Manual which may be obtained by contacting the appropriate VTS, and periodically published in the Local Notice to Mariners. The VTS User's Manual and the World VTS Guide, an International Maritime Organization (IMO) recognized publication, contain additional information which may assist the prudent mariner while in the appropriate VTS area.

### § 161.5 Deviations from the rules.

(a) Requests to deviate from any provision in this part, either for an extended period of time or if anticipated before the start of a transit, must be submitted in writing to the appropriate District Commander. Upon receipt of the written request, the District Commander may authorize a deviation if it is determined that such a deviation provides a level of safety equivalent to that provided by the required measure or is a maneuver considered necessary for safe navigation under the circumstances. An application for an authorized deviation must state the need and fully describe the proposed alternative to the required measure.

(b) Requests to deviate from any provision in this part due to circumstances that develop during a transit or immediately preceeding a transit, may be made verbally to the appropriate VTS Commanding Officer. Requests to deviate shall be made as far in advance as practicable. Upon receipt of the request, the VTS Commanding Officer may authorize a deviation if it is determined that, based on vessel handling characteristics, traffic density, radar contacts, environmental conditions and other relevant information, such a deviation provides a level of safety equivalent to that provided by the required measure or is a maneuver considered necessary for safe navigation under the circumstances.

## SERVICES, VTS MEASURES, AND OPERATING REQUIREMENTS

### § 161.10 Services.

To enhance navigation and vessel safety, and to protect the marine environment, a VTS may issue advisories, or respond to vessel requests for information, on reported conditions within the VTS area, such as:

(a) Hazardous conditions or circumstances;

(b) Vessel congestion;

(c) Traffic density;

(d) Environmental conditions;

(e) Aids to navigation status;

(f) Anticipated vessel encounters;

(g) Another vessel's name, type, position, hazardous vessel operating conditions, if applicable, and intended navigation movements, as reported;

(h) Temporary measures in effect;

(i) A description of local harbor operations and conditions, such as ferry routes, dredging, and so forth;

(j) Anchorage availability; or

(k) Other information or special circumstances.

### § 161.11 VTS measures.

(a) A VTS may issue measures or directions to enhance navigation and vessel safety and to protect the marine environment, such as, but not limited to:

(1) Designating temporary reporting points and procedures;

(2) Imposing vessel operating requirements; or

(3) Establishing vessel traffic routing schemes.

(b) During conditions of vessel congestion, restricted visibility, adverse weather, or other hazardous circumstances, a VTS may control, supervise, or otherwise manage traffic, by specifying times of entry, movement, or departure to, from, or within a VTS area.

### § 161.12 Vessel operating requirements.

(a) Subject to the exigencies of safe navigation, a VTS User shall comply with all measures established or directions issued by a VTS.

(1) If, in a specific circumstance, a VTS User is unable to safely comply with a measure or direction issued by the VTS, the VTS User may deviate only to the extent necessary to avoid endangering persons, property or the environment. The deviation shall be reported to the VTS as soon as is practicable.

(b) When not exchanging communications, a VTS User must maintain a listening watch as required by § 26.04(e) of this chapter on the VTS frequency designated in Table 161.12(b) (VTS Call Signs, Designated Frequencies, and

Monitoring Areas). In addition, the VTS User must respond promptly when hailed and communicate in the English language.

NOTE: As stated in 47 CFR 80.148(b), a VHF watch on Channel 16 (156.800 MHz) is not required on vessels subject to the Vessel Bridge-to-Bridge Radiotelephone Act and participating in a Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) system when the watch is maintained on both the vessel bridge-to-bridge frequency and a designated VTS frequency.

