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Working Party on Inland Water Transport

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Item 9 (a) of the provisional agenda

Promotion of River Information Services and Other Information and Communication Technologies in Inland Navigation: Guidelines and Criteria for Vessel Traffic Services on Inland Waterways (Resolution No. 58)

Revision of the Guidelines and Criteria for Vessel Traffic Services on Inland Waterways

Note by the secretariat

Mandate

1. This document is submitted in line with the proposed Programme Budget for 2023, part V, Regional cooperation for development, section 20, Economic Development in Europe, Programme 17, Economic Development in Europe (A/77/6 (Sect. 20), table 20.6).
2. At its sixty-third session, the Working Party on the Standardization of Technical and Safety Requirements in Inland Navigation (SC.3/WP.3) preliminarily approved the draft revision of the *Guidelines and Criteria for Vessel Traffic Services on Inland Waterways* (annex to resolution No. 58) based on ECE/TRANS/SC.3/WP.3/2023/9 and subject to the modifications agreed at the session. SC.3/WP.3 asked the secretariat to transmit the draft to the sixty-seventh session of the Working Party on Inland Water Transport (SC.3) for final adoption.
3. Annexes to this document contain:
 - (a) Comments of Austria to the draft (annex I);
 - (b) Modifications to the draft based on the decisions of SC.3/WP.3 and the comments of Austria (annex II);¹
 - (c) Draft resolution of SC.3.
4. SC.3 may wish to adopt the draft as resolution No. 107.

¹ The full text is contained in Informal document SC.3 No. 4 (2023).



Annex I

Comments to the Draft Revision of the Guidelines and Criteria for Vessel Traffic Services on Inland Waterways*

Transmitted by Austria

1. The definition of inland waterways in paragraph 2.1.12 is referring to “the baseline established in accordance with international law” as the boundary between sea and inland waterways. According to international law, the baseline can be a straight line between two shore points on either side of the bay. The area of the sea behind the baseline is an “inland water”, but it is not an “inland waterway” where the rules of inland navigation apply. Austria is not directly affected but suggests that the delegations of countries with coasts check the definition. Furthermore, when adapting provisions of IALA² or IMO documents for inland waters to inland waterways, the difference between the two terms should be taken into account.
2. The list of the key components of the international regulatory and legal framework for establishing VTS in paragraph 5.1.1 contains only maritime standards. It is proposed to complement the list with the European Code for Inland Waterways (CEVNI), SC.3 resolutions of relevance to River Information Services (RIS) and to consider complementing the list with the European Standard laying down Technical Requirements for Inland Navigation vessels and the European Standard for River Information Services.
3. The International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea do not apply to all waters connected to the high seas and navigable by seagoing ships as mentioned in paragraph 5.1.5. On European inland waterways, CEVNI, regulations of river commissions or national law based on CEVNI apply, even if inland waterways are connected to the high seas and are navigable by seagoing ships.
4. In relation to paragraph 5.4.2, it should be mentioned that many inland waterways are too small for navigation of seagoing ships. It is therefore not justified to require from any VTS³ that it has to follow the IALA standards. The requirement is justified for “inland waters” according to international law, because they are part of the sea, but not for “inland waterways”.
5. The buoyage system applied on inland waterways may not only “be different from the IALA buoyage system” as stated in paragraph 5.11.4, but is normally based on CEVNI, regulations of river commissions or national law based on CEVNI.

* See ECE/TRANS/SC.3/WP.3/2023/9.

² International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities.

³ Vessel Traffic Services.

Annex II

Modifications to the Draft Revision of the Guidelines and Criteria for Vessel Traffic Services on Inland Waterways***

1. Section 3.2 “Responsibilities and Liability”, *add* a new paragraph 3.2.2
 - 3.2.2 The VTS provider should:
 - Ensure that VTS conform with the regulatory framework set by the competent authority for VTS
 - Set operational objectives for VTS that are consistent with improving the safety and efficiency of ship traffic and the protection of the environment. The objectives set should be routinely evaluated to demonstrate that they are being achieved.
 - Ensure that appropriate equipment, systems and facilities for the delivery of VTS are provided.
 - Ensure that VTS are adequately staffed and that VTS personnel are appropriately trained and qualified.
 - Ensure that information regarding requirements and procedures of VTS and the categories of ships required to participate in VTS are promulgated in appropriate nautical publications.

