



Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) Policy

April 2025

The Authority has a statutory duty, as well as a responsibility under the Port Marine Safety Code, to contribute to safety of life at sea, improve the safety and efficiency of navigation and support the protection of the environment within Poole Harbour and approaches (VTS area) by mitigating the development of unsafe situations.

To achieve this PHC shall:

1. Establish and continually review the provision of a Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) based on the outcome of formal risk assessment.
2. Operate the VTS within national and international guidelines and legislation.
3. Ensure that VTS operators are trained to the appropriate UK national requirements and their qualifications are kept current and valid.
4. Establish operating procedures for VTS and for implementation of emergency contingency plans.
5. Carry out regular training and exercises for VTS personnel in operating and emergency response procedures.
6. Regularly review VTS operations to ensure that the service is harmonized with ship reporting, routing instructions, aids to navigation, pilotage and port operations as appropriate.
7. Report any apparent infringement of legislation using the Safety Management System.
8. Maintain appropriate standards of communications on channels assigned for VTS purposes.
9. Ensure that appropriate manning is available to provide the service taking into account appropriate guidance.
10. Ensure that equipment appropriate to the service is available, taking into account appropriate guidance.
11. Ensure that VTS personnel are vested with the appropriate authority and delegations to fulfil their duties.

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12. Periodically audit and review the performance of port VTS in accordance with appropriate guidelines, recommending and facilitating improvements where necessary.
13. Publish details of the VTS, including the details of radio watches, designated frequencies and hours of operation in the appropriate nautical publications.

Nothing in this Policy shall subvert existing Harbour Byelaws, General Directions, regulations or terms and conditions.

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