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| IALA Guideline |

Guideline XXXX

TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT OF VTS PERSONNEL

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# INTRODUCTION

A major factor in the effective delivery of a Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) is the competence and experience of its personnel to:

* provide timely and relevant information on factors that may influence the ship's transit and to assist on-board decision making;
* monitor and manage traffic to ensure the safety and efficiency of ship movements; and
* respond to developing unsafe situations to assist the on-board decision-making process.

Training and certification for VTS personnel is recognised internationally through the following framework:

* **IMO Resolution A.857(20) on Guidelines for Vessel Traffic Services** – The Resolution states, inter-alia, that:
* the Contracting Government or Governments or the competent authority should ensure that the VTS authority is provided with sufficient staff, appropriately qualified, suitably trained and capable of performing the tasks required (paragraph 2.2.2.8); and
* ensure that provisions for the training of VTS operators are available (paragraph 2.2.2.10).
* **IALA Standard 1050 – Training and Certification** specifies the practices associated with the training and assessment of VTS personnel. The Standard references normative provisions which are contained in IALA Recommendations, covering the following scope:
* Training and assessment.
* Accreditation, competency, certification and revalidation

# DOCUMENT PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance on implementing practices associated with training and assessment of VTS personnel in accordance with IALA Standards and IMO Guidelines on vessel traffic services.

Associated with this Guideline are the following Model Courses:

* V‐103/1 VTS Operator Training.
* V‐103/2 VTS Supervisor Training.
* V‐103/3 VTS On‐the‐Job Training.
* V‐103/4 VTS On‐the‐Job Training Instructor.
* V‐103/5 The Revalidation Process for VTS Qualification and Certification.

IALA Standards relating to training and assessment should be taken into account, and where there are national requirements for training and assessment, these should be used.

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| This Guideline is associated with IALA *Recommendation R0103 (V-103) on Training and Certification of VTS Personnel.* Recommendation R0103is a normative provision of IALA Standard 1050 Training and Certification. To demonstrate compliance with this Recommendation the provisions of this Guideline should be implemented. |

IALA Standard 1050 states that “*There are no informative provisions that should be observed if compliance with this Standard is claimed.”*

Note: This document also contains additional information on recruitment and personnel in the Annex’s related to the staffing structure at a VTS centre and associated recruitment activities.

Competent Authorities are encouraged to implement this guidance, together with the associated model courses as a basis for mandatory training in a manner consistent with their domestic legal framework. This may include establishing appropriate qualifications and training requirements to ensure that VTS personnel are certified.

# INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR VTS TRAINING

IMO Resolution A.857(20) on Guidelines for Vessel Traffic Services states that:

*In planning and establishing a VTS, the Government or the Competent Authority should:*

* *ensure that the VTS Authority is provided with sufficient staff, appropriately qualified, suitably trained and capable of performing the tasks required, taking into consideration the type and level of services to be provided (paragraph 2.2.2.8);*
* *establish appropriate qualifications and training requirements for VTS operators, taking into consideration the type and level of services to be provided (paragraph 2.2.2.9); and*
* *ensure that provisions for the training of VTS operators are available (paragraph 2.2.2.10).*

*In operating a VTS the VTS Authority should:*

* *ensure that the standards set by the Competent Authority for types of service and operator qualifications and equipment are met (paragraph 2.2.3.2); and*

IALA Recommendation R0103 on Training and Certification of VTS Personnel states:

* *that competent authorities and VTS authorities implement and establish VTS training and certification in a standardised and harmonised manner in accordance with the guidelines and model courses developed by IALA; and*
* *National Members and competent authorities for VTS to implement the provisions of this Recommendation and its associated Guidelines and Model Courses on VTS training and certification.*

# TRAINING

The training, knowledge and skills needed to undertake the duties associated with VTS personnel are defined in the suite of IALA Model Courses. Each of these provide:

* A teaching syllabus that is presented as a series of learning objectives which define the required knowledge, understanding and proficiency.
* Guidance for instructors to assess competency.

## Recognition of prior learning

Exemptions from a module or subject elements within a VTS model course may be considered depending on the qualifications and training that an individual may already have. The accredited training organisation delivering the approved model course should assess an individuals prior learning.

