VTS35 Input paper

Agenda item 8.3

Task Number 3

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Review of IMO Resolution A.857(20)

Guidelines for Vessel Traffic Services

# Summary

The review of Resolution A.857(20) is an important but time consuming task. During the process it became quite clear that it will be extremely difficult to incorporate the rapid amount of recent and foreseen developments with respect to VTS in such a way that the final result can replace the present Resolution as a legislative tool. The Netherlands organizations and experts participating in the VTS Committee concluded that, among others, the recent decision by Council in respect to the development of a Strategy Paper for the future delivery of VTS may affect the current task concerning the review of de review van Resolution.

It was felt that the relevant work of the VTS Committee is at the parting of the ways. There are a number of good reasons to discuss this in the Committee.

In chapter 3 of this document a number of argumentative considerations are reflected. Chapter 4 provides aspects for a substantial discussion and in chapter 5 advises and proposals are given for a more structured approach in time to review of the Resolution and the way to inform the IMO.

## Purpose of the document

The VTS Committee to discuss this paper (the concerns, the reflected considerations) and the offered proposals to rearrange the process of work of the Committee and to inform the IALA Council accordingly.

## Related documents

VTS35-6, VTS35-7, VTS35-8, VTS35-22, VTS35-26, VTS35-30, VTS35-33, VTS35-35, VTS35-40/41

# Background

The review of Resolution A.857(20) is a longstanding and probably the most important task for the VTS Committee as this Resolution provides the regulatory umbrella for the establishment of VTS, the provision of services, the responsibilities and liabilities of the VTS Authorities, their organization and procedures to be executed.

The work for the VTS Committee is reflected in Task 3:   
*“Review/update/provide input to IMO on Resolution A.857 (20) - Guidelines For Vessel Traffic Services”*

Note: the deleted wording “taking into account the development and implementation of the VTM concept” due to the VTM discussion   
 now can be read as “taking into account recent and foreseen developments”.

# CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 This Resolution was developed in 1987 and limited updated since, where appropriate and possible. In the past 25 years VTS evolved and matured under the guidance and work of IALA. However, the rapid developments during the last decade (shipping globalized, increasing traffic density and diversity in many areas worldwide such as coastal waters and harbour approaches and ports, the increasing needs for reliable and in time data and information for decision making processes both ashore and aboard) had and will have their impact on VTS services to be provided as well as on the VTS organizations, such as

* Task 10 “Guidelines on provision of VTS Types of Service”
* Task 11 “Guideline on VTS support and interaction with allied services in emergency situations, SAR, disaster management, law enforcement and regulatory compliance”
* The further development of and discussion on Navigational Assistance Service;

3.2 Recently at its 53rd session the IALA Council decided to assign the Committee with a new Task 21 *“Develop a Strategy Paper on the Needs for the future delivery of VTS”* . - to be started at VTS35.  
It is common use that a Strategy follows a vision, which is based on the mission of VTS (to fulfil present and future needs). In order to define the mission and scope of future VTS a large number of substantial aspects will have to be identified, studied and discussed. The mission and scope and these substantial aspects will have to be incorporated in the Guidelines for VTS i.e. a revised Resolution A.857(20). It should be concluded that the decision by Council and tasking the VTS Committee with Task 21 will have an impact on the execution of present Task 3 *“Review of Resolution A.857(20)”.*

3.3The IALA Council (C51) concluded: that there is demand at IMO for VTS beyond national borders.

The role of IALA in this direction is not to promote the concept but give guidance when it has to be implemented, i.e. when IMO has made practical provision for it in SOLAS Chapter V. IALA should initially work towards such a provision. Council (C52) concluded, based on a document provided by the VTS Committee - dealing solely with guidance based on the use of Ship reporting Systems - that task 2, as set for the 2010 - 2014 Work Programme, is considered complete. Council however acknowledged the potential need to have coastal/inter-country VTSs on their own and that the subject will be addressed at VTS 2012. Council herewith noticed that the discussion and development of “VTS beyond territorial waters” will remain an issue but that the initiative should come from the IMO. In fact, in certain areas in the world, VTS service (INS) is already in practice, however without the proper international legal basis in place (SOLAS) and clarity in respect to the responsibilities and liabilities for the relevant Competent VTS Authorities. It can’t be denied that this is a development of VTS with a future impact on Resolution A.857(20) and other regulations.