TABLE 161.12(B).—VESSEL TRAFFIC SERVICES (VTS) CALL SIGNS, DESIGNATED FREQUENCIES, AND MONITORING AREAS

| Vessel traffic services call sign | Designated[1] frequency (channel designation) | Monitoring area |
|---|---|---|
| New York[2] | | |
| New York Traffic[3] | 156.550 MHz (Ch. 11) and 156.700 MHz (Ch. 14) | The navigable waters of the Lower New York Harbor bounded on the east by a line drawn from Norton Point to Breezy Point; on the south by a line connecting the entrance buoys at the Ambrose Channel, Swash Channel and Sandy Hook Channel to Sandy Hook Point; and on the southeast including the waters of the Sandy Hook Bay south to a line drawn at latitude 40°25′N.; then west into waters of the Raritan Bay to the Raritan River Rail Road Bridge; and then north including the waters of the Arthur Kill and Newark Bay to the Lehigh Valley Draw Bridge at latitude 40°41.95′N.; and then east including the waters of the Kill Van Kull and Upper New York Bay north to a line drawn east-west from the Holland Tunnel Ventilator Shaft at latitude 40°43.7′N.; longitude 74°01.6′W. in the Hudson River; and continuing east including the waters of the East River to the Throgs Neck Bridge, excluding the Harlem River. |
| | 156.600 MHz (Ch. 12) | Each vessel at anchor within the above areas. |
| Houston[2] | | The navigable waters north of 29°N., west of 94°20′W., south of 29°49′N., and east of 95°20′W. |
| Houston Traffic | 156.550 MHz (Ch. 11) | The navigable waters north of a line extending due west from the southern most end of Exxon Dock #1 (29°43.37′N., 95°01.27′W.). |
| | 156.600 MHz (Ch. 12) | The navigable waters south of a line extending due west from the southern most end of Exxon Dock #1 (29°43.37′N., 95°01.27′W.). |
| Berwick Bay | | |
| Berwick Traffic | 156.550 MHz (Ch. 11) | The navigable waters south of 29°45′N., west of 91°10′W., north of 29°37′N., and east of 91°18′W. |
| St. Marys River | | |
| Soo Control | 156.600 MHz (Ch. 12) | The navigable waters of the St. Marys River between 45°57′N. (De Tour Reef Light) and 46°38.7′N. (Ile Parisienne Light), except the St. Marys Falls Canal and those navigable waters east of a line from 46°04.16′N. and 46°01.57′N. (LaPointe to Sims Point in Potagannissing Bay and Worsley Bay). |
| San Francisco[2] | | |
| San Francisco Offshore Vessel Movement | 156.600 MHz (Ch. 12) | The waters within a 38 nautical mile radius of Mount Tamalpais (37°55.8′N., 122°34.6′W.) excluding the San Francisco Offshore Precautionary Area. |
| Reporting Service San Francisco Traffic | 156.700 MHz (Ch. 14) | The waters of the San Francisco Offshore Precautionary Area eastward to San Francisco Bay including its tributaries extending to the ports of Stockton, Sacramento and Redwood City. |
| Puget Sound[4] | | |
| Seattle Traffic[5] | 156.700 MHz (Ch. 14) | The navigable waters of Puget Sound, Hood Canal and adjacent waters south of a line connecting Marrowstone Point and Lagoon Point in Admiralty Inlet and south of a line drawn due east from the southernmost tip of Possession Point on Whidbey Island to the shoreline. |
| | 156.250 MHz (Ch. 5A) | The navigable waters of the Strait of Juan de Fuca east of 124°40′W. excluding the waters in the central portion of the Strait of Juan de Fuca north and east of Race Rocks; the navigable waters of the Strait of Georgia east of 122°52′W.; the San Juan Island Archipelago, Rosario Strait, Bellingham Bay; Admiralty of Juan de Fuca north and east of Race Rocks; the navigable waters of the Strait of Georgia east of 122°52′W.; the San Juan Island Archipelago, Rosario Strait, Bellingham Bay; Admiralty Inlet north of a line connecting Marrowstone Point and Lagoon Point and all waters east of Whidbey Island north of a line drawn due east from the southernmost tip of Possession Point on Whidbey Island to the shoreline. |
| Tofino Traffic[6] | 156.725 MHz (Ch. 74) | The waters west of 124°40′W. within 50 nautical miles of the coast of Vancouver Island including the waters north of 48°N., and east of 127°W. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Vancouver Traffic | 156.550 MHz (Ch. 11) | The navigable waters of the Strait of Georgia west of 122°52′W., the navigable waters of the central Strait of Juan de Fuca north and east of Race Rocks, including the Gulf Island Archipelago, Boundary Pass and Haro Strait. |
| Prince William Sound [7] | | |
| Valdez Traffic | 156.650 MHz (Ch. 13) | The navigable waters south of 61°05′N., east of 147°20′W., north of 60°N., and west of 146°30′W.; and, all navigable waters in Port Valdez. |
| Louisville [7] | | |
| Louisville Traffic | 156.650 MHz (Ch. 13) | The navigable waters of the Ohio River between McAlpine Locks (Mile 606) and Twelve Mile Island (Mile 593), only when the McAlpine upper pool gauge is at approximately 13.0 feet or above. |

**Notes:**

[1] In the event of a communication failure either by the vessel traffic center or the vessel or radio congestion on a designated VTS frequency, communications may be established on an alternate VTS frequency. The bridge-to-bridge navigational frequency, 156.650 MHz (Channel 13), is monitored in each VTS area; and it may be used as an alternate frequency, however, only to the extent that doing so provides a level of safety beyond that provided by other means.

[2] Designated frequency monitoring is required within U.S. navigable waters. In areas which are outside the U.S. navigable waters, designated frequency monitoring is voluntary. However, prospective VTS Users are encouraged to monitor the designated frequency.

