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## **Navigation: Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) - Training and Certification of VTS Personnel**

**Notice to all Port and VTS Authorities, prospective and current VTS Personnel, Maritime Training Organisations, Masters and Deck Officers of Merchant Vessels and Skippers and Watchkeepers of Fishing and Recreational Vessels**

*This notice should be read in conjunction with MGN 401 (Amendment 2) on issues of VTS policy other than training. This notice replaces MGN 434*

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### **Summary**

The purpose of this guidance note is to identify the standards of Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) training and certification recognised by the United Kingdom Competent Authority that are also closely aligned with IALA standards and the UK National Occupational Standards. It also provides information on the procedures for the training and certification of VTS personnel in the UK.

*Note: Although the advice contained in this guidance is aimed essentially at shore-based establishments, the merits of informing a wider audience to promote awareness of the important contribution that VTS makes to the maritime industry and to indicate the standard and level of training of VTS personnel within the UK are also recognised. It is therefore necessary that mariners, as users of VTS and Local Port Services (LPS), also receive this information. Reference should also be made to MGN 401 (Amendment 2) on issues of VTS policy other than training*

### **1. Introduction/ Background**

1.1 In 1993 the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation & Lighthouse Authorities (IALA) published the first IALA Vessel Traffic Services Manual to provide guidance and assistance to administrations and authorities considering the implementation of new VTS or upgrading existing ones. The Manual remained the primary document on VTS until 1995 when the Conference of Parties to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers 1978, as amended, (STCW Convention) recognised the important contribution of other professionals towards maintaining the safety of life at sea, safety and efficiency of navigation and the protection of the marine environment. Resolution 10 of the Convention called for international provisions to be drawn up for the training of maritime pilots and VTS personnel. In response IALA embarked on the



development of a Recommendation for the training and certification of VTS personnel and the associated model courses.

- 1.2 In 1997 the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Resolution A.857 (20), *Guidelines for Vessel Traffic Services* was adopted. The guidelines are associated with SOLAS V Regulation 12, and describe the principles and general operational provisions for the operation of a VTS and for the participating vessels.
- 1.3 In May 2000 the IMO, through the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC/Circular 952), noting the development of IALA Recommendation V-103, invited Member Governments, pending the development of additional provisions, *to bring the Recommendation and associated model courses to the attention of their VTS authorities when considering the training and certification of VTS personnel.*
- 1.4 Since then, model courses and Guidelines relating to the training of VTS personnel have been developed and regularly updated by IALA. The IALA standards are now recognised internationally as the primary training and certification standards for VTS personnel. A list of the current publications pertaining to VTS training are available on the IALA website at <http://www.iala-aism.org>
- 1.5 Additionally, the Port Marine Safety Code (PMSC) and Guide to Good Practice both address the issue of training for port personnel including VTS personnel.

## **2. The National Competent Authority for VTS**

2.1 IMO and IALA define the Competent Authority as:

*The authority made responsible, in whole or in part, by the Government for the safety, including environmental safety, and efficiency of vessel traffic and the protection of the environment in the area.*

2.2 The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), in the role of the UK National Competent Authority for VTS, is responsible for ensuring consistency of training standards and methods within the UK in accordance with the appropriate IMO and IALA Recommendations and Guidelines. The responsibilities of the Competent Authority for VTS are contained in MGN: *VTS and Local Port Services in the UK*, which also contains the responsibilities of Harbour Authorities (in the context of VTS) and VTS Authorities.

## **3. UK VTS Policy Steering Group**

UK VTS policy is established through the UK VTS Policy Steering Group, chaired by the MCA with appropriate representation which sets, inter alia, VTS training, certification and operational policy.

## **4. Selection and Recruitment**

4.1 Prospective candidates for VTS Operator training (V-103/1) should meet the minimum entry requirements as defined by the Competent/VTS Authority. Whilst the pre-requisite standard for entry to a V103-1 VTS operators' course is the STCW II/1 OOW Deck or equivalent qualification, it is accepted that candidates from a wide variety of backgrounds may wish to embark on a career in VTS. VTS authorities who recruit candidates who do not fully meet the pre-requisite standard should liaise with an approved VTS Training Organisation to make an early assessment of the candidate to identify any additional Radar / ARPA, Nautical Knowledge and VHF Radio training which may be required. (see Annex 4 for further details on the assessment process)



4.2 The selection procedure for newly recruited VTS Operators should, at a minimum, include a medical examination, an aptitude assessment and an assessment of the personal attributes/suitability of the candidate by the VTS authority or prospective employer.

#### 4.3 Medical Fitness Requirements

Candidates are expected to meet the medical fitness requirements set by the VTS Authority on recruitment. Evidence that these standards continue to be met will be required on revalidation of log books every 5 years.

#### 4.4 Aptitude Assessment

Aptitude assessments should be carried out during the recruitment process. All prospective candidates should be assessed, even if they have previous maritime experience. The VTS Authority should consider appropriate personal aptitude and suitability requirements for each applicant. To assess the applicant's aptitude and suitability, different types of tests and evaluations may be used. This may include, but not be limited to

- Interviews;
- Written tests;
- Practical tests; and
- Psychometric tests.

#### 4.5 Personal Attributes/Suitability

Personal attributes are important factors in the selection criteria. A continual assessment should be made of a candidate's suitability throughout the selection process. Candidates should as a minimum have an appropriate sense of responsibility, and show independence as well as having a willingness to co-operate with others as part of a team.

