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**Government Decree
On Vessel Traffic Service
(763/2005)**

Section 1 – On-the-job training plan

- (1) The VTS authority must have a VTS centre-specific on-the-job training plan confirmed by the Finnish Maritime Administration.
- (2) The on-the-job training plan must include a method for assessing whether a training period has been completed successfully and whether the employee concerned has the capability to start working independently as a VTS operator.
- (3) The on-the-job training plan must include instructions for the procedure to be followed in revalidating expired endorsements.

Section 2 – VTS operator basic training

- (1) VTS operator basic training must be arranged in accordance with a training programme approved by the Finnish Maritime Administration. The training programme must be based on the recommendations drawn up by the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA) and approved by the International Maritime Organization (IMO).
- (2) The basic training must consist of VTS theory and simulator practice.

- (3) Participants in basic training may be granted partial or full release from some modules of the training programme on the basis of previous training. When approving a training programme, the Finnish Maritime Administration defines the modules from which release can be granted. In order to be granted release, the person concerned must present an acceptable certificate of alternative training before the beginning of the basic training.
- (4) Basic training must be completed before completion of the on-the-job training referred to in section 4.

Section 3 – *VTS supervisor advancement training*

- (1) VTS supervisor advancement training must be arranged in accordance with a training programme approved by the Finnish Maritime Administration. The training programme must be based on the recommendation drawn up by the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA) and approved by the International Maritime Organization (IMO).
- (2) The advancement training must consist of advanced VTS theory.
- (3) Participants in advancement training may be granted partial or full release from some modules of the training programme on the basis of previous training. When approving a training programme, the Finnish Maritime Administration will define the modules from which release can be granted. In order to be granted release, the person concerned must present an acceptable certificate of alternative training before the beginning of the advancement training.
- (4) Participants in VTS supervisor training must have successfully completed VTS operator basic training.

Section 4 – *VTS operator on-the-job training*

- (1) The VTS authority is responsible for providing on-the-job VTS operator training at the VTS centre.
- (2) On-the-job training takes place as practical work under an on-the-job instructor. On-the-job instructors must supervise and assess the trainee's action during training situations by following the radio traffic and the traffic image and, if necessary, intervene in the trainee's action. On-the-job instructors can be in charge of only one trainee when practising operational watchkeeping work. A record must be kept of on-the-job training, showing training progress, quantity and periods.
- (3) During on-the-job training, the trainee must receive training concerning
 - 1) the VTS area, its fairways and vessel traffic;
 - 2) the VTS centre's technical systems and equipment;
 - 3) the VTS centre's procedures, instructions and regulations; and
 - 4) the VTS centre's instructions for emergencies and exceptional circumstances.
- (4) The endorsement entered on the certificate by the VTS authority shows what vessel traffic services the VTS operator concerned is entitled to provide and the VTS area or sector in which the operator is entitled to act. Endorsements are valid for one year. Their validity may be extended if the holders of the certificates concerned have, in the assessment of knowledge and skills referred to in section 8, shown their competence for the provision of the vessel traffic service that the endorsements entitle them to.
- (5) The duration of on-the-job training must not exceed six months.

Section 5 – *Language skills required of VTS operators*

- (1) It is a condition for granting a VTS operator certificate that the applicant has good oral and written skills in either the Finnish or the Swedish language and satisfactory oral skills in the other of the two. In addition, National Language Test skill level four referred to in the Act on National Language Tests (964/2004) is required in the English language.
- (2) The requirement concerning skill in the other language laid down in subsection 1 above does not, however, apply to applicants who have completed the deck officer's training laid down in the Decree on the Manning of Ships, Certification of Seafarers and Watchkeeping (1256/1997).

Section 6 – *Language skill requirements for VTS supervisors*

What is laid down in section 5 applies to the language skills required of VTS supervisors.