[3] VMRS participants shall make their initial report (Sail Plan) to New York Traffic on Channel 11 (156.550 MHz). All other reports, including the Final Report, shall be made on Channel 14 (156.700 MHz). VMRS and other VTS Users shall monitor Channel 14 (156.700 MHz) while transiting the VTS area. New York Traffic may direct a vessel to monitor and report on either primary frequency depending on traffic density, weather conditions, or other safety factors. This does not require a vessel to monitor both primary frequencies.

[4] A Cooperative Vessel Traffic Service was established by the Untied States and Canada within adjoining waters. The appropriate vessel traffic Center administers the rules issued by both nations; however, it will enforce only its own set of rules within its jurisdiction.

[5] Seattle traffic may direct a vessel to monitor the other primary VTS frequency 156.250 MHz or 156.700 MHz (Channel 5A or 14) depending on traffic density, weather conditions, or other safety factors, rather than strictly adhering to the designated frequency required for each monitoring area as defined above. This does not require a vessel to monitor both primary frequencies.

[6] A portion of Tofino Sector's monitoring area extends beyond the defined CVTS area. Designated frequency monitoring is voluntary in these portions outside of VTS jurisdiction, however, prospective VTS Users are encouraged to monitor the designated frequency.

[7] The bridge-to-bridge navigational frequency, 156.650 MHz (Channel 13), is used in these VTSs because the level of radiotelephone transmissions does not warrant a designated VTS frequency. The listening watch required by 26.05 of this chapter is not limited to the monitoring area.

(c) As soon as is practicable, a VTS User shall notify the VTS of any of the following:

(1) A marine casualty as defined in 46 CFR 4.05–1;

(2) Involvement in the ramming of a fixed or floating object;

(3) A pollution incident as defined in § 151.15 of this chapter;

(4) A defect or discrepancy in an aid to navigation;

(5) A hazardous condition as defined in § 160.203 of this chapter;

(6) Improper operation of vessel equipment required by Part 164 of this chapter;

(7) A situation involving hazardous materials for which a report is required by 49 CFR 176.48; and

(8) A hazardous vessel operating condition as defined in § 161.2.

[CGD 90–020, 59 FR 36324, July 15, 1994, as amended by CGD 95–033, 60 FR 28329, May 31, 1995; CGD 92–052, 61 FR 45326, Aug. 29, 1996]

### § 161.13 VTS Special Area operating requirements.

The following operating requirements apply within a VTS Special Area:

(a) A VTS User shall, if towing astern, do so with as short a hawser as safety and good seamanship permits.

(b) A VMRS User shall: (1) Not enter or get underway in the area without prior approval of the VTS;

(2) Not enter a VTS Special Area if a hazardous vessel operating condition or circumstance exists;

(3) Not meet, cross, or overtake any other VMRS User in the area without prior approval of the VTS; and

(4) Before meeting, crossing, or overtaking any other VMRS User in the area, communicate on the designated vessel bridge-to-bridge radiotelephone frequency, intended navigation movements, and any other information necessary in order to make safe passing arrangements. This requirement does not relieve a vessel of any duty prescribed by the International Regulations for Prevention of Collisions at Sea, 1972 (72 COLREGS) or the Inland Navigation Rules.

## Subpart B—Vessel Movement Reporting System

### § 161.15 Purpose and intent.

(a) A Vessel Movement Reporting System (VMRS) is a system used to manage and track vessel movements within a VTS area. This is accomplished by requiring that vessels provide information under established procedures as set forth in this part, or as directed by the VTS.

(b) To avoid imposing an undue reporting burden or unduly congesting radiotelephone frequencies, reports shall be limited to information which is essential to achieve the objectives of the VMRS. These reports are consolidated into four reports (sailing plan, position, sailing plan deviation and final).

### § 161.16 Applicability.

The provisions of this subpart shall apply to the following VMRS Users:

(a) Every power-driven vessel of 40 meters (approximately 131 feet) or more in length, while navigating;

(b) Every towing vessel of 8 meters (approximately 26 feet) or more in length, while navigating; or

(c) Every vessel certificated to carry 50 or more passengers for hire, when engaged in trade.

### § 161.17 Definitions.

As used in this subpart: *Published* means available in a widely-distributed and publicly available medium (e.g., VTS User's Manual, ferry schedule, Notice to Mariners).

### § 161.18 Reporting requirements.

(a) A VTS may: (1) Direct a vessel to provide any of the information set forth in Table 161.18(a) (IMO Standard Ship Reporting System);

TABLE 161.18(A).—THE IMO STANDARD SHIP REPORTING SYSTEM

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| A | ALPHA ..... | Ship ..... | Name, call sign or ship station identity, and flag. |