4.6 A test of the applicant regarding aptitude and suitability may include, but not be limited to, the following abilities:

- Situational awareness;
- Spatial conceptual ability:
  - Assessment of the relative movement to fixed and moving objects.
- Communications skills (written and oral):
  - Effective participation as a member of a team;
  - Vocabulary and verbal expression capacity.
- Numerical aptitude;
- Simultaneous tasking capability (multi-tasking):
  - Ability to receive multiple inputs;
  - Ability to prioritise and decide what situations require immediate action;
- Judgement and responsibility;
- Ability to take initiatives and make decisions;
- Ability to function under conditions of stress;
- Ability to work and co-operate with others as part of a team

4.7 Any tests of the applicant regarding aptitude and suitability should be assessed for suitability, reliability and validity to ensure their relevance to the selection and recruitment of VTS personnel. Where necessary the VTS Authority should seek appropriate assistance in the selection, administration and evaluation of tests measuring aptitude and suitability.

## 5. UK VTS Training, Certification and Operational Strategy

5.1 The strategy in the UK for VTS training, certification and Operations, broadly adopts the contents of relevant IALA recommendations, guidelines and model courses. The UK VTS Policy Steering Group may also deem necessary to have additional standards or initiatives that need adopting into UK VTS policy. In this case, the UK will work towards incorporating them into UK policy at the same time as promoting them through the IALA route.



## 6. The Training Process

6.1 The UK's VTS 'Training and Certification Strategy' is the only approved route to acquire professional qualifications for VTS personnel in the UK.

6.2 UK VTS Operators are persons who have:

- a. Successfully completed the VTS Operator training course at an MCA approved Training Organisation.
- b. A UK VTS Certification log book issued by the MCA
- c. Completed On-the-Job Training (OJT), at their sponsoring port or VTS Authority, and have an endorsement in their VTS Certification log book by the VTS authority.

## 7. Delivery of VTS Training

7.1 VTS training can only be provided by organisations that have been accredited by the MCA, have achieved approval of their courses through audit by the MCA in accordance with IALA Guidelines, and are in possession of a valid MCA Certificate of Approval. Following initial approval, all VTS courses are subject to intermediate / periodical audits between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> anniversary and a renewal audit every 5-years.

7.2 Organisations delivering VTS training should provide training services within the framework of a Training Management System (TMS), as prescribed by IALA Guideline No. 1014, that fulfils the requirements of an approved Quality Management System (QMS) standard. It is important to ensure that the programme for the training and assessment of VTS personnel, is:

- able to meet and maintain the standard of competence as indicated in IALA Recommendation V-103;
- structured in accordance with the established training procedures based on clearly communicated, measurable and achievable objectives;
- conducted, monitored, evaluated and supported by trainers/assessors qualified, as a minimum, to the current Further Education qualifications;
- managed in a manner that ensures the continued development of the training courses in terms of relevancy, currency and accuracy. This includes, but is not limited to, the continued monitoring and where appropriate incorporation in training courses of:
  - a. technological advances,
  - b. Recent developments in national and international recommendations, laws and regulations,
  - c. Reviews of recent accident reports, investigations, studies and other emerging trends that may have an impact upon the delivery of VTS.

7.3 A current list of MCA accredited VTS Training Organisations and VTS course dates is provided in a Marine Information Notice (MIN) published on an annual basis by the MCA.



## 8. VTS Operator Training

8.1 VTS Operator training follows the IALA Model Course V-103/1 and covers the following eight modules:

- Module 1: Language
- Module 2: Traffic Management
- Module 3: Equipment
- Module 4: Nautical Knowledge
- Module 5: Communication Co-ordination
- Module 6: VHF Radio
- Module 7: Personal Attributes
- Module 8: Emergency Situations

### VTS Operators course

This course Provides underpinning knowledge and prepares trainees for the formal assessment of IALA V-103/1 model course modules ending with two written paper assessments. This course may only be commenced by candidates who meet the prescribed pre-entry standard (STCW II/1 OOW Deck or equivalent) or who have successfully completed the required nautical knowledge, radio or radar and ARPA training.

The second half of the course provides simulation exercises to assess the learning outcomes of IALA V-103/1 model course. This stage of the course may only be commenced on successful completion of the formal assessment for the first half of the course.

8.2 VTS Operator training offers a variety of approaches but must meet the requirements of IALA and the MCA that trainees achieve and demonstrate competence in VTS underpinning knowledge and simulated exercises covering all eight modules.

8.3 VTS Authorities should, in the first instance, approach an accredited VTS training organisation to confirm course availability and application/entry requirements.

8.4 Full or Partial Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) may be granted for some modules. The minimum acceptable marine qualifications for full APL leading to entry on a IALA Model Course V-103/1 (VTS Operator) Module 4 (Nautical Knowledge) are STCW II/1 OOW Deck or accepted equivalent.

8.5 The accredited VTS training organisation and/or VTS authority will undertake an initial assessment of the candidates which will involve a review of existing qualifications, knowledge and skill to determine whether all necessary course prerequisites have been fully or partially met. In the event of any course prerequisites not being fully or partially met the accredited training organisation will provide advice to the candidate and VTS Authority on the areas in which further qualifications, knowledge, or skill are required.

8.6 Accredited VTS training organisations will assess candidates on a case-by-case basis and where candidates exceed the minimum entry standards, including those with previous nautical knowledge, they may be credited for the appropriate training and the training time reduced accordingly. Candidates who are unable to qualify for full APL in Nautical Knowledge must complete a full or partial programme of Nautical Knowledge training dependant on their level of APL. This training will include a final assessment of the candidate's knowledge set by an accredited training organisation and conducted at the training organisation itself.



8.7 There are three routes for VTS Operator training and a synopsis for each is described in Annex 1:

- a. Candidates with acceptable marine qualifications,
- b. Candidates with partial marine qualifications or
- c. Candidates without acceptable marine qualifications.

8.8 The method by which the above is achieved will vary depending on a candidate's knowledge, experience and previous training which, if properly documented, may be recognised through the award of Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) and/or Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL). Where such evidence is documented and validated, training may be adjusted to reflect both the past formal training and experience of the candidate – Competence is assessed by a combination of formal (written) examinations and an assessment of the candidate's ability to perform defined VTS tasks or duties effectively in a simulated environment.

