

*Vessel Traffic Service
Puget Sound
User Manual*



March, 2003



Photo by Michael M. Neary, Graphics by The Emerald

User Definitions

VMRS (Vessel Movement Reporting System) Users:

- ◆ Every power-driven vessel of 40 meters (approximately 131 feet) or more in length, while navigating;
- ◆ Every commercial vessel engaged in towing 8 meters (approximately 26 feet) or more in length, while navigating;
- ◆ Every vessel certificated to carry 50 or more passengers for hire, when engaged in trade.

VTs (Vessel Traffic Service) Users:

- ◆ Every power-driven vessel of 20 meters (approximately 66 feet) or more in length, while navigating;
- ◆ Every vessel of 100 gross tons or more carrying 1 or more passengers for hire, while navigating;
- ◆ A dredge or floating plant.

Waterborne Craft:

- ◆ **1972 Collision Regulations definition of a vessel.**

Note: Vessel length is measured from end to end over the deck, excluding sheer.

Level of participation

ALL waterborne craft are subject to:

1. 1972 Collision Regulations (72 COLREGS);
2. VTS Measures (direction given by the VTS, 33CFR 161.11);
3. All other practices of safe navigation and prudent seamanship.

VTs Users (in addition to the above requirements):

4. Shall monitor the designated VHF-FM VTS frequency for the area in which they are operating, and Channel 13;
5. Shall respond if hailed;
6. Shall comply with general VTS operating rules.

VMRS Users (in addition to all of the above):

Shall make required reports to the VTS. See Section 2, Subpart B.

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INTRODUCTION

This manual is intended to provide the user with information necessary for participating in the Vessel Traffic Service Puget Sound (VTSPS). This manual is not intended to conflict with or modify the National Vessel Traffic Services Regulations in any respect, and any apparent conflict should be resolved in favor of the Regulations. This manual is not intended to replace or alter any federal regulations nor does it necessarily include all references made herein. It also contains supplementary text (In **bold print** and an **alternate font**) which is not part of the Regulations, but is intended to be explanatory, or helpful, in nature. This manual does meet the requirement set forth in 33 CFR Part 161.4, "Requirement to Carry the Rules".

The Puget Sound area and the waters of the Pacific Northwest provide several fine harbors for commercial and public vessels. The area has historically supported a valuable fishery (both commercial and recreation) and a large, ever increasing, recreational fleet. The establishment of VTSPS is a major effort by the U. S. Coast Guard to ensure the continued safe use of these waters for its many diverse users. Our purpose is to facilitate the safe and efficient transit of vessel traffic to assist in the prevention of collisions or groundings that could cost lives, property damage, or subject the waters of this beautiful area to environmental harm. Additionally, by facilitating the safe and efficient flow of commerce, VTSPS serves as an intermodal partner in supporting the National Transportation System.

Many regulations contained herein are applicable to all vessels, no matter the size, operating in the Vessel Traffic Service Puget Sound Area. While certain regulations are applicable only to vessels of certain length, tonnage, and/or engaged in certain specific activities, it is incumbent upon the operator of any vessel in this area to be familiar with the regulations for the particular type vessel being operated. The Ports and Waterways Safety Act, as amended, prescribes civil and criminal penalties for violation of the regulations.

VTSPS is comprised of three major components:

- (1) A Vessel Movement Reporting System (VMRS);
- (2) A Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS); and
- (3) Surveillance systems including radar and closed circuit television.

The VMRS is based upon a VHF-FM communications network maintained continuously by the Vessel Traffic Center (VTC) in Seattle. This network consists of 14 variable power sites. The location of these communication sites throughout the VTSPS area allows mariners to contact the VTC while normally only using low power on their radio. The VTC processes all information received and disseminates navigational safety information to those vessels asking for or requiring it. Much of the information processed by the VTC is collected from vessel reports, so mariners are cautioned that advisories based on vessel reports are only as accurate as the information given to the VTC from vessels in the VTS area.

The TSS in the VTSPS area has been adopted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and is subject to the provisions of Rule 10 of the 1972 Collision Regulations. The

traffic lanes and separation zone that comprise the TSS are depicted on nautical charts. International Collision Regulations apply throughout the VTSPS area.

The VTC receives radar signals from 12 strategically located radar sites throughout the VTSPS area. Radar provides approximately 2,900 square miles of coverage including the Strait of Juan de Fuca, Rosario Strait, Admiralty Inlet, and Puget Sound south to Commencement Bay. Additionally, close circuit TV provides coverage of various critical waterways.

The VTC may not have first hand knowledge of all hazardous conditions that exist in the VTSPS area, so unreported hazards may confront the mariner at any time. Such hazards should be reported to the VTC so they may pass that information on to other mariners.

Since 1979, the U.S. Coast Guard has worked cooperatively with the Canadian Coast Guard in managing vessel traffic in adjacent waters through the Cooperative Vessel Traffic Service (CVTS). Two Canadian Vessel Traffic Centers work hand in hand with Puget Sound Vessel Traffic Service. The area west of the Strait of Juan De Fuca is managed by Tofino Vessel Traffic (VHF-FM CH 74). North of the Strait of Juan De Fuca, through Haro Strait, to Vancouver Harbour, BC is managed by Victoria Vessel Traffic Service (VHF-FM CH 11). The three Vessel Traffic Centers communicate via a computer link and dedicated telephone lines to advise each other of vessels passing between their respective zones.

We encourage all interested parties to visit the Vessel Traffic Center. Visiting hours are from 0800 to 1800 daily. Reservations are requested for large tour groups. We also encourage suggestions for improvements to this manual or to VTS operating procedures. Send suggestions, comments or requests for additional copies of this Users Manual to:

Commanding Officer
Vessel Traffic Service Puget Sound
1519 Alaskan Way South
Seattle, WA 98134-1192
Phones: (206) 217-6040 Automated phone directory
(206) 217-6050 Vessel Traffic Center
Facsimile: (206) 217-6058

USCG Home Page: www.uscg.mil
VTS Puget Sound: www.uscg.mil/d13/units/vts/psvts.html
E-Mail: VTSPSOps@pacnorwest.uscg.mil

Section 1

Quick Reference Guide

What are the participation requirements?

How do I communicate?

What VHF-FM radio channel do I use?

What information do I need to give Seattle traffic?

**What type of marine casualty or hazardous condition information must I provide to
Seattle Traffic?**

What type of information will I receive from Seattle Traffic?

How do I use the Traffic Separation scheme?

What are the Rosario Strait and Guemes channel requirements?

Section 1

Quick Reference Guide

What are the participation requirements for my vessel?

In general, all waterborne craft are subject to:

- (a) 1972 Collision Regulations (72 COLGREGS);
- (b) VTS Measures (33 CFR 161.11);
- (c) All other practices of safe navigation and prudent seamanship.

This participation category includes vessels of every description, powered or not.

The VTS Puget Sound Recreational Boater's Guide offers more detailed information. It is available through the resources listed in the Introduction section of this manual.

For the VTS user, -Passive participation is required. This level of participation, as a minimum, consists of the continuous monitoring of the appropriate VHF-FM VTS frequency (either 5A, or 14, depending on location) in addition to Channel 13. This class of user shall also respond if hailed by the VTS, and adhere to sections pertaining to general VTS operating rules.

VTS users are defined as:

- (a) Every power driven vessels of 20 meters (approximately 66 feet) or more in length, while navigating;
- (b) Every vessel of 100 gross tons or more carrying 1 or more passengers for hire, while navigating;
- (c) A dredge or floating plant engaged in or near a channel or fairway in operations likely to restrict or affect navigation of other vessels.

For the VMRS (Vessel Movement Reporting System) user, All parts of the VTS regulations are applicable.

VMRS vessels are defined as:

- (a) Every power-driven vessel of 40 meters (approximately 131 feet) or more in length, while navigating;
- (b) Every commercial towing vessel of 8 meters (approximately 26 feet) or more in length, while navigating;
- (c) Every vessel certificated to carry 50 or more passengers for hire, when engaged in trade.

The significant difference in participation of the VTS user in comparison to the VMRS, is the absence of the reporting requirements 161.19-22 under Section 2, Subpart B to this manual. This exclusion does not prohibit the VTS user from making these additional reports if deemed beneficial to the safe navigation of your vessel. The additional participation is advisable if your transit will include passage through Canadian waters, or Haro Strait. Canadian Traffic Services set full participation requirements beginning at 20 meters. If your transit information is first received by the VTS, it will then be passed on to the appropriate Canadian Traffic Service, by the VTS. See section 5 for more information.

Am I required to have the regulations with me?

Both VMRS users and VTS users must carry a copy of current VTS regulations on board the vessel. This manual fulfills the requirement to carry the rules.

How do I communicate with the VTS?

Using the appropriate VTS frequency listen for a moment before keying the radio, and with the use of low power, address the VTS as **“Seattle Traffic”** followed by the name of your vessel.

- (a) Each VMRS user and VTS user must have a combination of radio equipment capable of operating from the navigational bridge, that simultaneously maintains a listening watch on Channel 13 (156.650Mhz), **and** the designated VTS frequency.
- (b) A single VHF/FM radio capable of scanning, or with "dual watch" capability, will **not** meet the requirement of two radios.
- (c) A VHF watch on Channel 16 is not required on vessels subject to the Vessel Bridge-to-Bridge Radio Telephone Act, during participation with the VTS while maintaining a watch on Channel 13, and the VTS frequency.
- (d) A person required to maintain a listening watch must be able to communicate in the **English** language. Use of Message Markers is recommended when necessary.
- (e) Any fixed or portable radiotelephone equipment capable of transmitting and receiving on the designated VHF frequency may be used.

