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| **From:** | VTS Committee | VTS51-13.1.1.5 |
| **To:** | ENAV Committee  ARM Committee  ENG Committee  MASS Task Force | 7 October 2021 |

**LIAISON NOTE**

**Operations and Trials of Autonomous Ships - ‘Case Studies’**

# introduction

The use of case studies has been identified as a potentially useful tool to assist the VTS Committee achieve a common understanding of MASS, its implications on the provision of VTS, and remain cognizant of developments associated with the many tests and trials being conducted world-wide.

# background

The Committee commenced work on *Task 1.4.3 Development of Guidance on the Implications of Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS) from a VTS Perspective* at VTS50. A component of the task includes preparing a discussion paper describing the implications of MASS on the provision of VTS and its regulatory and legal framework. The paper should:

* Clearly and concisely identify:
  + - Trends and opportunities presented by MASS.
    - Issues / challenges for the management of ship traffic in a VTS area.
    - Options, policies, and strategies for VTS to embrace / influence MASS.
    - Implications for the regulatory and legal framework for VTS.
    - Implications for IALA Standards relating to VTS.
* Provide the basis for strategically planning for MASS and determining new work programme tasks associated with the preparation of new/amended IALA guidance from a VTS perspective (e.g., a new guideline)

# Discussion

In preparing the Discussion Paper, the use of ‘case studies’ was identified as a potentially useful tool to assist the Committee achieve a common understanding of MASS and its implications on the provision of VTS. Particularly, ‘case studies’ provide a mechanism to gain insight into ‘trials’ and test beds’ being conducted, outcomes, lessons learnt, emerging information, implications for VTS, etc.

A draft document highlighting possible projects being conducted, or about to commence, in 12 countries was prepared at VTS51. A copy of the draft document is attached.

It is recognised that not all projects identified may ultimately be appropriate as ‘case studies’ and the list will grow in the near future. However, the Committee is of the view that the document provides a basis to identify/shortlist projects that may provide useful ‘case studies’ to monitor and with a view to members/IALA exploring some level of engagement/involvement in the projects as appropriate.

It was also identified that with the rapid developments associated with MASS and associated supporting technologies there would be benefits in circulating the draft document to the other IALA Committees and the IALA Task Force for their information.

**Action requested**

The ENAV, ARM and ENG Committees, and the MASS Task Force, are requested to:

* Note the ‘case studies’ document being prepared by the VTS Committee; and
* Give consideration to adapting the ‘Case Studies’ template to also flag studies which may also have implications/interest for their Committee.