8.9 All VTS personnel are required to meet the English Language requirement. Recommended training hours for Module 1 (Language) of the IALA Model Course V-103/1 are set on the assumption that VTS trainees have achieved an International English Language Testing Scheme (IELTS) Level 5 or equivalent prior to commencement of training. It should however be noted that candidates wishing to work in a UK VTS centre and thus requiring a UK VTS certification log, will be required to demonstrate that they meet IELTS level 7 when applying for their certification log.

8.10 The validity of an IELTS certificate is two years. If the IELTS certificate has been obtained earlier than the two-year validity period, the candidate should demonstrate evidence that they have maintained or improved their proficiency in English.

8.11 Accredited VTS training organisations will issue the following certificates on successful completion of the VTS (V-103/1) Operator training:

- VTS Nautical Knowledge certificate (for non-marine or partial marine background candidates who have not met the pre-requisite standard and have been required to complete nautical knowledge training before embarking on the VTS Operators course);
- VTS Induction certificate;
- VTS Operator course certificate, and
- Radar/ARPA certificate (only if taken at the training organisation during the VTS Nautical Knowledge course)
- VTS VHF Radio certificate (only if taken at the training organisation during the VTS Nautical Knowledge course).

8.12 The MCA will issue a VTS Certification Logbook to the individual on submission of the necessary documents and fee to the MCA's Seafarer Training and Certification Branch (see Annex 4). The VTS Certification Logbook represents a history of the VTS Operator's career, containing documentary evidence of a professional qualification, a record of training, endorsements, annual assessments, refresher training and revalidation. MSF 4807 should be used to apply for VTS Operator Logbook, Supervisor, Instructor Endorsement and Revalidation.

## **9. On-the-Job Training**

9.1 On-the-Job Training (OJT) is training and familiarisation at the VTS centre at which the person will be employed. It includes training on the particular services provided by the VTS, the facilities and equipment used, as well as the local geography and appropriate local regulations and procedures. The MCA recognises that the OJT process will involve



- individuals learning from several sources.
- 9.2 VTS areas will vary, and OJT should be tailored to provide the candidate with the necessary training for their particular area. The duration of the training will depend upon the complexity of the VTS operations and reflect the experience and qualifications of the trainee. Ideally, individuals will normally commence OJT at their VTS centre on completion of VTS Operator training; however, the MCA recognises that this may not always be possible.
- 9.3 Satisfactory completion of OJT will qualify the trainee for an endorsement from the VTS Authority. This will be entered in the trainee's Certification Logbook. The issue of an endorsement confirms successful completion of training as a VTS Operator or VTS Supervisor at a VTS Centre, or Centres under the responsibility of that VTS Authority only. The endorsement will specify the grade at which the member of VTS personnel is employed (VTS Operator or VTS Supervisor) and which of the following types of service the Operator is authorised to provide:
- Information Service (INS);
  - Traffic Organisation Service (TOS);
  - Navigational Assistance Service (NAS).
- 9.4 Each VTS Authority is responsible for the development of an OJT programme in accordance with the IALA Model Course V-103/3. The OJT programme should take into account the necessary skills and competencies required by the trainee and these should be clearly defined in an OJT Training Record Book. Personnel carrying out the OJT of VTS staff in the core VTS subjects should be qualified as a VTS OJT Instructor (see section 12 below). OJT may, however, include instruction in other disciplines from subject matter experts who may not be qualified as VTS OJTIs.
- 9.5 A VTS Operator or VTS Supervisor transferring to a VTS centre not identified in their VTS Certification Log Book or transferring employment to another VTS Authority is required to obtain a further endorsement to operate at that centre.
- 9.6 Before a VTS Operator achieves appointment as a VTS Supervisor a further process of OJT should take place to cover, at a supervisory level, the elements listed in Annex 2. Upon the successful completion of such training a further endorsement should be made in the VTS Certification Logbook reflecting that the holder is authorised to perform VTS Supervisory functions.

## **10. VTS Supervisor Training Portfolio**

- 10.1 The development of a portfolio is based on a VTS Supervisor candidate examining their experiences to identify skills and knowledge acquired. A professional portfolio may be described as a structured collection of evidence of a professional's best work that is selective, reflective, and collaborative, and demonstrates a professional's accomplishments over time and across a variety of contexts.
- 10.2 The portfolio is an essential element of the V-103/2 Supervisor course. This must be compiled by a candidate and submitted to the chosen training organisation for checking prior to commencement of the course. When the portfolio is created a comprehensive indication of learning, cross-referenced with evidence demonstrating actual skills, knowledge, and competence related to IALA Model Course V-103/2 should be provided. A VTS Supervisor portfolio should also document a candidate's training, reflection of operational experiences and personal development as a VTS professional in addition to drawing on expertise gained elsewhere.



- 10.3 The recommended subject areas of a portfolio are described in annex 3 and should be regularly updated to ensure that relevant Continuous Professional Development (CPD) training and certification is recorded.
- 10.4 A portfolio allows a professional to analyse his/her professional practice, to gather evidence that supports identified beliefs/standards, and to develop reflective rationales that connect professional development and learning.
- 10.5 Building a portfolio requires planning, reflection and collection of evidence both of professional development and learning.