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| *IALA Guideline 1017 - Assessment of Training for VTS* provides further guidance on the assessment and recognition of prior learning. |

## Model courses

The training and assessment of VTS personnel should be undertaken in accordance with IALA model courses. These include:

* V‐103/1 – Vessel Traffic Service Operator Training;
* V‐103/2 – Vessel Traffic Service Supervisor Training;
* V‐103/3 – Vessel Traffic Service On‐the‐Job Training;
* V‐103/4 – Vessel Traffic Service On‐the‐Job Training Instructor; and
* V‐103/5 – Revalidation Process for VTS Qualification and Certification.

These model courses are intended to provide national members and other appropriate authorities charged with the provision of VTS with specific guidance on the training of VTS Operators.

### V-103/1 VTS Operator

Model Course V-103/1 provides details of the subject areas, knowledge and practical competence required to undertake the duties associated with VTS Operations. In particular, it provides the curriculum to ensure a student has the requisite knowledge, understanding and proficiency to:

* provide timely and relevant information on factors that may influence the ship's transit and to assist on-board decision making;
* monitor and manage traffic to ensure the safety and efficiency of ship movements; and
* respond to developing unsafe situations to assist the decision-making process on board.

### V-103/2 VTS Supervisor

The VTS Supervisor course provides a qualified VTS Operator with the additional knowledge, understanding and proficiency to:

* provide supervision for VTS operations;
* ;
* ensure that co‐ordination takes place between the VTS, allied services and other port facilities and services.

### V-103/3 VTS On-the-Job Training

On-the-Job (OJT) training is intended to provide the knowledge, practical competence, and proficiency to perform the day to day operations at a particular VTS Centre. The OJT program should be based on the V-103/3 Model Course covering areas such as:

* traffic management;
* local knowledge of the VTS area and legislative framework;
* communication co-ordination;
* equipment used at the VTS centre;
* operational and emergency procedures; and
* local publications and documents.

VTS Authorities need to determine when OJT training is undertaken to best meet their operational requirements. For example, OJT training may be completed:

* prior to the trainee attending formal V-103/1 VTS Operator training;
* after a trainee attends formal V-103/1 VTS Operator training; or
* in multiple stages, with some training prior to, and after completing formal V-103/1 VTS Operator training

### V-103/4 VTS On-the-Job Training Instructor

~~The OJT instructor course is designed to assist VTS Authorities and their instructors in the consistent development and implementation of VTS centre specific OJT, Updating Training and Adaptation Training and the subsequent assessment of the competency of their VTS personnel.~~

~~The course ensures that the VTS OJT instructor has the necessary knowledge, understanding and proficiency~~  ~~to:~~

* ~~create and validate training programmes;~~
* ~~deliver training programmes;~~
* ~~competency assessment and evaluation of a trainees progress; and~~
* ~~development of instructional, coaching and mentoring skills.~~

**This alternate text is suggested to replace what is above:**

This model course covers the knowledge and practical competence required of a trainer delivering local training at the VTS centre.

On completion of this course the student should have the necessary skills to deliver local VTS training (eg On-the-Job, Adaption or Update) at a VTS centre, these include:

* The development and ongoing evaluation of training programmes,
* The instructional techniques used to deliver training programmes,
* The communication skills required to conduct a successful briefing and debriefing
* Assessing the performance of a student against the training objectives, and
* Maintaining quality training records.

While this model course is not a mandatory qualification, any trainer delivering and assessing local training at a VTS centre should at a minimum hold this V103/4 qualifications, or an equivalent national qualification.

Note - Some countries may have national requirements for persons undertaking OJT and these need to be taken into consideration.

### V-103/5 Revalidation process for VTS Qualifications and Certification

This course provides a structured means for VTS personnel to reinforce previous VTS training and maintain a certain level of performance and skills in areas or knowledge which are infrequently used. Recurrent Training should cover generic and area specific elements of competency.

Upon the successful completion of this course, VTS personnel should have demonstrated the skill, knowledge and experience to revalidate their VTS qualifications in order to perform their roles effectively and satisfactory maintain a high level of competence.