3.4 At this moment a review of Resolution A.857(20) nor the revision of SOLAS V, Resolution 12, article 3 are no agenda items for IMO Sub-Committee on the Safety of Navigation (NAV). In order to get the issue on the agenda of NAV the proper procedural process will have to be followed at the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC). This process will take some time. At the other hand, based on the recent observations both in MSC and NAV, it is doubtful whether these Committees are really “waiting” on a revised Resolution A.857(20) from IALA, as they are mainly focussing on other issues, such as e-navigation. It was already recognized in the VTS Committee that also the development of e-navigation (e.g. information management and the Maritime Service Portfolio) will have an impact on the future execution of VTS services.

**4** **DISCUSSION**

The VTS Committee may consider the work and present Working Programme of the VTS Committee as it seems to be at the parting of the ways. Choices may be have to be made to define how to proceed:

a) to continue with the review and update of Resolution A.857(20) with the possible consequences

* that this process goes on in length (experience gained during the last sessions of the VTS Committee shows that the review of this Resolution is a time consuming task and it appeared to be very difficult to incorporate new and recent developments and views in the 25 years old text without creating a regulatory monster, instead of unambiguous and transparent Guidelines)
* that the new draft review of the Resolution will not be coherent with the developments on VTS and will substantially not be ready to submit to the IMO for a long time and therefore acceptance and support may be jeopardized)

b) to rearrange the work of the Committee in such a way that the results and views of the discussions on VTS as mentioned above may be incorporated in a coherent and timely manner into the draft Review of the Resolution and to inform the IMO about IALA’s intentions.

### **5 PROPOSALS**

Based on the considerations and indicated discussion points the following process proposals may be discussed:

1. IALA may consider to develop an INF-paper to be forwarded to both the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC91) and the Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation (NAV57) to inform these committees about

• the *present update process of Resolution A.857(20) Guidelines for VTS* initiated by IALA; an appeal to interested organizations and parties to contribute with suggestions and/or ideas to this IALA process may be included;

• the *initiative by the IALA Council to develop a “Strategy Paper”* to reflect a vision on VTS to address the future of VTS from a strategic point of view, including the provision of a framework and requisite policy objectives for the development of VTS to meet the emerging needs and developments over the next 10-20 years;

• the intention of IALA to initiate a proposal to MSC (MSC93 or MSC94, at the latest early 2014) for the *Review of Resolution A.857(20),* taking into account future development of VTS, *as a work item* on the agenda of IMO/NAV; (note: the actual submission of the proposal will have to be made by one or more IMO member states).

2. In the meantime, in support to a structured approach and process, the following tasks and work -some have to be started (e.g. in VTS35), the results of others still have to be incorporated in the IALA documentation and approved by Council - can be finalized within the actual timeframe (5-6 Committee meetings) of Work Plan 2010-2014:

a) ***Task 10*** *“Guidelines on provision of VTS Types of Service”*

b) ***Task 11*** *“Guideline on VTS support and interaction with allied services in emergency situations, SAR, disaster management, law enforcement and regulatory compliance”* ;

c) ***Task 21*** *“Develop a Strategy Paper on the Needs for the future delivery of VTS”* ;

d) ***Task 2*** *“Develop criteria, guidance or general provisions, for submission to IMO, on establishing and operating a VTS beyond territorial seas, to include a clarification of the difference between a VTS Area established / extending beyond territorial seas ………. etc.”* Not intended is to restart this task as a whole, but to develop a set of criteria and conditions for “VTS beyond territorial waters” from a Coastal State and Harbour State perspective and to incorporate the results in the Strategy Paper as mentioned under c).

3. The results of the tasks and work mentioned under a, b, c and d form input for a further review of Resolution A.857(20). It is therefore proposed to temporize Task 3 *“Review/update/provide input to IMO   
on Resolution A.857 (20) Guidelines For Vessel Traffic Services”* - taking into account recent and foreseen developments - in such a way that all results of the tasks mentioned under 2) can be incorporated as a coherent package into a to be reviewed Resolution A.857(20). The actual review of this Resolution therefore may be one of the spearhead actions of the future Working Program 2014-2018 of the VTS Committee, to be finalized early in the Program (2015).

# 6 Action requested of the Committee

The Committee is requested to:

1. discuss the concerns, considerations and proposals in this document and to endorse, where appropriate;
2. modify the Work Plan 2010-2014 for the VTS Committee accordingly and where appropriate, and request approval from the IALA Council.