## **11. VTS Supervisor Training**

- 11.1 A VTS Supervisor is a V-103/1 qualified VTS Operator who has successfully completed the VTS Supervisor training course, and is appropriately qualified as a VTS Supervisor, in accordance with IALA Model Course V-103/2 and holding the appropriate local endorsement.
- 11.2 The VTS Supervisor training course follows a modular training approach. Successful completion results in the issue of a certificate by the accredited training organisation and provides a formal qualification to VTS personnel performing one or more supervisory tasks.
- 11.3 Annex 2 shows the process for VTS Supervisor training and certification.
- 11.4 The MCA will endorse the individual's VTS Certification Logbook on submission of the necessary documents and fee.
- 11.5 Successful completion of the V-103/2 Supervisor course will also provide the equivalent level of refresher training for Revalidation (see section 14).
- 11.6 Personnel may be recruited directly as VTS Supervisors if they can demonstrate to the VTS Authority that they have the required experience to undertake the responsibilities and duties of a VTS Supervisor. The VTS Authority should ensure that such personnel have received VTS Operator training and any additional training as may be necessary to meet the required standards of competence for a VTS Supervisor.

## **12. VTS On-the-Job Training Instructor**

- 12.1 VTS On-the-Job Training Instructor (OJTI) is a person qualified as a VTS Operator or VTS Supervisor and has successfully completed an approved OJTI course (IALA V-103/4) at an accredited VTS training organisation. The training organisation will endorse the individual's VTS Certification Logbook.
- 12.2 The MCA will endorse the individual's VTS Certification Logbook on submission of the necessary documents and fee.
- 12.3 OJTIs are qualified in the task for which training is being conducted and assessment is being made. It is expected that they will have an appropriate level of knowledge and understanding of the competence to be assessed.
- 12.4 OJT in basic VTS skills by VTS personnel, who have not completed IALA V-103/4, while permissible, should only occur in a VTS with a small team of VTS Operators. Associated risks must be evaluated as part of the overall risk assessment to identify the standard and the performance indicators against which the VTS OJT is evaluated.



12.5 OJT Instructors shall have a detailed knowledge of the VTS Centre's OJT programme and specific objectives.

### **13. Maintaining Standards**

13.1 VTS personnel have established their role as maritime professionals contributing to the safety and efficiency of coastal and port vessel traffic in the United Kingdom. The MCA recognises VTS personnel as professionals and requires that the quality of professional skills, competence and standards is assured through a process of annual assessment, refresher/recurrent training and revalidation.

13.2 IALA Model Course V-103/5 on the Revalidation process for VTS qualification and certification provides guidance on the implementation of VTS Refresher/Recurrent, Updating and Adaptation training in addition to the provision of annual assessments and the continual professional development of VTS personnel.

#### **13.3 Annual Assessment**

The continual assessment of all VTS personnel by their respective VTS Authorities should be carried out annually. On-the-job formal assessment should be recorded at the rear of the VTS Certification Logbook under 'Record of Annual Assessment'. If occasions arise where VTS personnel are found to be below the required standard they should be removed from operational duties and given appropriate updating training until such time as they are considered competent.

#### **13.4 Continual Professional Development**

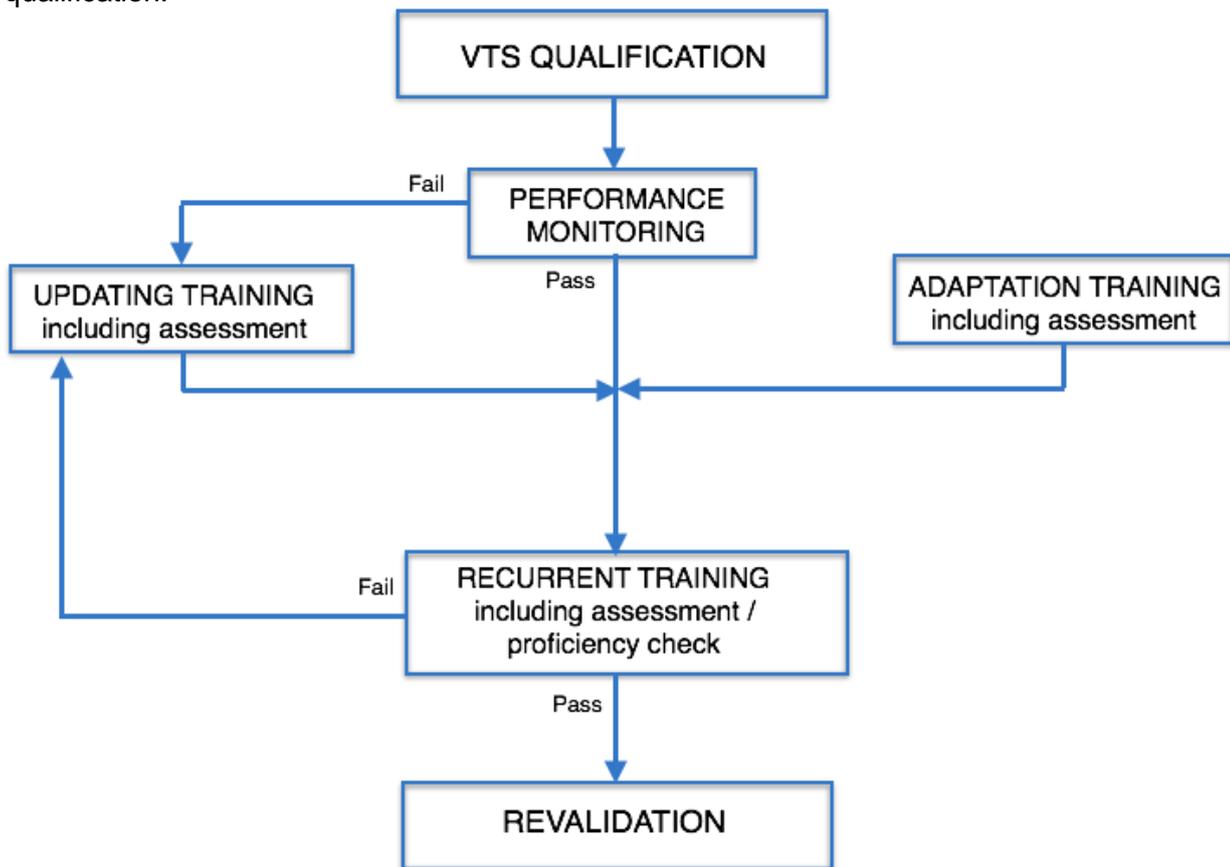
In addition to refresher/recurrent training VTS Authorities should provide training and development opportunities for VTS personnel to keep abreast of technological advances, policy and good working practice in VTS.