## Approval of VTS model courses

Model courses provided by accredited Training Organisations should be approved by the Competent Authority.

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| *IALA Guideline 1014 - Accreditation and Approval Process for VTS Training* sets out the process by which a training organisation can be accredited to deliver approved VTS Training Courses. |

[Need a para to clarify responsibility for providing OJT and recurrent training by a VTS Authority]

A list of training organisations accredited to deliver VTS model courses in accordance with IALA Guideline 1014 are available on the IALA website.

## Use of simulators

Simulators offer an excellent interactive environment where skills and competencies may be practiced and VTS personnel assessed. Wherever practical, simulation exercises should be incorporated into training programmes.

VTS simulation provides a dynamic environment that can be used to train in the operation of equipment, procedural knowledge, responding to developing situations and emergency response. The realism and complexity of the exercises should increase as training proceeds.

Scenarios which rarely occur may also be integrated in simulator training, to improve readiness for such situations.

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| *IALA Guideline 1027 – Simulation in VTS training* contains information about the design and implementation of VTS exercises using a simulator. |

# QUALIFICATIONS for INSTRUCTORS AND ASSESSORS

## Instructors and Assessors at Accredited Training Organisations

Authorities should determine the qualifications and experience required for instructors delivering model courses at an accredited training organisation. Authorities should ensure that instructors and assessors hold appropriate and recognised teaching qualifications and that they are appropriately qualified and experienced for the training being provided and assessing competence. The requirements for such qualifications and experience should be incorporated within the accredited training organisations quality and/or training management systems.

## Instructors and Assessors within VTS Authorities

Authorities should ensure that instructors and assessors delivering VTS centre specific training (eg OJT, Updating Training and Adaptation Training) are suitable experienced and appropriately qualified in accordance with the IALA V-103/4 VTS On-the-Job Training Instructor model course and/or an equivalent national qualification.

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| *IALA Guideline 1103 – Train the trainer* assists instructors with the preparation of and development of training courses and is aimed at courses delivered at an accredited training organisation.  *IALA V103/4 On-the-Job Training Instructor model course* provides a structure to ensure instructors have the knowledge, skill and proficiency to deliver VTS centre specific OJT, Updating Training and Adaptation Training. |

## Instructors

Any person conducting VTS training should:

* have a detailed understanding of the training programme and objectives of the training being conducted;
* be qualified in the task for which training is being conducted; and
* have practical instructional experience.

Where training involves a simulator the person should be familiar with instructional techniques used with simulators and have operational experience on the equipment being used.

## Assessors

Any person assessing the competence of VTS personnel during training should:

* have a good level of knowledge and understanding of the competence to be assessed;
* be qualified in the task for which the assessment is being made;
* have received guidance in assessment methods and practices;
* have practical experience in conducting assessments ~~to the satisfaction of an experienced assessor.~~

# QUALIFICATION AND CERTIFICATION

## Qualification

Qualification is the education, knowledge, understanding, proficiency, skill, experience or any other attribute which the Competent Authority and/or the VTS Authority has determined desirable for performing the duties of the relevant position. VTS qualifications should be based on the principle that satisfactory results are obtained on completion of the IALA VTS model courses.

VTS personnel should only be considered competent when appropriately trained and qualified for their VTS duties. This includes:

* satisfactorily completing generic VTS training approved by a Competent Authority;
* satisfactorily completing On-the-Job training at the VTS where the person is employed;
* undergoing periodic assessments and revalidation training to ensure competence is maintained; and
* being in possession of appropriate certification.

VTS qualifications should be periodically assessed to ensure the operational performance of the VTS personnel is maintained.

## Certification

Certification is the award of a document that confirms that a student has met the requirements for the award of a specific qualification. Typically, students will receive a certificate as evidence of successfully completing a course.

## VTS Model Course Certificate

A VTS model course certificate is a document awarded by the accredited training organisation, to confirm that a student has successfully completed a VTS training course. The course certificate should include:

* the students full name;
* the country in which it was awarded;
* authorised signature of the accredited training organisation;
* the name relevant model course;
* date of birth and/or unique identification information;
* the date of award; and
* the unique course certificate number.