What is the appropriate VTS frequency, channel 5A, or 14? (All users)

Use VHF-FM channel 14 (156.700Mhz) when south of a line drawn from Nodule Point to Bush Point, or south of a line drawn due east from Possession Point when entering or exiting Possession Sound. Channel 5A (156.250Mhz) is used north of these lines. For more information on frequency change lines, see the chartlet in Section 5.

Channel 13 is used as Seattle Traffic's secondary frequency when 5A or 14 are temporarily unavailable. Within the Strait of Juan de Fuca, vessels are encouraged to make passing arrangements on Channel 5A to ensure good understanding of intent by all parties.

What information do I need to give "Seattle Traffic," and when? (VMRS User required, VTS user optional)

Provide an initial report - Sailing Plan (SP)

Call "Seattle Traffic" at least 15 minutes, but not more than 45 minutes, before navigating in the VTS area. Upon initial call, provide your vessel's name, and the general location of your vessel to permit VTS operators to select the proper radio transmission site. After "Seattle Traffic" answers your radio call, provide the following information about your voyage:

- (a) Vessels name and type.
- (b) Position.
- (c) Destination and Estimated Time of Arrival (ETA).
- (d) Anticipated speed of advance.
- (e) Intended route.
- (f) Time and point of entry into the Seattle Traffic area.
- (g) Dangerous cargo on board, or, in your tow if applicable.

Provide position information - Position Report (PR)

You must report your vessels name and position:

- (a) When you get underway or enter the VTS area.
- (b) When inbound in the Strait of Juan de Fuca at 124°00' west longitude.
- (c) When directed by the VTS (Seattle Traffic).

Provide updated information - Sailing Plan Deviation Report (DR)

You must provide updated information:

- (a) When your ETA to a destination changes by more than 30 minutes.
- (b) If you intend to deviate from the TSS or a VTS issued measure.
- (c) If you intend to operate differently than previously reported.

Provide destination information - Final Report (FR)

Upon arrival at your destination, or when leaving the VTS area, you must provide:

- (a) Vessel name.
- (b) Position.
- (c) Your intention to check out of the system.

Are there any reporting exemptions? (VMRS users)

Due to the nature of their operation, unless otherwise directed, the following vessels are exempted from providing **Position** and **Final Reports**:

- (a) Vessels on a published schedule and route. *Example: WSF Ferries.*
- (b) Vessels operating within an area of a radius of three nautical miles or less. *Example: A tug and barge maneuvering within a short distance.*
- (c) Vessels escorting another vessel or assisting another vessel in maneuvering procedures. *Example: Escort, or assist tugs.*

Vessels exercising their exemption must report to the VTS:

- (a) A **sailing plan** at least five minutes, but not more than 15 minutes before navigating within the VTS area. *This generally includes a brief description of the operation.*
- (b) Any changes to the stated sailing plan, or, if the ETA varies more than 15 minutes.
- (c) Additional reports as directed by the VTS.

What type of marine casualty or hazardous condition information must I provide to the VTS?

Call "Seattle Traffic" immediately if the following or knowledge of the following occur:

- (a) Grounding;
- (b) Collision with a fixed or floating object.
- (c) Striking of a bridge;
- (d) Loss of propulsion, steering or reduction in ability to safely navigate or maneuver;
- (e) Occurrence adversely affecting seaworthiness or causing property damage in excess of \$25,000, (including fire, explosion, flooding, etc.);
- (f) Incident adversely affecting the environmental quality of a waterway;
- (g) Incident involving hazardous materials;
- (h) Loss of life, or injury requiring professional medical attention.

What type of information will I receive from Seattle Traffic?

Advisories on vessel traffic are normally given in the following sequence:

- (a) Description
- (b) Location
- (c) Direction of movement

- (d) Speed
- (e) Route/Destination
- (f) Description of operation or supplementary information

Seattle Traffic will not normally repeat departure information on Washington State Ferries. Participants are required to monitor the VTS channel and listen for Washington State Ferry departures. When visibility drops below 2 nautical miles, Seattle Traffic will pass Washington State Ferry transit information to all relevant participants.

How do I use the TSS (traffic separation scheme)?

The requirements for using the traffic lanes can be found in Rule 10 of the 1972 International Regulations for the Prevention of Collisions at Sea (1972 COLREGS). A copy of Rule 10 is included in this manual. These requirements apply to all vessels – not just those participating in the VTS.

What are the Rosario Strait and Guemes Channel requirements?

If transiting Rosario Strait or Guemes Channel:

- (a) Towing vessels shall not impede the passage of a vessel of 40,000 dead weight tons or more.
- (b) A vessel of 100 meters or more in length will not be allowed to meet or overtake; or, cross or operate within 2000 yards of a vessel of 40,000 dead weight tons or more (except when crossing astern).
- (c) A vessel of 40,000 dead weight tons or more will not be allowed to meet or overtake; or, cross or operate within 2000 yards of a vessel of 100 meters or more in length (except when crossing astern).
- (d) Vessels of 40,000 dead weight tons or more require authorization from Seattle Traffic to enter or get underway in Rosario Strait and/or Guemes Channel.
- (e) A vessel requiring authorization shall provide at least 15 minutes notification prior to entering or getting underway within Rosario Strait or Guemes Channel.
- (f) Vessels experiencing maneuverability or navigational difficulties, or any other situation that may impair their safe transit, must report this to Seattle Traffic before entering or getting underway in either Rosario Strait or Guemes Channel.
- (g) Vessels required to fully participate with VTS (VMRS Users) must communicate on channel 13 to make safe passing arrangements before meeting, crossing or overtaking any other VMRS User.

NOTE: Definitions of Guemes Channel / Rosario Strait geographic boundaries can be found in 33CFR Part 161.55(c). These areas are referred to as "VTS Special Areas."

Exception:

A partial deviation to the VTS Special Area regulations for Rosario Strait and Guemes Channel has been granted to allow all Washington State Ferries departing Ships Harbor, WA en-route to the San Juan Islands to meet vessels greater than 40,000 dead weight tons when their ultimate intention is to pass astern.

May I depart from these rules for convenience?

Deviations will be granted for navigational safety reasons only, and not for matters of convenience such as saving time. Deviations from regulations may be granted verbally for one time transits by "Seattle Traffic" or for extended periods by written authorization from the Commander (m), 13th Coast Guard District, 915 2nd Ave. Seattle, WA 98174.

NOTE: In emergency situations, specific verbal requests are not required, however, you must notify “Seattle Traffic” as soon as possible regarding the deviation.

Does Seattle Traffic have the authority to direct the movement of my vessel?

Yes: “Seattle Traffic” may issue measures or directions to enhance navigation and vessel safety and protect the marine environment by:

- (a) Designating temporary reporting points and procedures;
- (b) Imposing vessel operating requirements;
- (c) Establishing vessel traffic routing schemes;
- (d) During conditions of vessel congestion, restricted visibility, adverse weather, or other hazardous circumstances, “Seattle Traffic” may control, supervise, or otherwise manage traffic, specifying times of entry, movement, or departure, from, or within Seattle Traffic's area.

The primary function of a VTS is to instill good order and predictability on a waterway. In no way will the VTS relieve the master of his or her responsibility to control vessel movement.

Section 2

VTS Regulations (excerpts from 33CFR)

VESSEL TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

Subpart A

**Vessel Traffic Services General Rules
Services, VTS Measures, and Operating Requirements**

Subpart B

Vessel Movement Reporting System (VMRS)

Subpart C

**Vessel Traffic Service Areas
Cooperative Vessel Traffic Service Area
Vessel Traffic Service Special Areas, and Reporting Points**

Subpart A

General Rules.

(Reference 33 CFR Parts 160, 161).

160.3 Commanding Officer, VTS –definition from Ports and Waterways Safety.

161.1 Purpose and Intent. –Vessel Traffic Management.

161.2 Definitions.

161.3 Applicability.

161.4 Requirement to carry the rules.

161.5 Deviations from the rules.

Services, VTS measures, and operating requirements.

161.10 Services.

161.11 VTS measures.

161.12 Vessel operating requirements.

161.13 VTS Special Area operating requirements.

§161.1 Purpose and Intent.

(a) The purpose of this part is to promulgate regulations implementing and enforcing certain sections of the Ports and Waterways Safety Act (PWSA) setting up a national system of Vessel Traffic Services that will enhance navigation, vessel safety, and marine environmental protection, and promote safe vessel movement by reducing the potential for collisions, rammings, and groundings, and the loss of lives and property associated with these incidents within VTS areas established hereunder.

(b) Vessel Traffic Services provide the mariner with information related to the safe navigation of a waterway. This information, coupled with the mariner's compliance with the provisions set forth in this part, enhances the safe routing of vessels through congested waterways or waterways of particular hazard. Under certain circumstances, a VTS may issue directions to control the movement of vessels in order to minimize the risk of collision between vessels, or damage to property or the environment.

(c) The owner, operator, chartered, master, or person directing the movement of a vessel remains at all times responsible for the manner in which the vessel is operated and maneuvered, and is responsible for the safe navigation of the vessel under all circumstances. Compliance with these rules or with a direction of the VTS is at all times contingent upon the exigencies of safe navigation.

