



## IALA RECOMMENDATION (NORMATIVE)

# R1012 VTS COMMUNICATIONS

**Edition 1.3**

**December 2025**

**urn:mrn:iala:pub:r1012:ed1.3**



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International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation



# DOCUMENT REVISION

Revisions to this document are to be noted in the table prior to the issue of a revised document.

Date	Details	Approval
December 2017	1 <sup>st</sup> Issue	Council 65
September 2020	Ed.1.1 Editorial corrections.	
January 2022	Edition 1.2 Approved by Council December 2021 and published January 2022, in alignment with IMO Resolution A.1158(32) Guidelines for Vessel Traffic Services.	Council 74
December 2025	Edition 1.3 Updated to include the new Guideline GNNNN and editorial corrections.	Council 03



# THE COUNCIL

**RECALLING** that:

- 1 The aim and objectives of the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation (the Organization hereafter) with respect to the improvement and harmonization of Marine Aids to Navigation worldwide for the benefit of the maritime community and the protection of the marine environment.
- 2 Article 8 of the Convention of the Organization regarding the responsibilities of the Council.

**NOTING** that:

- 1 IALA Recommendation *R0127 Operational Procedures for Vessel Traffic Services* provides practices for interactions between the VTS, participating vessels and allied services.
- 2 IALA Guideline *G1089 Provision of a VTS* provides practical guidance to assist an authority with delivery of VTS to achieve consistency in provision of VTS worldwide in order to avoid confusion about the delivery of VTS for the mariner trading between various jurisdictions.
- 3 IALA Guideline *G1132 VTS Voice Communications and Phraseology* provides guidance for competent authorities, VTS providers and training organizations to develop standardized operating procedures for communications and phraseology and to achieve best practice in effective VTS voice communications.
- 4 IALA Guideline *GNNNN VTS English Communication Competency Testing* provides a framework to assess the English competency of VTS personnel in the use of standard messaging structure and phrases.

**RECOGNIZING** that:

- 1 IALA fosters the safe, economic and efficient movement of vessels through improvement and harmonization of Marine Aids to Navigation, including vessel traffic services, worldwide:
- 2 The *International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea 1974 (SOLAS) Chapter V (Safety of Navigation) Regulation 12* provides for Vessel Traffic Services and states inter-alia that:
  - a Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) contribute to safety of life at sea, safety and efficiency of navigation and protection of the marine environment, adjacent shore areas, work sites and offshore installations from possible adverse effects of maritime traffic.
  - b Contracting Governments undertake to arrange for the establishment of VTS where, in their opinion, the volume of traffic or the degree of risk justifies such services.
  - c Contracting Governments planning and implementing VTS shall, wherever possible, follow the guidelines developed by Organization (i.e., *IMO Resolution A.1158(32) Guidelines for Vessel Traffic Services.*)
- 3 *IMO Resolution A.1158(32)* recognizes that:
  - a The level of safety and efficiency in the movement of maritime traffic within an area covered by vessel traffic services is dependent upon close cooperation between those operating the vessel traffic services and participating ships.



- b The use of differing procedures may cause confusion to ship masters, and that vessel traffic services should be established and operated in a harmonized manner and in accordance with internationally approved guidelines.
- 4 The level of safety and efficiency in the movement of maritime traffic within an area covered by a vessel traffic service would be enhanced by ensuring that VTS communications are harmonized through common phraseology, procedures and technology for the delivery of precise, simple and unambiguous communications to the bridge team and allied services.

**CONSIDERING** the proposals of the VTS Committee.

**RECOMMENDS** that competent authorities and VTS providers contribute to precise and unambiguous communications with traffic by implementing harmonized and standardized procedures and technology.

**INVITES** Member States and competent authorities for VTS to implement the provisions of the Recommendation and its associated guidelines on VTS communications.

**REQUESTS** the VTS Committee or such other committee as the Council may direct, to keep this Recommendation under review and to propose amendments as necessary.