The use of the IALA logo on a VTS model course certificate recognises that the Competent Authority is a National Member of IALA and has approved the delivery of that VTS model course by an accredited training organisation in accordance with IALA Guideline 1014.

## Recognition of Certificates

A Competent Authority may choose to recognise the VTS Course certificates issued by other Competent Authorities where they are satisfied that the:

* certificate has been issued in accordance with *Recommendation R0103 on Training and Certification of VTS Personnel*
* Competent Authority is satisfied with the training arrangements of the other Country or State concerned.

## Validity

A qualification should remain valid until either:

* an assessment indicates that the holder has fallen below the required competency and proficiency set by the Authority;
* there is a break in service, for any reason, for a period defined by the Authority, or
* the maximum time period for undertaking revalidation training has been reached.

## training records

The VTS Authority should maintain training records for VTS personnel. These records should include details of:

* OJT at each VTS centre at which the holder is employed, the name of the OJT assessor and the date the training was completed;
* VTS model courses successfully completed, including the name of the accredited training organisation where the course was undertaken and copies of the course certification;
* regular assessment records and the results thereof;
* any break in service;
* revalidation records; and
* any other relevant course or training successfully completed (e.g. first aid training).

VTS course certificates should be in the official language or languages of the awarding country. If the language is not English then a translation should be available.

Authorities may consider issuing a VTS certification log as a means to formally record course certificates and training activities of VTS personnel. The log should include (but not be limited to):

* the holders full name;
* the country in which it was awarded;
* date of birth and/or unique identification information;
* the date of issue;
* a unique certificate number; and
* brief details of the VTS qualifications held, including the certificate number.

# MAINTAINING QUALFICATIONS

## Revalidation PROCESS

The generic term ‘Revalidation Process’ is used to describe the process to maintain a VTS qualification. The process ensures that holders of a VTS qualification maintain a satisfactory level of operational performance in order to retain, develop and increase their competency.

The VTS Authority should implement a process for revalidation to ensure competence is maintained. For example, revalidation of a VTS qualification is required when:

* The VTS qualification is approaching its expiry date.
* There are changes in the physical environment of the VTS, or tasks which necessitate additional training for VTS personnel.
* There is a break in service, unsatisfactory operational performance or other circumstances leading to a reduced level of competence.

The flowchart below describes components of the revalidation process:

* **Recurrent Training** is a structured training programme carried out at regular intervals to reassess the competency and proficiency of VTS personnel. Refer to section 7.2.
* **Adaptation Training** is carried out when significant changes are expected, such as changes associated with equipment, regulations, operational procedures etc. Refer to section 7.3.
* **Updating Training** is tailor made programme based on a training needs analysis that identifies additional training is required. Refer to section 7.4.
* **Periodic Performance Assessments** on VTS personnel are undertaken to ensure that the established standards continues to be met. These should be carried out at regular intervals, preferably annually. Refer to section 7.5.

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1. Process for the revalidation of VTS qualifications



## Recurrent Training

Recurrent Training provides a mechanism to reassess the competency and proficiency of VTS personnel through a structured and standardised programme.

The course content should be based on the core elements of V-103/1 and any specific requirements to meet national or local needs. This training should be carried out at regular intervals. [[1]](#footnote-1)Recurrent training should be conducted by an accredited training organisation or VTS Authorities with the approval of the relevant Competent Authority.

Successful completion of a process of recurrent training is necessary to facilitate the revalidation of VTS qualifications.

The Competent Authority should determine the frequency of the recurrent training programme. It is recommended that recurrent training should be carried out at intervals not exceeding five years.

## Adaptation Training

Where significant changes to VTS operations are expected, such as changes associated with equipment, regulations, operational procedures, adaptation training should be completed, and where possible, before the change(s) takes place.

Adaptation training should be developed on a case-by-case basis taking account the nature of the specific change(s). Consideration should be given to:

* Completing a needs analysis to determine the nature of the planned change in order to design, develop and implement the required training
* Preparing a structured programme with detailed lesson plans and clear learning goals based on the results of the training needs analysis.
* Identifying who would be best positioned to develop and deliver adaptation training. This may be in-house, a training organisation, a service provider (e.g. company installing VTS equipment), or a combination of various parties.