13.5 VTS Authorities are recommended to develop a programme of ongoing Continual Professional Development (CPD) to ensure that the standard of training achieved during VTS Operator/VTS Supervisor courses as well as V-103/3 OJT is maintained. VTS related CPD may comprise of the following areas:

- Review and analysis of lessons learned from local VTS operations;
- Regular updates of regulatory, procedural and technological developments;
- Continual development through trips on vessels with Pilots or other stakeholders;
- Visits to allied services, adjacent VTS Centres or other similar organisations;
- Attendance and participation in relevant emergency, procedural and VTS related exercises.



Figure below describes the steps necessary in order to enable the revalidation of a VTS qualification.



Notes:

- 1 Performance Monitoring should be carried out annually.
- 2 Refresher / Recurrent Training is carried out at intervals of not exceeding three years.
- 3 Updating Training and Adaptation Training should be carried out when deemed necessary

#### 14. Refresher/Recurrent Training

14.1 VTS personnel are required to undergo VTS Refresher/Recurrent training every 3 years, either through a formal VTS Refresher/Recurrent training course conducted by an MCA accredited VTS training organisation, or in-house by an MCA approved course provided by a VTS Authority with the appropriate resources in order to achieve the refresher/recurrent training standard.

14.2 A VTS Refresher/Recurrent training course, approved by the MCA, aims to provide professional development training to ensure that the competence, knowledge and skills of VTS personnel are being maintained and updated on a periodic basis. The VTS Refresher/Recurrent training course should comprise approximately 10 hours of lectures, presentations and workshops and 10 hours of simulation presented over three consecutive days on an MCA approved course at a VTS training organisation or VTS Authority.

14.3 The MCA recognises that the course content will constantly evolve, be job-centred and relate directly to:

- maintenance of operational standards;



- recent changes, current/emerging trends and good practice that have been identified or promulgated by the IMO, IALA, MCA, Harbour Authorities, VTS Authorities, Pilotage Associations, accredited VTS Training Organisations, etc.;
- existing and evolving technological developments that may have an impact on the VTS environment; and
- lessons to be learnt from and relevant recommendations made by the MCA, the Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) and others as a result of studies/investigations that may have an impact on the delivery of VTS.

14.4 The VTS Refresher/Recurrent training course will evaluate a candidate's ability in the following areas as per V103/1 Operator course:

<b>Topic (including V-103/1 Module Reference)</b>	<b>Sample Subject Headings</b>
1 – Language	Language structure Specific VTS messages construction Standard maritime communication phrases
2 – Traffic Management	Regulatory requirements and legal knowledge Principles of waterway and traffic management including situational awareness Traffic monitoring and organisation including types of service
3 – Equipment	Evolving technologies
4 – Nautical Knowledge	Collision regulations
5 – Communication Co-ordination	General communication skills
6 – VHF Radio	Radio operator practices and procedures Communication procedures, including SAR
7 – Personal Attributes	Human relation skills & interpersonal relationships Responsibility and reliability Attitude/proactivity
8 – Emergency Situations	Prioritise and respond to situations Maintain a safe waterway throughout emergency situations

Note: Modules of VTS Supervisor (V103/2) and OJTI (V103/4) should also be considered when preparing Refresher/Recurrent training programme being delivered to Supervisors and OJTIs.

14.5 VTS Authorities adopting a process of in-house VTS Refresher/Recurrent training should cover the same course content as outlined for the Refresher/Recurrent training course in the paragraph above. This may be achieved either as a regular course or through a process of CPD to a syllabus and venue approved by the MCA.

14.6 The VTS Refresher/Recurrent training programme and Training Record Book should, in the first instance, be submitted to the MCA for approval to ensure compliance with this recommendation. This process only applies to VTS Authorities conducting in-house training for their own staff. Trainers for in-house training should, as a minimum, be a qualified V-103/4 OJT Instructor. However, training may be supported by instruction from subject matter experts who may not be qualified as VTS OJTIs. VTS Authorities who intend to provide refresher/recurrent training to other VTS Authorities are required to obtain approval as an



accredited VTS training organisation from the MCA which will, in turn, require delivery of the training by appropriately qualified staff and meeting the requirements of other VTS career courses set out at paragraph 8.2.

14.7 VTS Authorities opting for a Refresher/Recurrent training course shall ensure that all VTS personnel undergo such training every three years. VTS personnel whose refresher/recurrent training has lapsed past the three year requirement will be required to undertake successful completion of the 5-day VTS Operator simulator assessment course.

14.8 Training organisations will issue a certificate on successful completion, and to an appropriate standard, of the Refresher/Recurrent training course. VTS Authorities conducting in-house training should maintain a training record and ensure that the appropriate training has been achieved.

14.9 To successfully complete a VTS Refresher/Recurrent training course candidates will be assessed by an approved training organisation using a variety of methods including formal assessment and simulation exercises. These methods should include a requirement to complete pre course tasks to cover key elements and principles of generic VTS practice in order to optimise the time spent on the VTS Refresher/Recurrent training course. Pre course tasks may also highlight other areas that may need to be addressed or reviewed during the VTS Refresher/Recurrent training course.

Feedback on candidate's performance during the VTS Refresher/Recurrent training course can also be provided to the VTS authority upon request so as to enable the annual assessment process to be particularly focused on any areas for improvement/development.

Should a candidate not reach the required standard for the award of a VTS Refresher/Recurrent training course certificate, the Training Organisation will notify the VTS Authority concerned and provide feedback and recommendations as to relevant updating training requirements and options available.