2. Paragraph 5.1.1, *modify*
 - 5.1.1 The key components of the international regulatory and legal framework for establishing an **Inland** VTS include:
 - SOLAS
 - IMO Resolution A.1158(32) “Guidelines for Vessel Traffic Services”;
 - IALA standards
 - **European Code for Inland Waterways (CEVNI)**
 - **Resolutions of the Working Party on Inland Water Transport of relevance to River Information Services⁴**
 - National law.

3. Paragraphs 3.1.5 and 5.1.6, *modify*
 - 5.1.5 It should be noted that **in Europe** the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea only apply to vessels on the high seas and ~~all~~ waters connected to the high seas and navigable by seagoing ships, **except inland waterways where CEVNI applies. Special regional and/or national rules may apply on inland waterways.**
 - 5.1.6 Special consideration ~~may be~~ **is** needed for areas where inland waters are connected to the high seas and coastal areas and to the transition between different regulatory regimes.

*** See ECE/TRANS/SC.3/WP.3/2023/9.

⁴ Resolution No. 63 “International Standard for Tracking and Tracing on Inland Waterways (VTT)”
 Resolution No. 79 “International Standard for Electronic Ship Reporting in Inland Navigation”
 Resolution No. 80 “International Standard for Notices to Skippers”
 Resolution No. 57 “Guidelines and Recommendations for River Information Services”
 Resolution No. 48 “Recommendation on electronic chart display and information system for inland navigation (Inland ECDIS)”.

4. Paragraph 5.4.2, *modify*

5.4.2 Both inland waterway vessels and seagoing ships may operate in inland waters and may transit both inland and port/harbour VTS areas. National administrations should ensure that ~~inland~~-VTS providers **for VTS in inland waters** follow the IALA standards (see chapter 6) as far as is reasonably practicable.
5. Delete section 5.10 “Accreditation, Competency, Certification and Revalidation”.
6. Paragraph 5.11.4, *modify*

5.11.4 The buoyage system applied on **European** inland waterways ~~may also be different from the IALA buoyage system~~ **is based on CEVNI**. This should be taken into account to avoid, as far as possible, any risk of conflict or confusion between the two systems of buoyage and particularly where there is a transition between the different buoyage systems.

Annex III

Additions and Amendments to Resolution No. 58 on Vessel Traffic Services on Inland Waterways

Resolution No. ...

(adopted by the Working Party on Inland Water Transport on ...)

The Working Party on Inland Water Transport,

Noting with satisfaction the progress reached in the deployment of Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) on inland waterways,

Responding to the strategic recommendations set out in the Wroclaw Declaration and resolution No. 265 of 22 February 2019 of the Inland Transport Committee in relation to the development of River Information Services,

Responding also to Policy recommendation No. 5 of the White Paper on the Progress, Accomplishment and Future of Sustainable Inland Water Transport (ECE/TRANS/SC.3/279) to promote the development and pan-European application of River Information Services and other information technologies,

Recognizing that the safety and efficiency of vessel traffic and the protection of the environment would be improved if the establishment and operation of VTS on inland waterways was harmonized through international guidelines that are, as far as practicable, consistent with IMO Resolution A.1158(32) "Guidelines for Vessel Traffic Services",

Taking into account the VTS Manual and Guideline G 1166 "Vessel Traffic Services in Inland Waters" established by the International Association of Maritime Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA),

Considering its resolution No. 57 on River Information Services, as amended by resolution No. 73 adopted on 14 October 2011 (ECE/TRANS/SC.3/165/Rev.1),

Taking into account its resolution No. 58, "Vessel Traffic Services on Inland Waterways" adopted on 21 October 2004 (TRANS/SC.3/166),

Taking into account also the report of the Working Party on the Standardization of Technical and Safety Requirements in Inland Navigation on its sixty-third session,

1. *Decides* to replace the text of the annex of resolution No. 58 with the text contained in the annex to this resolution,
2. *Recommends* Governments to apply the annex to this resolution when establishing, planning, implementing and operating VTS on inland waterways where the application of IMO Resolution A.1158(32) is not considered appropriate,
3. *Requests* Governments to inform the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe whether they accept this resolution,
4. *Requests* the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe to periodically include the question of application of this resolution in the agenda of the Working Party on Inland Water Transport.