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## Updating Training

Updating training provides a structured means to ensure individual personnel maintain competency and proficiency in circumstances such as:

* after a break in service;
* an unsatisfactory performance assessment or proficiency check;
* upon request of a VTS Operator; or
* when deemed necessary by the Authority.

After an event that triggers a requirement for updating training, a training needs analysis should be undertaken to determine any performance gaps and identify training goals and the associated levels of performance to be achieved. The results from the analysis will form the basis of the update training programme.

Updating training will be individually tailored covering generic and/or area specific elements of competency. For example, this may include the repetition, in full or components of IALA model course V-103/1, V-103/2 and/or V-103/3 as appropriate.

After a break in service of three months or more, a VTS Authority should consider undertaking a training needs analysis to identify whether updating training is required, taking into account the complexity of the VTS area and their duties.

Prior to the updating training commencing, VTS personnel should be provided with the objectives of the training programme, the duration and format of the training.

## performance assessment

It is essential that once VTS personnel are qualified and certified, their performance is observed and monitored to ensure that the established competency continues to be met.

Performance assessments on VTS Personnel at regular intervals, preferably annually, to ensure their qualifications continue to be met. This regular assessment may take the form of performance review or appraisal.

Where the qualifications standards set by the Competent Authority and/or the VTS Authority are not being met, then updating training with these individuals or any other measure as deemed appropriate should be considered to help maintain their qualifications.

# DEFINITIONS

The definitions of terms used in this Guideline can be found in the International Dictionary of Marine Aids to Navigation (IALA Dictionary) at <http://www.iala-aism.org/wiki/dictionary> and were checked as correct at the time of going to print. Where conflict arises, the IALA Dictionary should be considered as the authoritative source of definitions used in IALA documents.

# ACRONYMS

[Acronym] [Acronym]

[Acronym] [Acronym]

… …

1. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Other considerations that Authorities may take into account with regards to VTS personnel include:

# STAFFING STRUCTURE AT A VTS CENTRE

## VTS PERSONNEL

VTS personnel are individuals that are appropriately trained and qualified in VTS operations. They actively contribute to the safe, efficient movement of vessel traffic in conjunction with the bridge team and allied services. Whilst the composition/types of roles for personnel in each VTS may vary, the roles generally consist of:

* VTS Operator;
* Senior VTS Operator / VTS Supervisor;
* VTS Manager; and
* On-the-Job Training (OJT) Instructor.

### VTS Operator

VTS Operators are responsible for establishing and maintaining a vessel traffic image and interacting with vessel traffic to improve the safety and efficiency of navigation within the VTS area. The VTS Operator is also required to respond to developing situations after considering information available.

### Senior VTS Operator / VTS Supervisor

The VTS Authority may establish senior VTS operator roles, often with supervisory functions to assist with managing and co-ordinating the operational activities of the VTS centre.

### VTS Manager

The VTS Authority may establish a VTS Manager position. The VTS Manager is responsible for managing and   
co-ordinating the activities of the VTS centre on behalf of the VTS Authority. In some cases, a VTS Manager may have the responsibility for more than one VTS centre and may hold VTS qualifications.

The VTS Manager should become familiar with operations of participating vessels in the VTS area, the tasks performed by the VTS personnel, and interactions with allied services and other stakeholders.

### On the Job Training Instructor

The VTS Authority should have VTS personnel trained as OJT Training Instructors to provide and coordinate local training at the VTS centre (e.g. OJT, Updating Training and Adaptation Training). The OJT Instructor should have in-depth knowledge of the processes and procedures of the VTS centre(s) where they provide training.

Any trainer delivering and assessing local training at a VTS centre should at a minimum hold the IALA V-103/4 VTS On-the-Job Training Instructor qualification, or an equivalent national qualification.

VTS Personnel who demonstrate aptitude for training should be encouraged to complete appropriate training to:

* obtain ability and experience in instructional techniques;
* develop and deliver training programmes; and
* assess competence of the training objective(s).