## **15. Revalidation (Continuous Service)**

15.1 All holders of a VTS Certification Logbook issued by the MCA who wish to serve at a VTS centre are required to revalidate their VTS Certification Logbook at intervals not exceeding 5 years.

15.2 The Revalidation process requires individuals to demonstrate the following:

- a. Evidence of medical fitness to the recommended requirements assessed within the last five years to include a statement by the VTS Authority of continued suitability if shortcomings against the requirements have been identified (see section 4.2);
- b. Evidence of CPD by successful completion of an approved VTS Refresher/Recurrent or VTS Supervisor training course delivered by an accredited training organisation or VTS authority. Refresher/Recurrent training courses must have been conducted within the last three years.
- c. Evidence of continuous service at a VTS centre as a VTS Operator, VTS Supervisor or VTS Manager during the preceding 5 years. This evidence will normally be the completion of formal assessments conducted annually by the VTS Authority and recorded in the VTS Certification Logbook. In addition to the above, for revalidation



purposes, the MCA will accept alternative occupations in lieu of continuous service at a VTS centre. Acceptable occupations include:

- Harbour Masters and their Deputies or Assistants with operational responsibilities for VTS;
- Marine/Port Managers with operational responsibilities for VTS;
- Pilots with V-103 qualifications and practical VTS operational experience who have maintained currency in VTS through regular interaction and employment within a port designated as a VTS Authority;
- Surveyors employed by Competent Authorities with responsibilities for VTS;
- Training organisation trainers/assessors engaged in delivery of MCA approved VTS training.

15.3 This list is not exhaustive and applications from certificate holders engaged in other occupations may also be considered.

15.4 The MCA will revalidate an individual's VTS Certification Logbook on submission of the necessary documents and fee as well as a completed MSF4807 form (Application for VTS Operator logbook). Further details are available from the Seafarer Training and Certification Branch of the MCA, or on the MCA website [www.dft.gov.uk/mca](http://www.dft.gov.uk/mca).

## 16. Updating Training

Updating Training is tailor made training following a training needs analysis indicating that additional training is required.

Updating Training should be implemented when VTS personnel require additional training other than that covered by the Refresher/Recurrent Training. Updating Training may be required due to a number of reasons:

- After a break in service;
- After a VTS qualification, endorsement or VTS certification log has expired;
- Following an unsatisfactory outcome of an annual assessment or the unsuccessful completion of Refresher/Recurrent training;
- Upon request of a member of VTS personnel;
- When deemed necessary by the Competent and/or VTS authority.

16.1 For breaks in service of less than 12 months the VTS Authority should undertake a training needs analysis to determine the requirement for updating training taking into account the complexity of the VTS area and the tasks of the VTS personnel.

16.2 VTS personnel who are away from operational duties for a period of more than 12 months will no longer be qualified for VTS operational duties. This absence will be reflected in the record of annual assessments. On return to work, VTS personnel will be required to demonstrate competence through successful completion of the 5-day VTS Operator simulator assessment course at an accredited training organisation. It is the responsibility of the VTS Authority to negotiate with the training organisation the appropriate training required to bring the VTS Operator up to the necessary entry standard, prior to commencing the simulator assessment course. On completion of the 5-day VTS Operator simulator assessment course the accredited training organisation will issue a V-103/1 VTS Operator Certificate. The VTS Authority should confirm that OJT standards have been met and the appropriate endorsement should be entered in the individual's Certification Logbook.



16.3 The MCA will revalidate an individual's VTS Certification Logbook on submission of the necessary documents and fee.

## 17. Adaptation Training

Adaptation Training is carried out whenever significant changes are expected or when changes have been made, concerning equipment, regulations, operational procedures or any other matter which is relevant to the performance of VTS personnel.

Adaptation Training should be carried out as deemed necessary by a Competent Authority and/or VTS Authority. A process of Adaptation Training will be implemented whenever significant changes are expected or have been made, concerning equipment, regulations, operational procedures, the VTS environment or any other matter which is relevant to the performance of VTS personnel.

A programme of Adaptation Training should be developed on a case-by-case basis taking full account of the nature of the specific change(s). In order to develop a programme of Adaptation Training, a training needs analysis should be undertaken to determine the nature of the planned change in order to design, develop and implement the required training and to subsequently assess the performance of VTS personnel.

## More Information

Navigation Safety Branch  
Maritime and Coastguard Agency  
Bay 2/20  
Spring Place  
105 Commercial Road  
Southampton  
SO15 1EG

Tel : +44 (0) 203 8172429  
e-mail: [navigationsafety@mca.gov.uk](mailto:navigationsafety@mca.gov.uk)

Website Address: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/maritime-and-coastguard-agency](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/maritime-and-coastguard-agency)

General Inquiries: [infoline@mca.gov.uk](mailto:infoline@mca.gov.uk)