(d) Nothing in this part is intended to relieve any vessel, owner, operator, charterer, master, or person directing the movement of a vessel from the consequences of any neglect to comply with this part or any other applicable law or regulation (e.g., the International Regulations for Prevention of Collisions at Sea, 1972 (72 COLREGS) or the Inland Navigation Rules) or of the neglect of any precaution which may be required by the ordinary practice of seamen, or by the special circumstances of the case.

§160.3 Definitions.

Commanding Officer, Vessel Traffic Services means the Coast Guard officer

designated by the Commandant to command a Vessel Traffic Service (VTS), or his designated representative, as described in part 161 of this chapter.

§160.203 Definitions

Hazardous Condition means any condition that may adversely affect

- (1) The safety of any vessel, bridge, structure, or shore area or
- (2) The environmental quality of any port, harbor, or navigable waterway of the United States. It may -- but need not -- involve collision, allision, fire, explosion, grounding, leaking, damage, injury or illness of a person aboard, or manning shortage.

§161.2 Definitions.

For the purposes of this part:

Cooperative Vessel Traffic Services (CVTS) means the system of vessel traffic management established and jointly operated by the United States and Canada within adjoining waters. In addition, CVTS facilitates traffic movement and anchorages, avoids jurisdictional disputes, and renders assistance in emergencies in adjoining United States and Canadian waters.

Hazardous Vessel Operating Condition means any condition related to a vessel's ability to safely navigate or maneuver, and includes, but is not limited to:

- (1) The absence or malfunction of vessel operating equipment, such as propulsion machinery, steering gear, radar system, gyrocompass, depth sounding device, automatic radar plotting aid (ARPA), radiotelephone, Automatic Identification System equipment, navigational lighting, sound signaling devices or similar equipment.
- (2) Any condition on board the vessel likely to impair navigation, such as lack of current nautical charts and publications, personnel shortage, or similar condition.
- (3) Vessel characteristics that affect or restrict maneuverability, such as cargo arrangement, trim, loaded condition, underkeel clearance, speed, or similar characteristics.

Precautionary Area means a routing measure comprising an area within defined limits where vessels must navigate with particular caution and within which the direction of traffic may be recommended.

Towing Vessel means any commercial vessel engaged in towing another vessel astern, alongside, or by pushing ahead.

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

Vessel Movement Reporting System (VMRS) User means a vessel, or an owner, operator, charterer, master, or person directing the movement of a vessel, that is required to participate in a VMRS within a VTS area. VMRS participation is required for:

- (1) Every power-driven vessel of 40 meters (approximately 131 feet) or more in length, while navigating;
- (2) Every towing vessel of 8 meters (approximately 26 feet) or more in length, while navigating; or Every vessel certificated to carry 50 or more passengers for hire, when engaged in trade.

Vessel length is measured from end to end over the deck, excluding sheer.

Vessel Traffic Center (VTC) means the shore-based facility that operates the vessel traffic service for the Vessel Traffic Service area or sector within such an area.

Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) means a service implemented by the United States Coast Guard designed to improve the safety and efficiency of vessel traffic and to protect the environment. The VTS has the capability to interact with marine traffic and respond to traffic situations developing in the VTS area.

Vessel Traffic Service Area or **VTS Area** means the geographical area encompassing a specific VTS area of service. This area of service may be subdivided into sectors for the purpose of allocating responsibility to individual Vessel Traffic Centers or to identify different operating requirements.

NOTE: Although regulatory jurisdiction is limited to the navigable waters of the United States, certain vessels will be encouraged or may be required, as a condition of port entry, to report beyond this area to facilitate traffic management within the VTS area.

VTS Special Area means a waterway within a VTS area in which special operating requirements apply.

VTS user means a vessel, or an owner, operator, charterer, master, or person directing the movement of a vessel, that is:

- (a) Subject to the Vessel Bridge-to-Bridge Radiotelephone Act; or
- (b) Required to participate in a VMRS within a VTS area (VMRS User).

VTS User's Manual means the manual established and distributed by the VTS to provide the mariner with a description of the services offered and rules in force for that VTS. Additionally, the manual may include chartlets showing the area and sector boundaries, general navigational information about the area, and procedures, radio frequencies, reporting provisions and other information which may assist the mariner while in the VTS area.

§161.3 Applicability.

The provisions of this subpart shall apply to each VTS user and may also apply to any vessel while underway or at anchor on the navigable waters of the United States within a VTS area, to the extent the VTS considers necessary. **VTS may require vessels involved in regattas or other marine events to comply with these provisions.**

§161.4 Requirement to carry the rules.

Each VTS user shall carry on board and maintain for ready reference a copy of these rules.

NOTE: These rules are contained in the applicable U.S. Coast Pilot, the VTS User's 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 preceding 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.

When anchored or moored to a buoy in the VTS area, the master, pilot, or person directing the movement of a vessel, is requested to insure that a radio telephone listening watch is maintained on the appropriate VTS frequency except when transmitting on that frequency. This radio listening watch may be maintained in a location other than the vessel's navigational bridge.

- (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.
 - (9)

Additionally, the master of a vessel is requested to report any hazardous conditions whenever observed unless they are known to have been previously reported.

Conditions of importance to the VTC and other participants include, but are not limited to the following:

- (a) Reduced visibility and other adverse weather conditions.
- (b) Concentrations of vessels.
- (c) Floating logs or other obstructions.
- (d) Any defect observed on another vessel that may affect safe navigation.

Regattas occur often within the VTS area. The VTC is normally in contact with the regatta officials. The general position of the concentration of boats will be passed to affected users by the VTC.

The State of Washington periodically opens fishing to licensed commercial fishermen. When this occurs, certain areas of Puget Sound may become heavily congested and highly susceptible to casualties. The Coast Guard may implement the provisions of 33CFR 165.1301 which establish special procedures for transiting these areas if a hazardous level of vessel congestion is deemed to exist. The text of 33 CFR 165.1301 is included in Section 3 of this manual.

161.12(b) - U.S. and Canadian Vessel Traffic Service call signs, designated frequencies, and monitoring areas.

NOTE: This section reflects the requirements for operating in the Seattle, Tofino, Victoria, and Vancouver areas only.

Seattle Traffic 156.700 MHz (Ch. 14)

The navigable waters of Puget Sound, Hood Canal, and adjacent waters south of a line connecting Nodule Point and Bush 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.

Seattle Traffic 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 Inlet north of a line connecting Nodule Point and Bush 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 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 48N., and east of 127W.

Victoria Traffic 156.550 MHz (Ch.11)

The navigable waters of the Strait of Georgia to Merry & Ballenas Island, excluding the areas of responsibility of Vancouver Traffic, 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.

Vancouver Traffic 156.600 MHz (Ch.12)

The navigable waters north of Iona Jetty (including Howe Sound) extending westward to a line directly south of Cape Roger Curtis, Bowen Island. The navigable waters east of Cape Roger Curtis including Burrard Inlet and Indian Arm.

Alternate usage, and enforcement:

- (1) In the event of a communication failure either by the vessel traffic center, vessel, or, radio congestion on a designated VTS frequency, communications may be established on an alternate VTS frequency. The bridge-to-bridge navigational frequency, 156.65 MHz (Ch. 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 these waters, designated frequency monitoring is voluntary but encouraged.
- (3) Seattle Traffic may direct a vessel to monitor the other primary VTS frequency – 156.250, or, 156.700 MHz (5A, 14) depending on traffic density, weather conditions, or other safety factors –in lieu of the normal VTS frequency for the area. A vessel is not required to monitor both VTS’ frequencies if directed to an alternate frequency. **Please note that Channel 5A is a U.S. simplex channel** and not to be confused with 5 International. Radios equipped with an INT/US switch should enable it to the US position.
- (4) A portion of Tofino’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.

A Cooperative Vessel Traffic Service was established by the United States and Canada within adjoining waters. The appropriate vessel traffic center administers the rules issued by both nations, however enforces only their respective VTS rules, and monitoring requirements. Example: While transiting Canadian waters in the Strait of Juan de Fuca, your vessel will be required to follow Seattle Traffic’s rules of participation, and monitor the appropriate Seattle Traffic frequency.

§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.

§161.13(b)(i) and (b)(3) are amended by Subpart C, §161.55 Vessel Traffic Service Puget Sound and the Cooperative Vessel Traffic Service for the Juan De Fuca Region. See Sections §161.55(d)(2) and (d)(3) for applicability.

