

M-Notices September 2011

MGN 434 (M+F) – Navigation: Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) – Training and Certification of VTS Personnel

This note sets out the standards for the training of VTS personnel in the UK and provides information on the procedures for VTS training and certification.

The UK standards are closely aligned with those developed in 1993 by the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation & Lighthouse Authorities (IALA) in response to Resolution 10 of the 1978 STCW Convention.

MGN 434 describes how applicants for VTS positions should be assessed for aptitude and suitability using interviews, written tests, practical tests and psychometric tests. It stresses that the only approved route to acquire professional qualifications for VTS personnel is through the UK VTS Training and Certification Strategy.

To practise as a VTS operator, a person must have completed the VTS Operator training course and on-the-job training, and have received a local endorsement from their VTS authority.

VTS training courses in the UK must be accredited by the Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA), the National Competent Authority for vessel traffic services. MGN 434 gives details of the requirements to be met by training organisations.

VTS Operator training must cover the following eight modules set out in the IALA Model Course V-103/1 (further details are given in MGN 434):

- Language
- Traffic management
- Equipment
- Nautical knowledge
- Communication coordination
- VHF radio
- Personal attributes
- Emergency situations

MGN 434 also sets out the requirements for on-the-job training, maintaining standards, refresher training and the further training needed to reach VTS Supervisor grade. In addition, it explains how to revalidate VTS certification at periods not exceeding five years.