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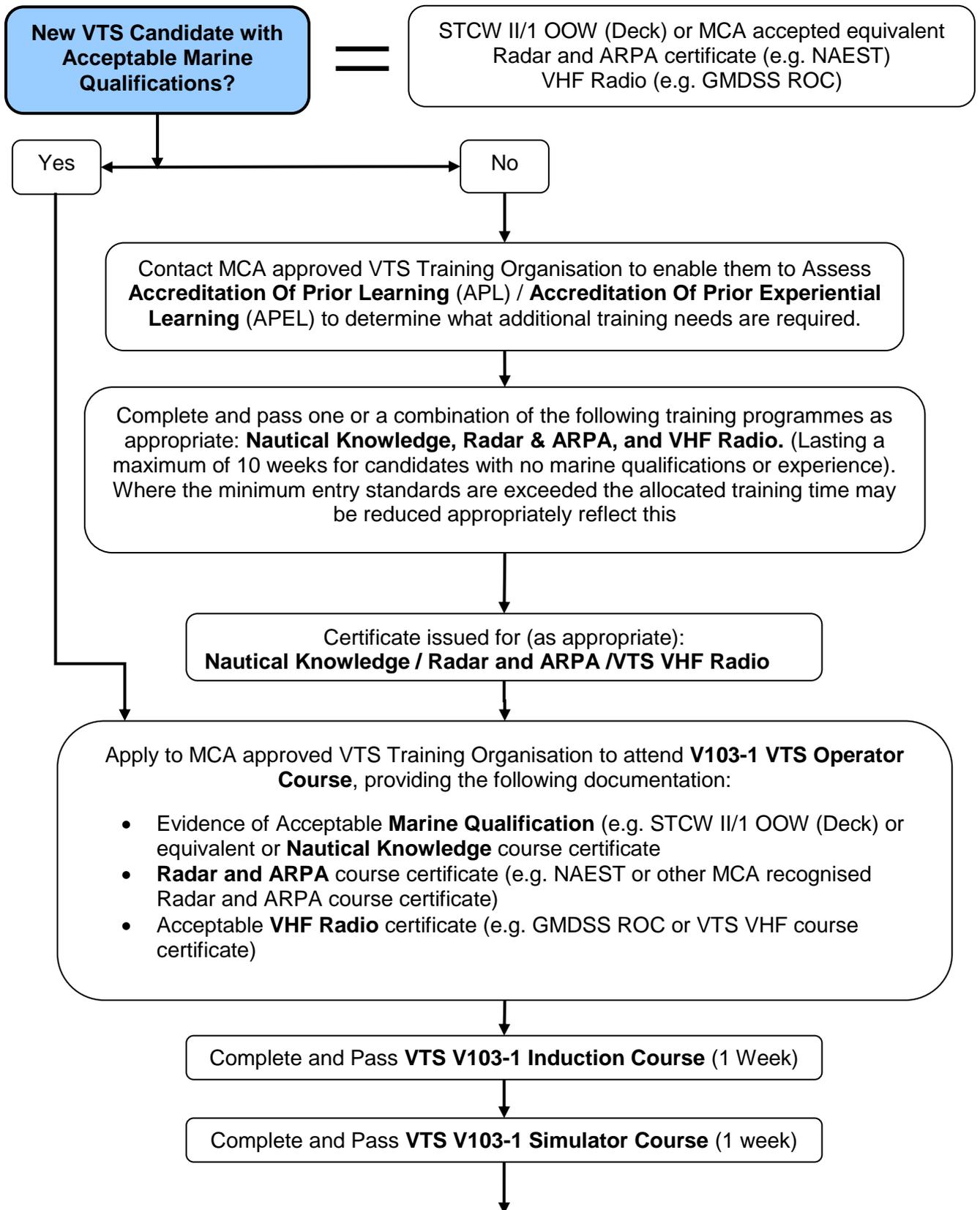
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***Safer Lives, Safer Ships, Cleaner Seas***



**V-103/1 Training and certification process for new entry VTSOs with or without acceptable marine qualifications**



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Apply to MCA for **VTS Certification Log Book** (using form MSF 4807) providing the following documents:

- Certificate of Nautical Knowledge or Evidence of Acceptable Marine Qualification (e.g. STCW OOW (Deck) etc)
- VTS Induction Course Certificate
- VTS Operator Course Certificate
- Radar and ARPA Course Certificate
- VHF Radio Certification (GMDSS ROC, VTS VHF course)
- 2 attested passport photographs
- Letter from employer confirming English language ability (IELTS level 7) and medical fitness

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Complete local knowledge **On-the-job Training** at VTS centre in order to achieve endorsement by VTS authority in candidates certification log book

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Once assessed as competent by VTS authority (endorsement in logbook) candidate embarks on career as a VTS operator

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**Every Year**: VTS authority undertakes **annual assessment** which is recorded in the VTS operator's VTS log book

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**Every 3 Years**: VTS operator undertakes a programme of **refresher/recurrent training** which is recorded in VTS operators log book

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**Every 5 Years**: VTS operators log book is sent to MCA (using form MSF 4807) for **revalidation**

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## V-103/2 Training and certification process for VTS Supervisor Training

<p><b>STAGE 1</b></p> <p>Underpinning Knowledge for preparation of VTS Supervisor Training Portfolio</p>
<p><b>STAGE 2</b></p> <p>Supervisor Training Portfolio based on current VTS operational experience: Development – Submission – Verification.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>STAGE 3</b></p> <p><b>NOTE: VTS Operators with acceptable marine qualifications are exempt from this module.</b></p> <p>The Additional Nautical Knowledge element for V-103/2 VTS Supervisor candidates should be completed in the workplace ahead of the residential component of the course.</p> <p>Candidates should draw upon a range of resources including research and liaison with other professionals such as Pilots, Harbourmasters, stakeholders/allied services etc.</p> <p>The Additional Nautical Knowledge is designed so that a VTS Supervisor can make an informed decision on operational matters in both routine and non routine circumstances.</p> <p>Training Organisations should devise case studies that are related to VTS Supervision and which encompass the following key points:</p> <p>Ship stability</p> <p>Identify and describe routine and non-routine conditions of stability that vessels within a VTS area may experience. This should include transverse and longitudinal stability, internal and external influences.</p> <p>Cargo operations</p> <p>Describe the general principles of cargo stowage onboard different categories of vessels to ensure the safety of the vessel and cargo.</p> <p>Ship construction</p> <p>Identify and explain how different types of vessel are constructed and how the construction of vessel varies according to the type of cargo that they carry.</p> <p>Ship handling and manoeuvring</p> <p>Compare and contrast different types of propulsion/steering systems and vessel handling characteristics as they relate to the operation of vessels at different stages of their transit within a VTS area.</p> <p>The case studies need not be stand alone, they may be blended together into one project or split into distinct pieces of work.</p>



**STAGE 4**

Delivered as a 10-day residential course by an MCA -accredited VTS training organisation as recommended by IALA Model Course V-103/2 and covers the following modules:

1. Advanced Traffic Management
2. VTS Equipment
3. Additional Personal Attributes
4. Responding to Emergency Situations
5. Administrative Functions
6. Legal Knowledge

**STAGE 5**

Issue of VTS Supervisor training course certificate by accredited training organisation on successful completion of Stage 4.