Subpart B

§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: 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 .
B	BRAVO	Dates and time of event.	A 6 digit group giving day of month (first two digits) hours and minutes (last four digits). If other than UTC state time zone used.
C	CHARLIE	Position.	A 4 digit group giving latitude in degrees and minutes suffixed with N (north) or S (south) and a 5 digit group giving longitude in degrees and minutes suffixed with E (east) or W (west); or.
D	DELTA	Position.	True bearing (first 3 digits) and distance (state distance) in nautical miles from a clearly identified landmark (state landmark).
E	ECHO	True course.	A 3 digit group.
F	FOXTROT	Speed in knots and tenths of knots.	A 3 digit group.
G	GOLF	Port of Departure.	Name of last port of call.
H	HOTEL	Date, time and point of entry system.	Entry time expressed as in (B) and into the entry position expressed as in (C) or (D).
I	INDIA	Destination and expected time of arrival.	Name of port and date time group expressed as in (B).
J	JULIET	Pilot.	State whether a deep sea or local pilot is onboard.
K	KILO	Date, time and point of exit from system.	Exit time expressed as in (B) and exit position expressed as in (C) or (D).
L	LIMA	Route information.	Intended track.
M	MIKE	Radio.	State in full names of communications stations/frequencies guarded
N	NOVEMBER	Time of next report.	Date time group expressed as in (B).
O	OSCAR	Maximum present static draught in meters.	4 digit group giving meters and centimeters.
P	PAPA	Cargo on board.	Cargo and brief details of any dangerous cargoes as well as harmful substances and gases that could endanger persons or the environment.
Q	QUEBEC	Defects, damage, deficiencies or limitations.	Brief detail of defects, damage, deficiencies or other limitations
R	ROMEO	Description of pollution or dangerous goods lost.	Brief details of type of pollution (oil, chemicals, etc) or dangerous goods lost overboard; position expressed as in (C) or (D).
S	SIERRA	Weather conditions.	Brief details of weather and sea conditions prevailing.
T	TANGO	Ship's representative and/or owner.	Details of name and particulars of ship's representative and/or owner for provision of information.
U	UNIFORM	Ship size and type.	Details of length, breadth, tonnage, and type, etc., as required.
V	VICTOR	Medical personnel.	Doctor, physician's assistant, nurse, no medic.
W	WHISKEY	Total number of persons on board.	State number.
X	XRAY	Miscellaneous.	Any other information as appropriate, [i.e. a detailed description of a planned operation, which may include: its duration, effective area; any restrictions to navigation; notification procedures for approaching vessels; in addition, for a towing operation: configuration, length of the tow, available horsepower, etc; for a dredge or floating plant: configuration of pipeline, mooring configuration, number of assist vessels, etc.].

- (2) Establish other means of reporting for those vessels unable to report on the designated frequency; or
 - (3) Require reports from a vessel in sufficient time to allow advance vessel traffic planning.
- (b) All reports required by this part shall be made as soon as is practicable on the

frequency

designated in Table 161.12(b) (VTS Call Signs, Designated Frequencies, and Monitoring Areas).

- (c) When not exchanging communications, a VMRS user must maintain a listening watch as described in §26.04(e) of this chapter on the frequency designated in Table 161.12(b) (VTS Call Signs, Designated Frequencies, and Monitoring Areas). In addition, the VMRS 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.

- (d) When reports required by this part include time information, such information shall be given using the local time zone in effect and the 24-hour military clock system.

§161.19 Sailing Plan (SP).

Unless otherwise stated, at least 15 minutes before navigating a VTS area, a vessel must report the:

- (a) Vessel name and type;
- (b) Position;
- (c) Destination and ETA;
- (d) Intended route;
- (e) Time and point of entry; and
- (f) Dangerous cargo on board or in its tow, as defined in §160.203 of this chapter, and other required information as set out in §160.211 and §160.213 of this chapter, if applicable.

In the VTS area, a vessel is requested to report their anticipated speed of advance following destination and ETA.

§161.20 Position Report (PR).

A vessel must report their name and position:

- (a) Upon entry into a VTS area;
- (b) At designated reporting points as set forth in subpart C; or,
- (c) When directed by the VTS.

NOTE: Notice of temporary reporting points, if established, may be published via Local Notices to Mariners, general broadcast or the VTS User's Manual.

§161.21 Sailing Plan Deviation Report (DR).

A vessel must report:

- (a) When its ETA to a destination varies significantly (*by more than 30 minutes*) from a previously reported ETA;
 - (b) Any intention to deviate from a VTS issued measure or vessel traffic routing system;
- or

- (c) Any significant deviation from previously reported information.

§161.22 Final Report (FR).

A vessel must report its name and position:

- (a) On arrival at its destination; or,
- (b) When leaving a VTS area.

§161.23 Reporting Exemptions.

- (a) Unless otherwise directed, the following vessels are exempted from providing Position and Final Reports due to the nature of their operation:
 - (1) Vessels on a published schedule and route;
 - (2) Vessels operating within an area of a radius of three nautical miles or less; or
 - (3) Vessels escorting another vessel or assisting another vessel in maneuvering procedures.
- (b) A vessel described in paragraph (a) of this section must:
 - (1) Provide a Sailing Plan at least 5 minutes but not more than 15 minutes before navigating within the VTS area; and
 - (2) If it departs from its promulgated schedule by more than 15 minutes or changes its limited operating area, make the established VMRS reports, or report as directed.

Subpart C

NOTE: all geographic coordinates contained in part 161 (latitude and longitude) are expressed in North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83).

§161.55 Vessel Traffic Service Puget Sound and the Cooperative Vessel Traffic Service for the Juan de Fuca Region.

(a) **The Vessel Traffic Service Puget Sound area** consists of the navigable waters of the United States bounded by a line drawn from the Washington State coastline at 48-23'08"N., 124-43'37"W. on Cape Flattery to the Cape Flattery Light at 48-23'30"N., 124-44'12"W. on Tatoosh Island, due west to the U.S. Territorial Sea Boundary; thence northward along the U.S. Territorial Sea Boundary to its intersection with the U.S./Canada International Boundary; thence east along the U.S./Canada International Boundary through the waters known as the Strait of Juan de Fuca, Haro Strait, Boundary Pass, and the Strait of Georgia to the Washington State coastline at 49-00'06", 122-45'18"W. (International Boundary Range C Rear Light). This area includes: Puget Sound, Hood Canal, Possession Sound, the San Juan Island Archipelago, Rosario Strait, Guemes Channel, Bellingham Bay, the U.S. waters of the Strait of Juan de Fuca and the Strait of Georgia, and all waters adjacent to the above.

(b) Vessel Traffic Service Puget Sound participates in a U.S./Canadian Cooperative Vessel Traffic Service (CVTS) to jointly manage vessel traffic in the Juan de Fuca Region. **The CVTS for the Juan de Fuca Region consists of** all waters of the Strait of Juan de Fuca and its offshore approaches, southern Georgia Strait, the Gulf and San Juan Archipelagos, Rosario Strait, Boundary Pass and Haro Strait, bounded on the northwest by 48-35'45"N.; and on the southwest by 48-23'30"N.; and on the west by the rhumb line joining 48-35'45"N., 124-47'30"W. with 48-23'30"N., 124-48'37"W.; and on the northeast in the Strait of Georgia, by a line drawn along 49-N. from Vancouver Island to Semiahmoo Bay; and on the southeast, by a line drawn from McCurdy Point on the Quimper Peninsula to Point Partridge on Whidbey Island. Canadian and United States Vessel Traffic Centers (Tofino, B.C., Canada, Vancouver, BC, Canada and Seattle, WA) manage traffic within the CVTS area irrespective of the International Boundary.

VTS Special Areas.

- (1) The Rosario Strait VTS Special Area consists of those waters bounded to the south by the center of Precautionary Area "RB" (a circular area of 2,500 yards radius centered at 48-26'24" N., 122-45'12"W.), and to the north by the center of Precautionary Area "C" (a circular area of 2,500 yards radius centered at 48-40'34"N., 122-42'44"W.; Lighted Buoy "C"); and

NOTE: The center of precautionary area "RB" is not marked by a buoy. All precautionary areas are depicted on National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) nautical charts.

- (2) The Guemes Channel VTS Special Area consists of those waters bounded to the west by Shannon Point on Fidalgo Island and to the east by Southeast Point on Guemes Island.

Additional VTS Special Area Operating Requirements. The following additional requirements are applicable in the Rosario Strait and Guemes Channel VTS Special Areas:

(1) A vessel engaged in towing shall not impede the passage of a vessel of 40,000 dead weight tons or more.

(2) A vessel of less than 40,000 deadweight tons is exempt from the provision set forth in §161.13(b)(1) of this part.

(3) A vessel of less than 100 meters in length is exempt from the provisions set forth in §161.13(b)(3) of this part. Approval will not be granted for:

(i) A vessel of 100 meters or more in length to meet or overtake; or cross or operate within 2,000 yards (except when crossing astern) of a vessel of 40,000 dead weight tons or more; or

(ii) A vessel of 40,000 dead weight tons or more; to meet or overtake; or cross or operate within 2,000 yards (except when crossing astern) of a vessel of 100 meters or more in length.

(4) Reporting Point. Inbound vessels (**VMRS Users**) in the Strait of Juan de Fuca upon crossing 124-W.

Section 3

Regulated Navigation Areas
(Excerpts from 33 CFR Part 165)

**Subpart F – Specific Regulated Navigation Areas and Limited Access
Areas**

PART 165—Regulated Navigation Areas and Limited Access Areas.

Subpart F – Specific Regulated Navigation Areas and Limited Access Areas.

THIRTEENTH COAST GUARD DISTRICT

§165.1301 Puget Sound, and adjacent Waters in Northwestern Washington - Regulated Navigation Area.

The following is a regulated navigation area - All of the following northwestern Washington waters under the jurisdiction of the Captain of the Port, Puget Sound: Puget Sound, Hood Canal, Possession Sound, Elliott Bay, Commencement Bay, the San Juan Archipelago, Rosario Strait, Guemes Channel, Bellingham Bay, U.S. waters of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, Haro Strait, Boundary Pass, and Georgia Strait, and all lesser bays and harbors adjacent to the above.

(a) Definitions as used in this section:

(1) *Vessels engaged in fishing* are as identified in the definition found in Rule 3 of the International Regulations for Prevention of Collisions at Sea, 1972, (72 COLREGS), found in Appendix A, Part 81 of this chapter.

(2) *Hazardous levels of vessel traffic congestion* are as defined at the time by Vessel Traffic Service Puget Sound.

