PSSVTS101
Operate communications equipment

Overview

This standard covers the skills and knowledge required to operate communications equipment in a Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) role.

The Vessel Traffic Services Operator is required to communicate with all persons that may be undertaking or affected by vessel movement. The Vessel Traffic Services Operator must determine if communications equipment is operating correctly identifying faults and dealing with them effectively. The Vessel Traffic Services Operator should be able to use radiotelephone, Automatic Identification System (AIS) messaging, Digital Selective Calling (DSC), telephone, facsimile and electronic mail equipment and systems effectively. They should be able to employ approved phrases and procedures so that their verbal communications can be understood without ambiguity.

The Vessel Traffic Services Operator is required to use data recording, data management systems and data export equipment.

There are seven elements in this standard:

1. Monitor the serviceability of the equipment
2. Use radiotelephone equipment
3. Use Automatic Identification System equipment
4. Use Digital Selective Calling equipment
5. Use telephone equipment
6. Use facsimile, and electronic messaging equipment
7. Use data recording equipment

Target Group

This standard applies to an authorised and appropriately qualified Vessel Traffic Services Operator who has a duty to ensure the safety of navigation and protection of the environment within their area.

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<table>
<tr><td></td><td>Monitor the serviceability of the equipment</td></tr>
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Performance criteria

Monitor the serviceability of the equipment

You must be able to:

P1   check equipment alarms and indications whilst making and receiving transmissions

P2   check documentation relating to equipment status and take corrective action

P3   report observed defects and failures promptly

P4   follow-up equipment malfunction reports in accordance with organisational procedures

Use radiotelephone equipment

You must be able to:

P5   comply with operating and legal limitations of the Vessel Traffic Services radio station licence and operating criteria

P6   select transceiver and use the appropriate frequency/channel correctly

P7   use appropriate equipment to send messages correctly

P8   switch to standby channels and aerials

Use Automatic Identification System equipment

You must be able to:

P9   conduct pre-use checks on the Automatic Identification System equipment

P10 operate the Automatic Identification System equipment in accordance with operating procedure

Use Digital Selective Calling equipment

You must be able to:

P11 conduct pre-use checks on the equipment

P12 operate the Digital Selective Calling equipment in accordance with operating procedure

Use telephone equipment

You must be able to:

P13 select and use the appropriate telephone

P14 use the ancillary telephone equipment

Use facsimile and electronic messaging equipment

You must be able to:

P15 operate facsimile equipment

P16 use electronic messaging equipment

Use data recording equipment

You must be able to:

P17 set up data recording equipment in accordance with organisation procedure

P18 check the status of data recording equipment in accordance with organisation procedure

P19 monitor the operational and functional integrity of the data recording

equipment in accordance with organisation procedure

P20 manage data storage equipment in accordance with organisation procedure

P21 operate playback of Vessel Traffic Services data recording in accordance with organisation procedure

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

K1 the hazards and risks of the workplace that may affect people and the environment

K2 how to make and apply decisions based on the assessment of risk

K3 how to apply practices that maximise the health, safety and welfare of self and others in the workplace

K4 the national and international regulations, statutory authority, codes of practice and industry good practice in relation to Vessel Traffic Services and the role of Vessel Traffic Services Operator

K5 your organisation's policies, procedures and working practices relevant to Vessel Traffic Services operations

K6 the different roles within Vessel Traffic Service operations, their priorities and responsibilities

K7 lines and methods of communication /reporting in the workplace

K8 vessel movement and data recording systems, their operating principles and how they are maintained

K9 the principles and procedures of operation of the different communication systems

K10 where the operational manuals for all communications equipment used are located

K11 the channels in the International Very High Frequency (VHF) Marine radio band

K12 simplex and duplex operation

K13 port operations and ships movements

K14 distress, safety and calling channels

K15 national and international regulations for radiotelephone operations

K16 distress, urgency, safety communications procedures

K17 principles of successful verbal and written communication, including how to communicate clearly and effectively with the port stakeholders/allied services

K18 principles and procedures for operation of data recording equipment

K19 International Marine Organisation (IMO) and Standard Marine Communications Phases (SMCP)

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Additional Information

Scope

The different communication systems used within Vessel Traffic Service operations include:
1. Radio telephone equipment including Global Maritime Distress Safety Systems (GMDSS)
2. Facsimile
3. Automatic Identification System (AIS)
4. Digital Selective Calling equipment
5. Telephone equipment
6. Electronic messaging equipment

External Links

The important contribution of Vessel Traffic Services towards maintaining the safety of life at sea, safety and efficiency of navigation and the protection of the marine environment is recognised nationally and internationally. International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation & Lighthouse Authorities (IALA) guidelines on recruitment, qualification and training for Vessel Traffic Services Operators have been adopted and are regulated in the UK through the Maritime and Coastguard Agency. These Vessel Traffic Services National Occupational Standards take cognisance of and complement the IALA guidelines and model courses.

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