**Text for Inclusion in G1141 - Operational Procedures for VTS Ed1 Dec2018**

**PERMISSION TO PROCEED FROM OR TO ALONGSIDE, A BERTH OR ANCHORAGE**

The departure or arrival of a vessel from a berth/anchorage or when entering a lock or confined waterway is a critical moment when a vessel’s movements may have a direct influence on other vessels nearby.

The departure of a ship from a berth is a critical moment when situational awareness of bridge staff on the departing ship may be diverted and impaired by internal or jetty-side issues and when other ships in the immediate vicinity might be surprised by the unexpected movement of another ship into the fairway.

Local regulations will normally require a ship to request permission to proceed when it is ready to depart. It is important that the response to a request from a vessel to proceed is formalised and clear. Prior to departure, a vessel should be informed of other traffic movements in the area that may influence the vessel’s departure. Approval from the VTS should be in a formal and standard format and all other vessels in the immediate vicinity should be notified of the imminent departure.

Approval from the VTS for an arrival when a vessel requests approval to proceed to a berth/anchorage, lock or confined waterway should also be in a formal and standard format

Permission for a vessel to proceed means that, based on the information available, the VTS assesses that it is safe and gives approval for the vessel to proceed on her intended course of action, subject to the discretion of the Master.

Permission for a vessel to proceed may be subject to conditions (e.g. details received from the vessel, known fairway and traffic) which may be contained in the message.

It is essential that a clear distinction is made between messages that give permission for a vessel to proceed and those that deny permission for a vessel to proceed.

If the VTS assesses that it is not safe for a vessel to proceed from or to a berth, anchorage, lock or confined waterway, the response from VTS should be direct to the vessel and the response must be unambiguous, clear and issued as an instruction.