Hazardous levels of vessel traffic congestion generally will occur when vessels engaged in fishing or other operations restrict the ability of vessels following the TSS to safely navigate within the TSS. Vessel Traffic Service Puget Sound will broadcast the determination on the designated VTSPS frequency.

(b) Nothing in this section shall be construed as relieving any party from their responsibility comply with applicable rules set forth in the 72 COLREGS.

(c) *General Regulations:* The provisions of this paragraph apply at all times

(1) Vessels engaged in fishing or other operations - that are distinct from vessels following a Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) or a connecting precautionary area east of New Dungeness and which are not required by the Bridge to Bridge Radiotelephone Regulations to maintain a listening watch, are highly encouraged to maintain a listening watch on the Vessel Traffic Service Puget Sound (VTSPS) VHF-FM radio frequency for the area in which the vessel is operating. A safe alternative to the radio listening watch is to stay clear of the TSS and connecting precautionary area.

(2) Vessels engaged in gillnet fishing at any time between sunset and sunrise in any of the waters defining the regulated navigation area of this section shall, in addition to the navigation lights and shapes required by Part 81 of this title (72 COLREGS), display at the end of the net most distant from the vessel an all-round 32-point) white light visible for a minimum of two nautical miles and displayed from at least three feet above the surface of the water

(3) Vessels engaged in fishing, including gillnet and purse seine fishing, are prohibited in the following Prohibited Fishing Area: The Hood Canal Bridge, to include the waters within a one-half mile radius of the center of the main ship channel draw span during the immediate approach and transit of the draw by public vessels of the United

States.

(4) East of New Dungeness, vessels engaged in fishing in a traffic lane or connecting precautionary area shall tend nets or other gear placed in the water so as to facilitate the movement of the vessel or gear from the traffic lane or precautionary area upon the approach of a vessel following the TSS.

(d) *Congested Regulations:* The provisions under paragraph (d) apply only when imposed in specific locations by Vessel Traffic Service Puget Sound. They are intended to enhance vessel traffic safety during periods and in locations where hazardous levels of vessel traffic congestion are deemed to exist by Vessel Traffic Service Puget Sound. Operations potentially creating vessel traffic congestion include, but are not limited to, vessels engaged in fishing, including gillnet and purse seine, recreational fishing derbies, regattas, or permitted marine events.

(1) Vessels engaged in fishing or other operations – that are distinct from vessels following a Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) or a connecting precautionary area east of New Dungeness, may not remain in, nor their gear remain in, a traffic lane or, a connecting precautionary area east of New Dungeness when a vessel following a TSS approaches. Such vessels not following a TSS or a connecting precautionary area shall draw in their gear, maneuver, or otherwise clear these areas so that their action is complete at least fifteen minutes before the arrival of a vessel following the TSS. Vessels which are required by paragraph (d)(1) to remain clear of a connecting precautionary area east of New Dungeness or a traffic lane must also remain clear of the adjacent separation zone when in a TSS east of New Dungeness.

(2) A vessel following the TSS may not exceed a speed of 11 knots through the water.

(3) Vessels engaged in fishing, including gillnet and purse seine fishing, are prohibited in the following Prohibited Fishing Area: Edmonds/Kingston ferry crossing lanes, to include the waters within one-quarter nautical mile on either side of a straight line connecting the Edmonds and Kingston ferry landings during the hours that the ferry is operating

(e) *Authorization to deviate from this section.*

(1) Commander, Thirteenth Coast Guard District may, upon written request, issue an authorization to deviate from this section if the proposed deviation provides a level of safety equivalent to or beyond that provided by the required procedure. An application for authorization must state the need for the deviation and describe the proposed alternative operation.

(2) VTSPS may, upon verbal request, authorize a deviation from this section for a voyage, or part of a voyage, if the proposed deviation provides a level of safety equivalent to or beyond that provided by the required procedure. The deviation request must be made well in advance to allow the requesting vessel and the Vessel Traffic Center (VTC) sufficient time to assess the safety of the proposed deviation. Discussions between the requesting vessel and the

VTC should include, but are not limited to, information on vessel handling characteristics, traffic density, radar contacts, and environmental conditions.

(3) In an emergency, the master, pilot, or person directing the movement of the vessel following the TSS may deviate from this section to the extent necessary to avoid endangering persons, property, or the environment, and shall report the deviation to the VTC as soon as possible.

§165.1303 Puget Sound and adjacent waters, WA-regulated navigation area.

Section 165.1303 will apply at all times.

(a) The following is a regulated navigation area: the waters of the United States east of a line extending from Discovery Island Light to New Dungeness Light and all points in the Puget Sound area north and south of these lights.

(b) *Regulations.*

(1) Tank vessel navigation restrictions: Tank vessels larger than 125,000 deadweight tons bound for a port or place in the United States may not operate in the regulated navigation area.

(2) Commander, Thirteenth Coast Guard District may, upon written request, issue and authorization to deviate from paragraph (b)(1) of this section if it is determined that such deviation provides an adequate level of safety. Any application for authorization must state the need and fully describe the proposed procedure.

(c) *Precautionary Area Regulations.*

(1) A vessel in a precautionary area which is depicted on National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) nautical charts, except precautionary area "RB" (a circular area of 2,500 yards radius centered at 48-26'24"N., 122-45'12"W.), must keep the center of the precautionary area to port.

NOTE: The center of precautionary area "RB" is not marked by a buoy.

Section §165.1303(c)(1) is intended to apply to vessels following, joining or leaving a Traffic Separation Scheme, and does not apply to vessels crossing the Traffic Separation Scheme through a connecting precautionary area.

(2) The Vessel Traffic Service Puget Sound (VTSPS) may, upon verbal request, authorize a onetime deviation from paragraph (c)(1) of this section for a voyage, or part of a voyage, if the proposed deviation provides a level of safety equivalent to or beyond that provided by the required procedure. The deviation request must be made well in advance to allow the requesting vessel and the Vessel Traffic Center (VTC) sufficient time to assess the safety of the proposed deviation. Discussions between the requesting vessel and the VTC should include, but are not limited to, information on the vessel handling characteristics, traffic density, radar contacts, and environmental conditions.

In an emergency, the master, pilot, or person directing the movement of the vessel may deviate from paragraph (c)(1) of this section to the extent necessary to avoid endangering persons, property, or the environment, and shall report the deviation to the VTC as soon as possible.

Section 4

IMO Rule 10

Speed and Wake Control

Anchorage Reservations

IMO Rule 10 (International)

Traffic Separation Schemes

- (a) This rule applies to traffic separation schemes adopted by the organization and does not relieve any vessel of her obligation under any other rule.
- (b) A vessel using a traffic separation scheme shall:
- (i) proceed in the appropriate traffic lane in the general direction of traffic flow for that lane;
 - (ii) so far as practicable keep clear of a traffic separation line or separation zone;
 - (iii) normally join or leave a traffic lane at the termination of the lane, but when joining or leaving from either side shall do so at as small an angle to the general direction of traffic flow as practicable.
- (c) a vessel shall, so far as practicable, avoid crossing traffic lanes but if obliged to do so shall cross on a heading as nearly as practicable at right angles to the general direction of traffic flow .
- (d) (i) A vessel shall not use an inshore traffic zone when she can safely use the appropriate traffic lane within the adjacent traffic separation scheme. However, vessels of less than 20 meters in length, sailing vessels and vessels engaged in fishing may use the inshore traffic zone.
- (ii) Notwithstanding subparagraph (d)(i), a vessel may use an inshore traffic zone when en route to or from a port, offshore installation or structure, pilot station or any other place situated within the inshore traffic zone, or to avoid immediate danger.
- (e) A vessel other than a crossing vessel or a vessel joining or leaving a lane shall not normally enter a separation zone or cross a separation line except:
- (i) in cases of emergency to avoid immediate danger;
 - (ii) to engage in fishing within a separation zone.
- (f) A vessel navigating in areas near the terminations of traffic separation schemes shall do so with particular caution.
- (g) A vessel shall so far as practicable avoid anchoring in a traffic scheme or in areas near its terminations.
- (h) A vessel not using a traffic separation scheme shall avoid it by as wide a margin as is practicable.
- (i) A vessel engaged in fishing shall not impede the passage of any vessel following a traffic lane.
- (j) A vessel of less than 20 meters in length or a sailing vessel shall not impede the safe passage of a power-driven vessel following a traffic lane.

Note: "Shall not impede" means a vessel MUST NOT navigate in such a way as to risk the development of a collision with another vessel (i.e. when a power driven vessel following a TSS is forced to make an unusual or dangerous maneuver in order to avoid one of the vessels listed above, then the vessel following the TSS has been impeded).

- (k) A vessel restricted in her ability to maneuver when engaged in an operation for the

maintenance of safety of navigation in a traffic separation scheme is exempted from complying with this rule to the extent necessary to carry out the operation.

(l) A vessel restricted in her ability to maneuver when engaged in an operation for the laying, servicing or picking up of a submarine cable, within a traffic separation scheme, is exempted from complying with this rule to the extent necessary to carry out the operation.

Vessel Speed and Wake Control

46 USC 2302 Penalties for negligent operations

(a) A person operating a vessel in a negligent manner that endangers the life, limb or property of a person is liable to the United States Government for a civil penalty of not more than \$1,000.00

Each vessel operator is responsible for operating their vessel at a safe speed, especially in reduced visibility, and for the wake created by their vessel. When a tide exceeds a stage of 11.0 feet at Seattle, there is an increased risk of vessel wakes endangering persons and/or property along the shoreline within the VTS Area. All vessels operating within the VTS Area should proceed at a speed that will minimize the risk of wake damage while maintaining the ability to maneuver safely.

