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Input paper for the following Committee(s): check as appropriate Purpose of paper:

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Agenda item [[2]](#footnote-2) 8.1

Technical Domain / Task Number 2 operation

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Close quarter situations reporting by VTS

# Summary

The technical and legal issue report enclosed has been produced as part of an academic work. It aims to address a broad audience that is not necessarily expert on safety of navigation, but the lead gradually to a high level of reflection. It complements a first overview on the reporting of close quarter situations by Ushant VTS exposed at the 18th conference of the IALA end of May 2014.

## Purpose of the document

The technical and legal isue enclosed has been posted to the VTS committee either for the new work programme 2014-2018 in particular to produce a guideline on incident/accident reporting and recording, including near miss situations as it relates to VTS. This item is in line with the 1st conclusion of the 18th IALA conference: “IALA should consider providing guidance on anomalous behaviour recognition to improve VTS operations and ship monitoring.”

## Related documents

IMO Res. A 857(20) guidance for VTS **/** SOLAS IX – ISM Code **/** MSC-MEPC.7/Circ.7 guidance on near-miss reporting

# Background

In case of a close quarter situation detected by Ushant VTS, in compliance to the “rules of the road”, it is not obvious to demonstrate an infringement, for the rule 16 relative to the “action by the give-way vessel” should be balanced with rule 17 relative to the “action of the stand-on vessel”. Hence a mail is send to the company of the give-way vessel exposing the analysis of the situation by the VTS with documentary evidences including radar screen prints if necessary. A copy is sent to the Flag State Authority and the Class Society delivering the ISM certificate.

For 6 years that the procedure is in force, Ushant VTS has received positive feed-back from companies, Flag States and Class Societies. Internal feed-back is also very positive for operators training and the quality system of the centre. The number of close quarter reporting has become a real indicator of the VTS activity.

The process of reporting could be enlarged to any other near-misses. But close quarter situations are interesting for the application of COLREG 72 to all ships. This is a long-term process, but patient work collects fruit and the analysis of close quarter situations could help a coast State in reviewing its safety of navigation infrastructures or regulations. Reporting close quarter situations and near-misses in general by VTS would fill a “cultural gap” of safety at IMO and rise up the requirement to the equivalent logic implemented already by ICAO. Reporting culture is the previous element to implement towards a Safety culture in the maritime community. But without any explanation and a Just culture in the maritime community the reporting from VTS would create another burden on seafarers and would strengthen a culture of punishment which is already too persistent.

# Discussion

None

# References

Enclosed document : Technical and legal issue report on “Close quarter situations reporting by VTS” in English and French.

# Action requested of the Committee

The Committee is invited to consider the enclosed document for the new work programme 2014-2018 in particular to produce a guideline on incident/accident reporting and recording, including near-miss situations as it relates to VTS.

1. Input document number, to be assigned by the Committee Secretary [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Leave open if uncertain [↑](#footnote-ref-2)