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| From: VTS Committee | VTS51-X.X.X |
| To: ARM Committee | 7 October 2021 |

LIAISON NOTE

Update of IALA Maritime Buoyage System and other   
Marine Aids to Navigation (MBS), the future IALA Recommendation R1001

# INTRODUCTION

The VTS Committee has noted the liaison note from ARM (ARM13-11.2.5) on the update of IALA Maritime Buoyage System and other Marine Aids to Navigation (MBS), the future IALA Recommendation R1001.

The Committee has been requested to review and provide feedback on the draft Recommendation R1001 for both editorial and technical content as well as the proposed change of title of R1001. ARM has also requested that pictures (with proprietary rights and high definition quality) that can be included as examples may be provided.

The VTS Committee has responded earlier to the ongoing revision of the MBS through a liaison note to ARM 13 (VTS50-13.1.1.7 Liaison Note to ARM on MBS). Therefore, some of the comments may be same as before. The VTS Committee appreciates the invitation to review the draft recommendation again and look forward to receiving future updates as ARM progresses its review.

# Comments

The VTS Committee has reviewed the draft revised Recommendation R1001 for both editorial and technical content as requested. The Committee provides the following comments:

1. The VTS Committee notice that the title of the recommendation still is proposed to include “other Marine Aids to Navigation”. Although we understand that this recommendation also contains other devices, systems or services beside the historically known buoys, marks, lighthouses etc. we would emphasize that the recommendation is almost exclusively about the IALA maritime buoyage system. Also, the MBS is a unique and international well-known system that is mentioned in SOLAS and other IMO documents and referred to in many national laws. Changing such a title could have a negative impact on how the MBS will be recognized and interpreted world-wide. Changing of the title would also mean that other changes also are needed in SOLAS, IMO SN/Circular and national legislations etc.

The revised proposed title (and also in some places of the text), now merges the maritime buoyage system with marine aids to navigation which includes everything that IALA has responsibility for. On the other hand, we note that the acronym AtoN means marine aid(s) to navigation already, which already includes VTS and other system and devices etc. But in order not to repeat ourselves again, we would like to recall what was mentioned about the use of the term “Marine Aids to Navigation” in our previous response to ARM 13 (VTS51-13.1.1.7). If necessary, the consideration of any additional marine aids to navigation should be identified and explained within the text of the recommendation.

In summary, the VTS Committee do not agree changing the title of the MBS as this may cause more confusion than clarification. We consider it more appropriate for the title to remain as is and keep the title simple! However, the acronym (MBS) could be inserted within brackets at the end of the title to read “The IALA Maritime Buoyage system (MBS)”.

1. The VTS Committee notes the ARM statement that “IALA Recommendation R1001 shall comply with the new IALA document structure” and that, “therefore, “The MBS” will be written as an annex to the R1001”. The VTS Committee has a different interpretation of IALA’s policy on document structure whereby recommendations are limited to brief, high-level guidance following the format of the recommendation template and the detail transferred into a guideline. To ensure consistency between committees in the presentation of IALA documents, it is recommended that policy guidance is sought from the IALA Secretariat.
2. The Committee also notes that the latest template of the IALA recommendation has not been used, see e.g. front page and document revision. Also the “Acronyms” section should be retitled “Abbreviations” and considerations should be made to include a section on “References”.
3. The list of content in the annex has not been updated.
4. The recommendation specifies that amendments need to be approved by IALA General Assembly. If this is correct, it’s not following the normal procedures for approval of a recommendation as this is a function of the IALA Council in accordance with the Constitution. However, we notice that ARM mentions in the LN to VTS that it “needs Council approval prior to a new edition”. The text concerning IALA Assembly in the recommendation should be further considered in order to be correct.
5. Suggestion to include a sentence on revocation of edition 1.0. This may require further consideration by LAP.
6. See specific comments in section 3.2.6 on “AtoN in relation to autonomous vessels”.
7. Further comments have been made directly in the draft R1001 (annex to this liaison note).
8. The VTS Committee notes with content that the MBS will be distributed primarily in a digital version.
9. Concerning the enclosed sample layout of the MBS, it looks very nice. However, we would recommend to use the same layout for all pages, meaning the page size and orientation should be the same on both front and end pages as well as the content. It will otherwise be difficult to make a nice readable print, see example of the latest edition of the VTS Manual, where the content pages are different from the front and end pages.
10. As regards providing pictures with proprietary rights and high definition quality, that could be included as examples in the recommendation, we may have pictures that may be of interest and that were not used when the VTS Manual was developed. These pictures were sent to IALA secretariat who may be of assistance if any specific photo could be used in the MBS. However, as these were collected to be used in the VTS Manual, new proprietary rights may be sought. The VTS Committee proposes that a specific folder in the ARM fileshare is created that could assist in providing relatively large photos. Further contact and assistance could also be made with the editor of the VTS Manual, Mr. Neil Trainor ([neil.trainor@amsa.gov.au](mailto:neil.trainor@amsa.gov.au)) and VTS Chair, Ms. Monica Sundklev ([monica.sundklev@transportstyrelsen.se](mailto:monica.sundklev@transportstyrelsen.se)).

# ACTION REQUESTED

The ARM Committee is requested to consider the response from VTS Committee and take action as appropriate.