The VTS will begin tidal advisory broadcasts 30 minutes before the tide is predicted to exceed 11.0 feet in Seattle. This advisory will be re-broadcast every 30 minutes until the tidal state has subsided.

Anchorage Reservations

VTSPS manages the anchorages in Puget Sound and adjacent areas for the Captain of the Port. For safety reasons, each anchorage has a restricted number of anchorage spaces available, and are normally reserved on a “first come, first served” basis. To allow a more efficient and fair allocation of available space we ask that:

1. Reservations be made as far in advance of arrivals as possible.
2. Revisions of ETA's and ETD's be made as they become known.

Reservations are only valid for the time span requested. A vessel staying past the ETD may be subject to movement orders to make room for an inbound vessel with a reservation. Anchorage reservations will not be accepted in high usage areas, such as Elliott Bay or Port Angeles, if there is a possibility of delay due to uncertain orders. With these considerations, the occasions of a vessel being denied anchorage or being ordered to depart to make room for another vessel should be infrequent.

Section 5

VHF Radio Areas & Call-In Points

Ferry Crossing Routes

Commercial Salmon Management & Catch Reporting Areas

CANADA/U.S. Cooperative Vessel Traffic Service (CVTS)

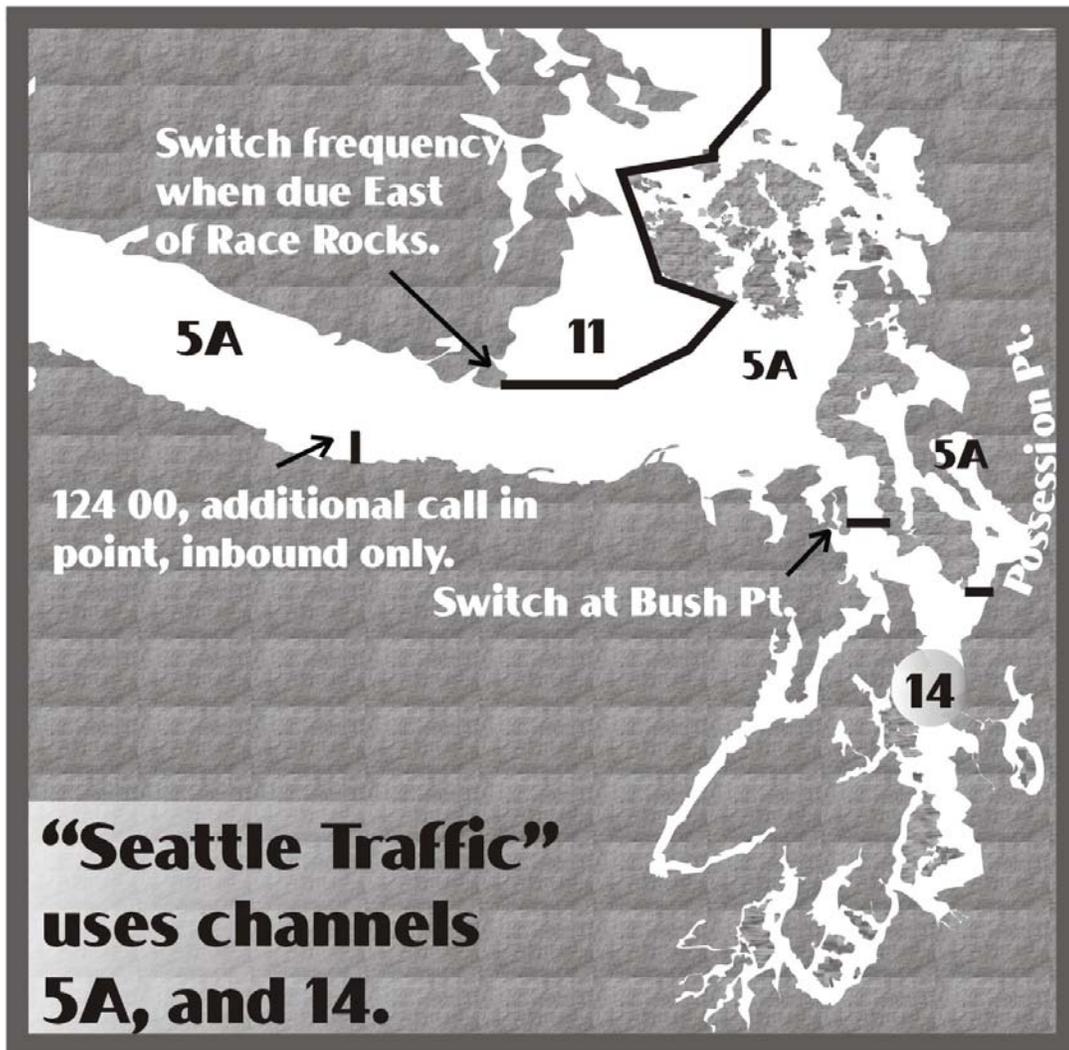
English Language

Message Markers

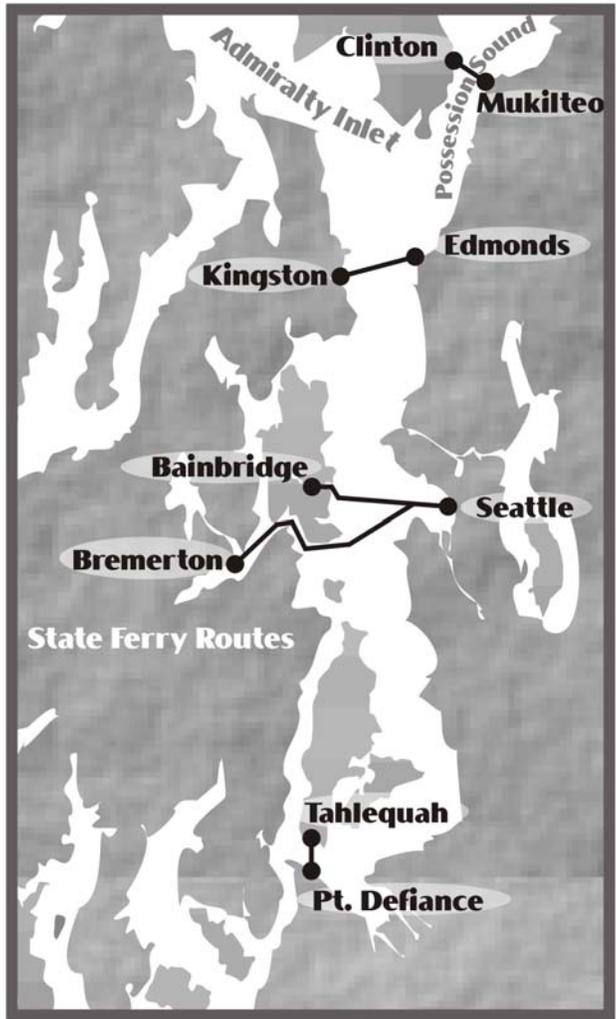
Puget Sound Harbor Safety Plan

IMO Area To Be Avoided off the Washington Coast

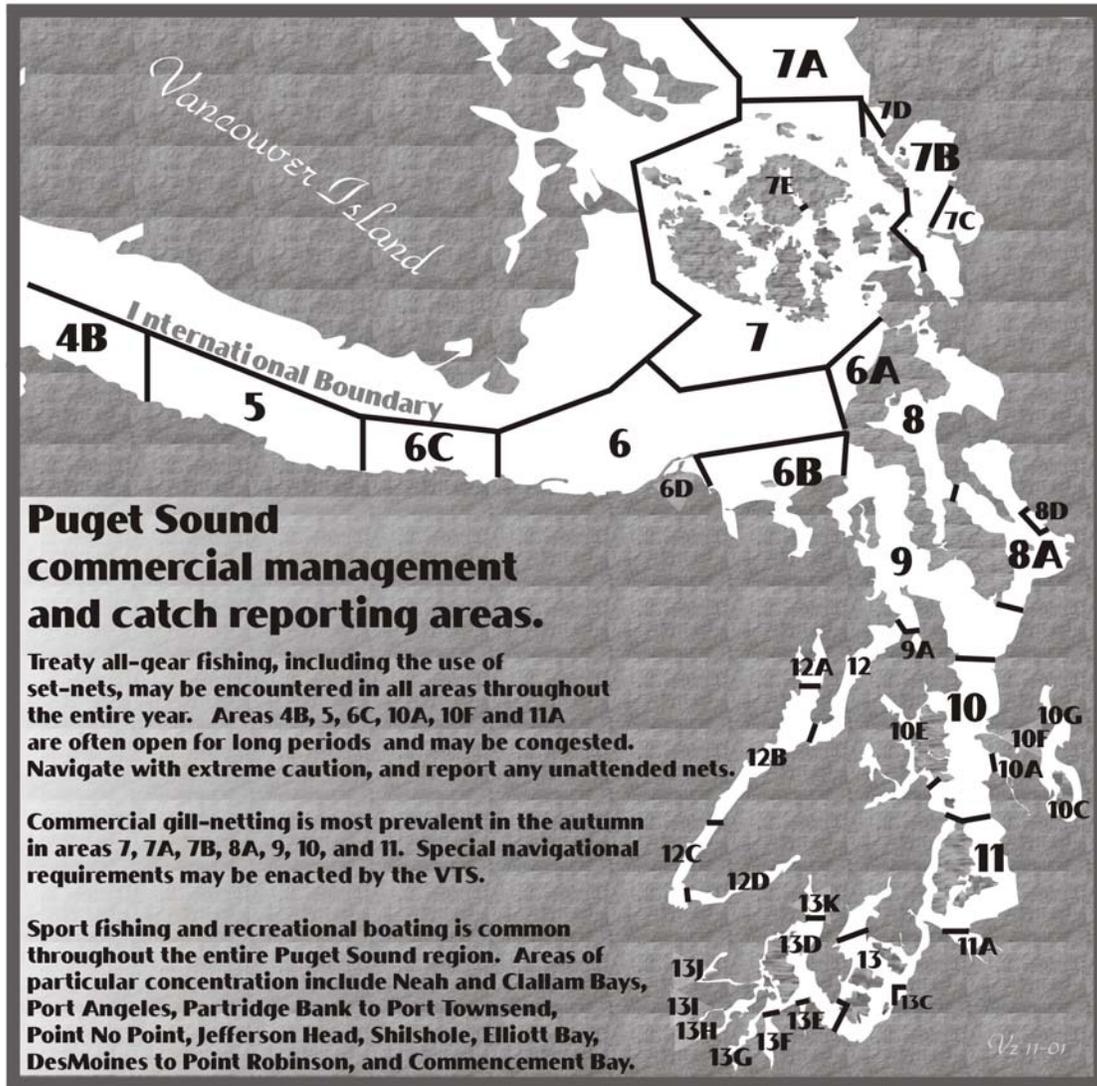
International Tug of Opportunity System



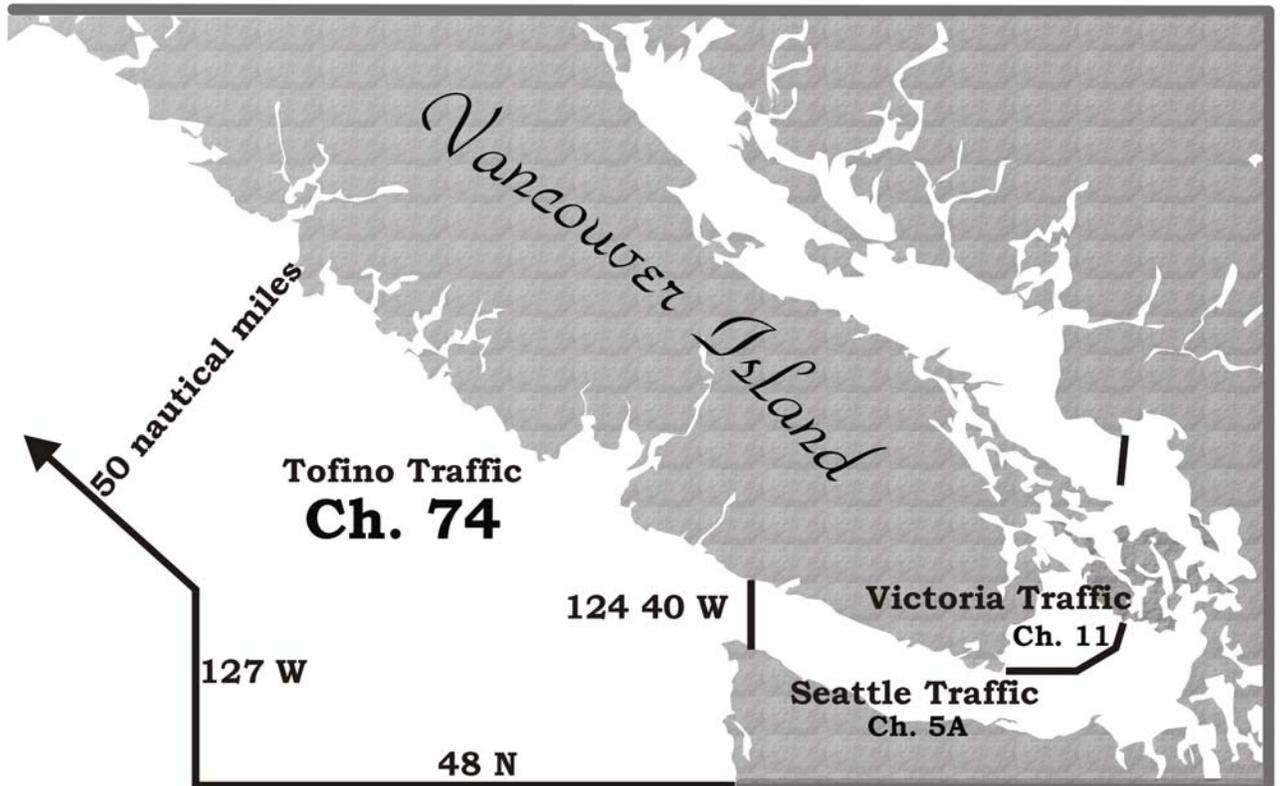
VHF Radio Areas and Call-In Points.



Ferry Crossing Routes



Commercial Salmon Management and Catch Reporting Areas



CANADA/U.S. Cooperative Vessel Traffic Service (CVTS)

General Information:

Details and regulations concerning the Canadian/United States Cooperative Vessel Traffic Services (CVTS) are contained in Canadian Notice to Mariners, the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations, and in many nautical publications. For more information about the CVTS, contact

In Canada

Superintendent
Marine Communications and
Traffic Services
200-401 Burrard Street,
Vancouver, B.C. V6B 4N6
Canada

Telephone: (604)775-8853

Facsimile: (604)775-8827

http://www.pacific.ccg-gcc.gc.ca/index_e.htm

In the United States

Commander (m)
Thirteenth Coast Guard District
Jackson Federal Building
915 Second Avenue
Seattle, WA 98174-1067
U.S.A.

Telephone: (206)220-7210

Facsimile: (206)220-7225

<http://www.uscg.mil/d13/default.htm>

General information (continued)

Participation with Tofino, Seattle and Victoria Traffic is mandatory within Canadian and U.S. territorial waters. The services, however, are available considerably further offshore, typically about 60 nautical miles. When inbound and crossing longitude 127° W, latitude 48° N, or within 50 NM of Vancouver Island, all vessels 20 meters or greater, including tugs and tows, contact “Tofino Traffic” on VHF Channel 74. Once under Tofino Traffic management, vessels will receive instructions on when to switch to new frequencies at Seattle Traffic (Channel 5A) and Victoria Traffic (Channel 11) zone boundaries.

