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What is VTS?

Welcome to Digimar videos!

In this video, we will define Vessel Traffic Services or VTS, and explain their purpose. By the end, you will gain a better understanding of the world of VTS, which will help set the context for all the videos that follow.

According to Resolution A.1158(32) of the International Maritime Organization from 2021, and Chapter V Regulation 12 of the SOLAS Convention, 1974, as amended, VTS means “services implemented by a government with the capability to interact with vessel traffic and respond to developing situations within a VTS area to improve safety and efficiency of navigation, contribute to the safety of life at sea and support the protection of the environment.”

The purpose of VTS, therefore, is to “contribute to the safety of life at sea, improve the safety and efficiency of navigation, and support the protection of the environment within a VTS area by mitigating the development of unsafe situations”.

To do this, VTS needs to:

- provide timely and relevant information on factors that may influence ship movements and assist onboard decision-making,
- monitor and manage ship traffic to ensure the safety and efficiency of ship movements, and
- respond to developing unsafe situations.

VTS provides information or issues advice, warnings, and instructions, as necessary. Their communication needs to be timely, clear, concise, and unambiguous.

On the other hand, the ships in a VTS area should:

- provide reports or information required by VTS,
- take into account the information provided, or advice and warnings issued by VTS,
- comply with the requirements and instructions given to the ship by VTS unless other safety or marine environment protection reasons exist, and
- report any pollution or dangers to navigation to VTS.

Now that you are familiar with the purpose and activities of VTS, we invite you to continue exploring Digimar videos on effective routine maritime communication! Thank you for watching!