Section 7 – *Revalidation of certificates*

- (1) Revalidation of a VTS operator certificate is applied for at the Finnish Maritime Administration. Applicants must show that they have maintained their competence and completed VTS operator supplementary professional training.
- (2) Applicants are considered to have maintained their competence if they have:
 - 1) a valid endorsement for providing vessel traffic services in at least one VTS area or sector; or
 - 2) at least a total of one year (1600 hours) of work experience in operational vessel traffic management during the past five years; or
 - 3) at least a total of six months (800 hours) of work experience in operational vessel traffic management and at least six months (800 hours) of work experience in a VTS supervisor's administrative duties during the past five years.

- (3) On-the-job training given by on-the-job instructors can be included in the instructors' operational working hours. The training time of persons receiving on-the-job training can be included in their operational working hours.
- (4) Applicants unable to show that they have kept up their competence in accordance with subsection 2 must, before participation in the supplementary professional training referred to in section 9, pass an examination in which they show sufficient command of basic knowledge in vessel traffic service. The form and content of the examination and the examiner are approved by the Finnish Maritime Administration.

Section 8 – *Revalidation of endorsements*

- (1) The VTS authority must carry out an annual assessment of the knowledge and skills of certificate holders. If the assessment is carried out during the three months preceding the last date of validity of an endorsement, the period of validity for the new endorsement will begin from the end of the previous endorsement period. If a person's work performance is evaluated earlier than three months before the expiry of the endorsement concerned, the validity of the new endorsement will begin from the date of the assessment.
- (2) Work performance can be evaluated in a practical demonstration of skill in a VTS centre or simulator. The assessment must comprise at least the following modules:
 - 1) vessel traffic management in accordance with the type of service to be provided and regulations and instructions given;
 - 2) communication; and
 - 3) command of technical equipment and systems.
- (3) If the work performance of the person to be evaluated does not meet the requirements, the person must complete an on-the-job training period in the module concerned in order to achieve sufficient knowledge and skills.

Section 9 – *Supplementary professional training*

- (1) Supplementary professional training for VTS operators must be organized in accordance with a training programme approved by the Finnish Maritime Administration.
- (2) Supplementary training must consist of supplementary training in VTS theory and simulator practice.
- (3) Supplementary professional training must take place during the 12 months preceding the last date of validity of the certificate. For revalidation of an expired certificate, supplementary training must be completed before a new certificate can be granted.

Section 10 – *The VTS authority's notification duty*

- (1) The VTS authority must notify the relevant VTS authorities of other European Community Member States located along the planned route of the vessel concerned of any relevant information it may have on the vessel if:
 - 1) the vessel has been involved in a maritime incident or accident referred to in section 23 of the Vessel Traffic Service Act (623/2005);
 - 2) the vessel has neglected the notification duty laid down in the Vessel Traffic Service Act;
 - 3) the vessel has violated rules applicable to a traffic separation scheme and vessel traffic service for which a European Community Member State is responsible;
 - 4) it can be shown or there is a justified reason to assume that the vessel has intentionally discharged oil into the sea or in some other way violated the provisions of the Protocol of 1978 (Finnish Treaty Series 51/1983) relating to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, in waters under the jurisdiction of a European Community Member State; or
 - 5) the vessel has been refused entry to ports in European Community Member States or a Member State has made a notification concerning the vessel under section 1 of Annex I of Council Directive 95/21/EC concerning control of vessels by port States, as amended and implemented in Finland.

- (2) The VTS authority must ensure that the information it receives under subsection 1 is forwarded to the relevant authorities and port and harbour operators referred to in section 18(1) of the Vessel Traffic Service Act.

Section 11 – *Contents of notifications concerning maritime incidents and accidents*

Notifications under section 23 of the Vessel Traffic Service Act must contain:

- 1) vessel identity;
- 2) vessel position data;
- 3) the vessel's departure port;
- 4) the vessel's destination port;
- 5) an address where information can be obtained concerning any dangerous or polluting substances carried on board;
- 6) the number of people on board;
- 7) detailed information on the incident; and
- 8) the relevant information referred to in IMO Resolution A.851(20).

Section 12 – *Entry into force*

- (1) This Decree enters into force on 1 October 2005.
- (2) Measures necessary for the implementation of this Decree may be undertaken before the Decree's entry into force.