Though participation seaward of Canadian and U.S. territorial waters is not required, vessels are strongly encouraged to participate. All vessels over 300 GRT inbound to Canadian and US West Coast ports must file a 96 and 24 hour offshore advanced report as a condition of entry.

Vessels are also encouraged to participate in order to receive the full benefit of the available Vessel Traffic Services. These benefits include traffic updates, warnings of vessel congestion or other hazardous conditions, and many other forms of transit assistance.

English Language:

All communications with Tofino, Seattle or Victoria Traffic must be made in clear, unbroken English. At least one person capable of conducting two-way radio communication using the English language must be present on the bridge at all times within the CVTS area.

Message Markers:

When language problems arise, the following message markers may precede communications:

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| ➤ Questions | request for information. |
| ➤ Answer | the reply to a previous question. |
| ➤ Request | a request for action from others with respect to the ship. |
| ➤ Information | observed facts. |
| ➤ Intention | notice of immediate planned navigational actions. |
| ➤ Warning | information about dangers. |
| ➤ Advice | a recommendation to correct a hazardous condition. |
| ➤ Instruction | a lawful order |
| Clearance | an authorization to proceed subject to conditions |

Puget Sound Harbor Safety Plan

The Puget Sound Harbor Safety Committee (PSHSC) is a duly constituted body of public and private stakeholders who share common interests in the safe, efficient, and environmentally sound use of Puget Sound and adjacent waters. As such, PSHSC takes responsibility for capturing existing and developing new standards and protocols that address those environmental and operational elements of maritime operations that are unique to Puget Sound. These standards and protocols are developed by local experts and are intended to increase safety.

The standards and protocols included in the Puget Sound Harbor Safety Plan complement and supplement existing and future federal, state and local law. It is not intended to supplant or otherwise conflict with federal, state or local regulations developed under legal authorities, nor is the Puget Sound Harbor Safety Plan intended to replace the good judgment of a ship's master in the safe operation of his/her vessel.

Chapters 1-7 of the plan are informative in nature, and provide important safety info for professional mariners transiting Puget Sound. Chapters 8-16 are Standards of Care developed by the Harbor Safety Committee that formalize and document good marine practice.

