonized, coordinated and seamless delivery of VTS”.
  4. In progressing the review of A.857(20) consideration will be given to the IALA VTS Strategy, its principles and associated annexes.
  5. In progressing 2.2.d above, elements identified which may require amendments to SOLAS Chapter V should be collated and considered as the basis for a future work programme item for the VTS Committee.
  6. Relegate definitions to the end of the document and review once update is nearing completion.
  7. The introduction should address "International Framework" leading to "Obligations of Governments" and the need to reflect this in National Law.
  8. The "Responsibilities and Liabilities" of Governments or Competent Authorities set out in Section 2.2, sub-paragraphs 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 should be drawn forward to this introductory section.
  9. There is a need to clarify what a VTS really is and to set out the principles of a VTS more clearly. These are currently distributed between sections/subparagraphs 2.1, 2.2.3 and 2.3.
  10. Section 3.2 on "Guidance for planning a vessel traffic service”, should be reviewed against IALA Recommendation V-119 and, as for training above, the IALA link identified and the IMO Resolution text reduced to the key hooks for IALA to develop.
  11. Notwithstanding the revised guidance issued in Guideline 1089 in 2012, confusion continues over Types of Service that "*currently are a source for continuous debate*" (IALA VTS Strategy Paper - annex B).
  12. A VTS would normally be expected to provide the functions currently identified as INS, TOS and NAS. Consideration should be given to these functions being taken forward with the range of tasks that a VTS might be expected to provide to achieve the required objectives. (See discussion that follows).

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| **Types of Service**  Of the key issues above, amendment to the types of service deserves further explanation for a full understanding:   * The purpose of VTS as set out in subparagraph 2.1.1 is as relevant today as it was in 1997 namely to "*improve the safety and efficiency of navigation, safety of life at sea and the protection of the marine environment and/or the adjacent shore area, worksites and offshore installations from possible adverse effects of maritime traffic*". * IALA Guideline 1089 suggested that "*When a VTS Authority organises and manages traffic within its VTS Area ... then it would normally also declare the provision of a Traffic Organisation service*" and that "*a VTS Authority should declare a Navigational Assistance Service (NAS) in addition to an Information Service (INS) or Traffic Organisation Service (TOS)*".   VTS Perspective  The establishment and on-going operation of a VTS is a considerable investment (equipment, staff, training, communications, etc). After undertaking such a major investment it is considered most unlikely that a VTS would not manage the vessel traffic in its area of responsibility. 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.  Ports not authorised as a VTS often provide information to ships through mechanisms such as “harbour control”, “local port services” delivered by personnel not trained in VTS and who may not monitor the effects.  In contrast, a VTS provides information, manages vessel traffic and oversees the navigational safety from a VTS Centre in which the effects are monitored by appropriately trained and certificated personnel on a continuous basis for the declared period of service. These functions are delivered through the provision of information, warnings, advice and instruction for which all VTSs should be capable.  Mariners Perspective  The mariner expects to be informed, managed and advised irrespective of any services formally declared. The differentiation between services is unlikely to be recognised. |