## VTS CAREER PROGRESSION

The formal recognition of VTS qualifications provides the foundation for a professional framework similar to that adopted by the shipping and pilotage industry. The regular revalidation of these qualifications seeks to create quality standards comparable to other professions.

VTS personnel have the scope for career progression by making use of the skills and experience gained, in either VTS, or other maritime environments (See example in Figure 2).



1. Career progression

# SELECTION AND RECRUITMENT

## Job Descriptions

Detailed job descriptions for VTS personnel should be developed focusing on the functions, objectives and responsibilities of the VTS Centre.

## Selection process

Policies and processes for the selection and recruitment of VTS personnel should be available. This may include minimum entry requirements such as:

* prior skills and knowledge;
* maritime experience and education;
* personal suitability characteristics; and
* medical fitness requirements.

IMO Resolution A.918(22) on the IMO standard marine communication phrases recognises the wide use of the English language for international navigational communications and that where language difficulties arise, English should be used as a common language for navigational purposes. Potential candidates should demonstrate using reliable tests they have attained a sufficient level of the language. Every student attending a V103 course should have achieved the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) level 5, or its equivalent.

It is important that a VTS authority assess the suitability of candidates to perform the required VTS tasks. The selection process may include assessing personal attributes, aptitude testing, assessment of prior learning and satisfying the medical/physical requirements.

### Personal attributes

Personal attributes are an important component of the selection process and the following elements should be assessed when determining a candidate’s suitability:

* Personality as a prediction of future behaviour.
* Behaviour, whereby candidates should at a minimum show an appropriate sense of responsibility, demonstrate independence as well as having a willingness to co-operate with others as part of a team.

### Aptitude/psychometric testing

The VTS Authority should consider testing for personal aptitude, attributes and overall suitability requirements, even if they have previous maritime experience. Different types of tests and evaluations may be used such as:

* Interviews;
* written tests;
* practical tests or exercises; and
* psychometric tests.

Assessments should be designed to evaluate the suitability of a candidate within a VTS environment by:

* distinguishing among relevant and irrelevant information (e.g. assess the relative movement of fixed and moving objects);
* combining auditory and visual information;
* demonstrating spatial and situational awareness;
* demonstrating alertness and decisiveness when required;
* carrying out several tasks simultaneously (multi-tasking);
* carrying out routine work without losing situational awareness;
* prioritising and deciding what situations require immediate action;
* show initiative and make decisions whilst working within a framework of standards, regulations and structured procedures;
* working under conditions of stress;
* demonstrating effective participation as a member of a team; and
* demonstrating appropriate communication, literacy (written and oral) and numeracy skills.

To assess a candidate’s aptitude, attributes and suitability, the assistance of specialists may be required to ensure appropriate tests and exercises are in place to complement the interview process conducted by the VTS Authority.

### Medical/Physical requirements

The VTS Authority should establish policies, which candidates and VTS personnel need to meet such as medical, hearing and vision requirements.

## Shiftwork

Candidates may vary in how they cope with shift work depending on their health, fitness, age, lifestyle, and domestic responsibilities.

In the recruitment process, a candidate should be provided with information about the VTS shift work arrangements and procedures. Further, if they are successful it may be possible to offer work experience to allow the candidate to make an informed decision to whether shift work is suitable for them.

VTS Authorities should ensure candidates are aware of the established policies and procedures associated with the management of shift rosters and fatigue management.

# CONTINUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

VTS Authorities may consider developing an ongoing Continual Professional Development (CPD) programme to ensure that the standard of training is maintained.

CPD may consist of the following areas:

* Review and analysis of lessons learned from local VTS operations.
* Regular updates of regulatory, procedural and technological developments.
* Continual development through familiarisation trips on vessels with pilots or other stakeholders.
* Visits to allied services, adjacent VTS centres or other similar organisations.
* Attendance and participation in relevant emergency or procedural exercises.

Further, VTS personnel should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own personal continued professional development as a core component of their role.

1. Recurrent training is also be referred to by some Competent Authorities as ‘refresher training’. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)