The Harbor Safety Committee welcomes additional input and participation to improve the plan and increase the region's safety. The Puget Sound Harbor Safety Plan can be obtained by going to the Marine Exchange or the National HSC websites at:

http://www.marineexchangesea.com/PSHSSC_SafetyPlan.html
<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/harborsafety/>

INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION (IMO) AREA TO BE AVOIDED OFF THE WASHINGTON COAST

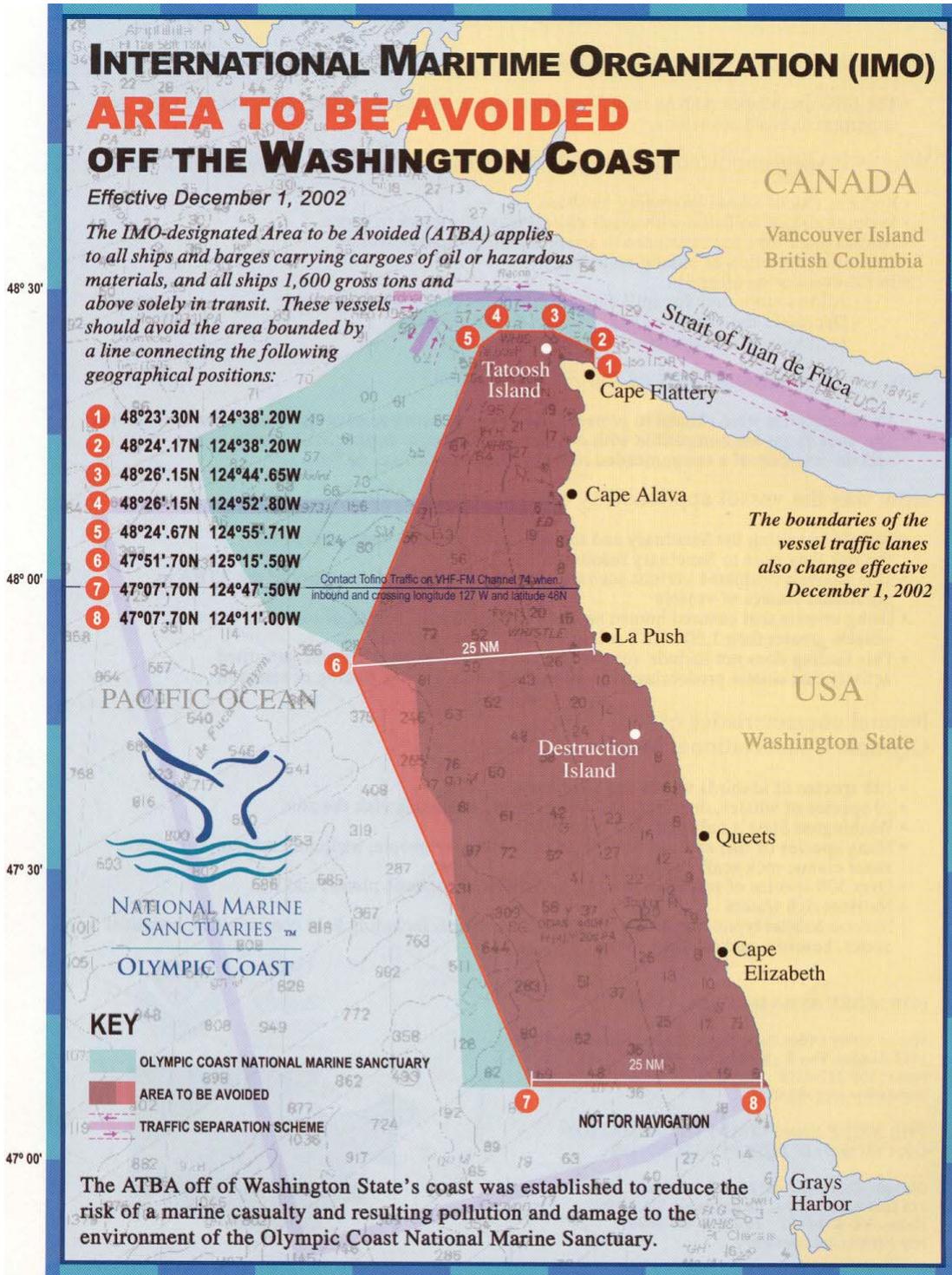
Effective December 1, 2002

The IMO-designated Area to be Avoided (ATBA) applies to all ships and barges carrying cargoes of oil or hazardous materials, and all ships 1,600 gross tons and above solely in transit. These vessels should avoid the area bounded by a line connecting the following geographical positions:

- 1 48°23'.30N 124°38'.20W
- 2 48°24'.17N 124°38'.20W
- 3 48°26'.15N 124°44'.65W
- 4 48°26'.15N 124°52'.80W
- 5 48°24'.67N 124°55'.71W
- 6 47°51'.70N 125°15'.50W
- 7 47°07'.70N 124°47'.50W
- 8 47°07'.70N 124°11'.00W

Contact Tofino Traffic on VHF-FM Channel 74 when inbound and crossing longitude 127°W and latitude 48°N

The boundaries of the vessel traffic lanes also change effective December 1, 2002



The ATBA off of Washington State's coast was established to reduce the risk of a marine casualty and resulting pollution and damage to the environment of the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary.

Why does the IMO establish ATBAs?

- The IMO establishes ATBAs in defined areas where navigation is very hazardous or where it is important to avoid casualties.

Why is it very important for vessels to remain offshore and avoid this area?

- Reduces risk of vessel grounding on shore
- Reduces risk of collision with small vessels traveling close to shore
- Allows more time for assistance to arrive to help a disabled vessel
- Increases protection of coastal resources
- In the event of an oil spill:
 - Allows more time for spill cleanup and containment crews to arrive
 - Decreases the chance of spill impacts on the shoreline
 - Increases spill evaporation and degradation time

How were the boundaries of the ATBA chosen?

- The boundaries were chosen to protect Sanctuary resources most at risk from vessel casualties.
- The boundaries are compatible with changes to the Traffic Separation Scheme and the addition of a recommended route in the Strait of Juan de Fuca

How was the vessel applicability chosen for the ATBA?

- Vessels transiting the Sanctuary and marine traffic patterns were studied for the risk they pose to Sanctuary resources
- This analysis evaluated various scenarios of extending the applicability of the ATBA to additional classes of vessels
- Using criteria that ensured human safety was upheld and the risk of oil spills reduced, vessels greater than 1,600 GRT solely in transit were selected
- This finding does not include vessels that are engaged in an otherwise permitted activity that occurs predominantly within the Sanctuary, e.g. fishing or research

Natural characteristics of the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary:

- 128 species of seabirds within the Sanctuary
- 29 species of whales, dolphins, and other marine mammals visit the area
- Washington State's only sea otter population
- Many species of fish and shellfish commonly eaten by people, including salmon, surf smelt, razor clams, rock scallops, and abalone
- Over 300 species of resident intertidal invertebrates, aquatic plants, and fish
- Nutrient rich waters
- Diverse habitat types supporting complex food chains, including kelp communities, intertidal zones, beaches, and offshore rocks

FOR MORE ATBA INFORMATION:

Marine Safety Office Puget Sound, United States Coast Guard
1519 Alaskan Way S., Seattle, WA 98134
Phone: 206-217-6232 Fax: 206-217-6345
<http://www.uscg.mil/d13/>

FOR MORE SANCTUARY INFORMATION OR COPIES OF THIS PUBLICATION:

Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary
115 East Railroad Ave, Port Angeles, WA 98362
Phone: 360-457-6622 Fax: 360-457-8496
<http://ocnms.nos.noaa.gov/>



INTERNATIONAL TUG OF OPPORTUNITY SYSTEM

The International Tug of Opportunity System (ITOS) is a unique Northwest approach to facilitate emergency resource assistance to disabled vessels in the entrance areas to Washington State and Southern British Columbia waters, using tugs, which routinely transit these waters.

Any vessels needing assistance in the entrance waters, including the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary and through the Strait of Juan de Fuca, can access the tug resources identified by the ITOS. Tugs are outfitted with transponders that transmit their Differential Global Positioning System (DGPS) locations to the Marine Exchange of Puget Sound and Vessel Traffic Centers. The reported DGPS location is visible on an electronic chart computer screen coupled with a complete database of tug particulars.

Vessel masters will contact the Marine Exchange of Puget Sound on VHF Channel 20 (International) to have all available tugs identified for them when assistance is necessary. If unable to contact the Marine Exchange, or during an actual emergency, contact Vessel Traffic Services as per the table in 33 CFR 161.12 (b) **(page 2-8 of this manual)**.

Upon request the Vessel Traffic Services or Marine Exchange can provide the vessel master with tug location, course, speed, horsepower, bollard pull, etc. The information is essential to the vessel master, and response authorities in determining appropriate action to take when considering vessel location, type of assistance needed, vessel drift, weather, etc. Depending on the situation, the response authorities may dispatch assistance or coordinate response actions with the involved parties. However, primary responsibility to arrange for assistance remains with the vessel



VESSEL TRAFFIC SERVICE PUGET SOUND

MISSION STATEMENT

OUR PURPOSE:

To enhance navigation, vessel safety, and marine environmental protection, and promote safe vessel movement by reducing the potential for collisions, rammings, and groundings, and the loss of lives.

WE WILL:

- ◆ Enhance the good order and predictability of vessel traffic by providing clear, concise, accurate, meaningful, and timely advisories to mariners in our area of responsibility.
- ◆ Provide our personnel with a safe working and learning environment as well as humane, caring and equitable treatment to enhance command unity and morale.
- ◆ Be responsive to customer needs and dedicated to safeguarding our waterways, improving through education of all user groups and enhancing navigation safety throughout our area of responsibility.
- ◆ Provide the necessary initial/recurrent training, equipment, and guidance to our watchstanders to meet their personal and professional needs.
- ◆ Provide constructive feedback focused on continuously improving processes and our service.
- ◆ Manage vessel traffic by exercising the minimal amount of direct control necessary consistent with ensuring the safety of our waterways.
- ◆ Maintain intra-service, inter-governmental and maritime community liaisons to accomplish mission/unit goals and to assist these agencies in the performance of their missions.