**STAGE 6**

Application to MCA for endorsement of VTS Certification Log Book.

**STAGE 7**

Completion of On-the-Job Training (OJT) in accordance with IALA Model Course V-103/3. OJT may be commenced as soon as the candidate embarks on Supervisor training.



## Portfolio Guidance

This annex should be read in conjunction with Section 9 of this MGN.

All candidates embarking on VTS Supervisor Training are required to prepare and submit a portfolio to demonstrate their knowledge and experience prior to attending the college based residential course (STAGE 5). It is recommended that the compilation of a portfolio is commenced by all VTSO's after completion of their V103/1 training. There are three categories of evidence that can be provided:

- Authentic Evidence / Documentation
- Reflections / Explanations
- Validation Entries / Observations

A typical portfolio will include, but not be limited to the following information, based on current operational VTS experience:

1. Job description; (Evidence)
2. Personal details; (Validation)
3. Curriculum Vitae; (Evidence / Reflection)
4. VTS employment record; (Evidence / Reflection)
5. Copies of VTS certificates; (Evidence / Validation)
6. Projects undertaken (if any); (Evidence / Reflection)
7. Description of own port VTS designation; (Validation / Reflection)
8. Record of Continuous Professional Development; (Reflection)
9. Personal development including relevant courses; (Reflection)
10. Membership of committees and associated responsibilities. (Reflection)

Portfolios should contain evidence of key traits and personal attributes of a supervisor.

Portfolios should contain personal narratives/reflections written by the candidate to support evidence that demonstrates the key traits of the VTS Supervisor.

VTS Supervisor Advancement Training is based on the IALA Model Course V-103/2. The Model Course consists of the following six modules:

### **Module 1: Additional Nautical Knowledge**

Data used in VTS/ Marine Organisations/ Traffic & Port Management/ Dangerous Cargoes

### **Module 2: VTS Equipment**

(Operation of equipment and systems/Maintenance procedures/Rectification of defects/Redundancy of equipment/Health & Safety requirements)

### **Module 3: Additional Personal Attributes**

(Leadership/Communication Skills/ Stress management)

### **Module 4: Responding to Emergency Situations**

Description and purpose of contingency plans/Implementation of contingency plans/Special circumstances/Delegation of responsibility

### **Module 5: Administrative Functions**

Allied services/Traffic schedules/Preparation of reports (internal & external)/Performance of a VTS centre/Performance of VTS personnel



## **Module 6: Legal Knowledge**

Legal basis for VTS in International Law/Legal liabilities and their implications to VTS/Legal liabilities and their implications to others in a VTS area/Shipping Acts and Regulations relating to VTS

### **Time Interval between VTS Operator and VTS Supervisor Training**

There is no mandatory time interval between undertaking a VTS Operator course and VTS Supervisor course. However, when selecting candidates for VTS Supervisor training, VTS Authorities should be mindful of the necessity for candidates to possess suitable supervisory personal attributes and their level of operational experience. In order to complete the VTS Supervisor portfolio and to meaningfully contribute to the VTS Supervisor course.

Further guidance is available direct from the Accredited Training Organisations, and the UK Vessel Traffic Services Association website at <http://www.ukvts.org.uk/>



### List of Documents Required by the Accredited Training Organisations and the Competent Authority

The candidate, prior to commencing the VTS Operator Training, should present the following original documents to the training organisation to obtain accreditation of prior learning/ accreditation of prior experiential learning:

<b>Module 1 (Language):</b>
GCSE level pass in English or acceptable equivalent; or for native English speakers a letter from the VTS Authority stating that the operator has an acceptable standard of English to carry out the role of a VTS Operator. For all other candidates for whom first language is other than English, either a UK Certificate of Competency or the minimum International English Language Testing Scheme (IELTS) General Training Standard Level 5.
<b>Module 3 (Equipment):</b>
Certificate of approved radar training; i.e. NAEST (Ops) certificate or acceptable equivalent.
<b>Module 4 (Nautical Knowledge):</b>
STCW II/1 OOW (Deck) / /Master (less than 500 GT) Near Coastal/Class 2 Fishing (Deck)/ Royal Navy Bridge Watch keeping certificate or acceptable equivalent.
<b>Module 6 (VHF Radio):</b>
GMDSS Restricted Operator's Certificate or acceptable equivalent.

Where doubt exists as to the acceptable equivalency of any certification/qualification the MCA should be contacted on a case-by-case basis.

In addition to the above original documents, candidates are required to submit the following to the MCA for issue of a Certification Logbook:

<b>Initial Application for candidates without marine qualifications:</b>
Certificate of Nautical Knowledge
VTS Induction Certificate
VTS Operator Course Certificate
Radar / ARPA Course Certificate
VHF Radio (GoC/RoC/LRC/VTS VHF Certificate)
Two attested passport-sized photographs
Letter from Employer confirming medical fitness & language ability (e.g. IELTS level 7)

<b>Initial Application for candidate with marine qualifications:</b>
Evidence of Accreditation of Prior Learning
VTS Induction Certificate
VTS Operator Course Certificate
Radar / ARPA Course Certificate
VHF Radio (GoC/RoC/LRC/VTS VHF Certificate)
Two attested passport-sized photographs
Letter from Employer confirming medical fitness & language ability (e.g. IELTS level 7)

For Applications and Endorsements for VTS Supervisors and VTS Instructors see MSF 4807.

