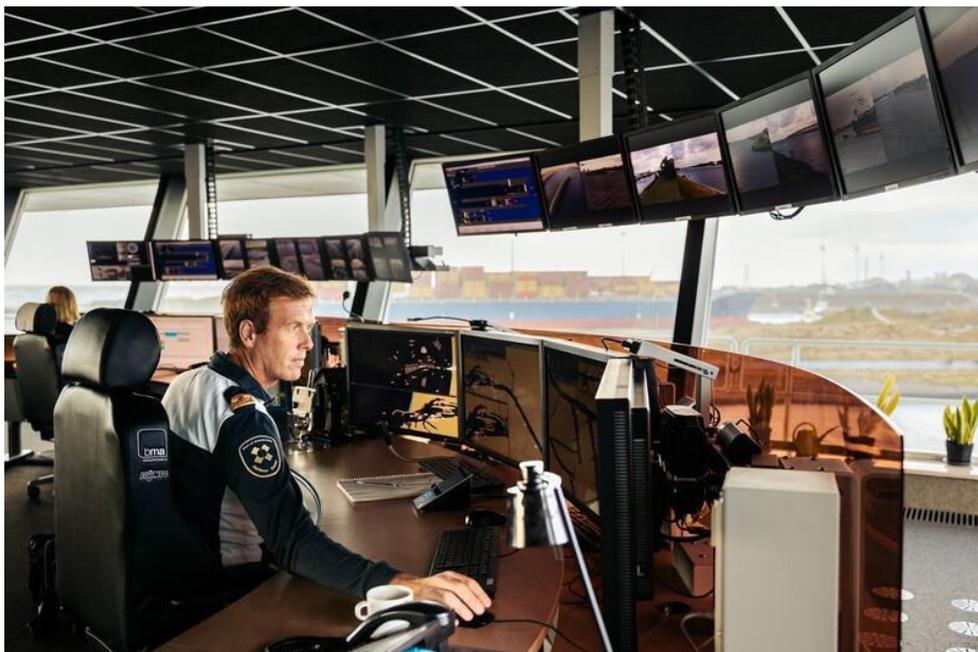


Regulations for VTS Communication and the supporting VHF maritime radio- telephone channels



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Foreword

The Director of the Central Nautical Management North Sea Canal Area– who also serves as the (State) Harbour Master and VTS Authority – places great importance on ensuring that all maritime traffic is well-informed of the VHF communication regulations applicable within the jurisdiction.

The purpose of this directive is to provide clear and accessible information regarding the relevant regulations, applicable procedures, and definitions of key terms.

The directive is structured in two main parts:

- Procedures for VHF communication with Vessel Traffic Services (VTS)
- Other VHF services and channels

The annexes include:

- Appendix I: Scope of application and basic rules
- Appendix II: VHF channels

Having regard to:

- Articles 1.19, 4.05, 9.07, Appendices 9 and 11 of the Inland Navigation Police Regulations (Binnenvaartpolitierglement BPR);
- Articles 4 and 9 of the Shipping Traffic Act (Scheepvaartverkeerswet - SVW);
- Articles 5 and 11 of the Territorial Seas Shipping Regulations (Scheepvaartreglement Territoriale Zee - STZ);
- Articles 7, 8 and annex 2 of the State Inland Waterways Communication and Dimensions Regulations (Regeling communicatie en afmetingen Rijksbinnenwateren);
- Article 20 of the Regulations for the Notification and Communication of Shipping Traffic (Regeling meldingen en communicatie scheepvaart);
- Decree on training requirements for nautical staff - Central Nautical Management North Sea Canal Area

The Director of the Central Nautical Management North Sea Canal Area announces the following:

Scope of application

This directive applies to the North Sea Canal Area, which comprises the following:

- a) the approaches to IJmuiden, defined as the section of the Territorial Sea (including Anchorages 6, 7, and 8) within a 12-nautical-mile radius of the seaward ends of the IJmuiden breakwaters, including the extended IJ-geul deep water channel;
- b) the outer harbour of IJmuiden, from the ends of the breakwaters up to the IJmuiden locks complex, including the Hoogoven outer harbour and the Buitenspuikanaal (outer sluicing channel), but excluding the Seaport Marina, IJmondhaven, Haringhaven, and Vissershaven;
- c) the IJmuiden locks complex;
- d) the inner approach channels of the IJmuiden locks complex;
- e) the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd national inland harbours and inner sluicing channel (Rijksbinnenhaven and Binnenspuikanaal);
- f) the side canals, from the North Sea Canal to the following boundaries:
 - i. Side Canal A: up to Beverwijk;
 - ii. Side Canal D: up to the imaginary bank line (shoreline);
 - iii. Side Canal E: up to the imaginary bank line (shoreline);
 - iv. Side Canal G: towards Zaandam, up to the Dr. J.J. Den Uyl Bridge;
- g) the North Sea Canal and the Afgesloten IJ up to Buoys IJ-10 and IJ-3;
- h) all harbour basins located along the waterways as referred to in Points a to g above.

A map of the designated area is provided in Appendix I.

Procedures for VHF communication with Vessel Traffic Services (VTS)

1. Vessel Traffic Services

Vessel Traffic Services (hereafter referred to as VTS) provide support to vessels in the navigation decision-making process. This support may include information regarding the position, identity, and destination of other vessels, as well as hydrographic and meteorological data.

In addition to the provision of information, VTS plays a key role in the organisation of maritime traffic. By managing traffic flow, VTS contributes to the safety and efficiency of maritime operations and supports the identification and mitigation of potentially hazardous situations. These services encompass the timely provision of information, advice, and instructions.

Navigational assistance may also be provided upon request by a waterway user, or when deemed necessary by the VTS authority. Such assistance might be offered in the event of an emergency, technical failure, onboard deficiencies, or in exceptional circumstances and may include enhanced traffic information and position data.

Navigational assistance is only provided within the primary transport corridor, defined as follows:

- a) the approaches to IJmuiden, defined as the section of the Territorial Sea within a 12-nautical-mile radius from the seaward ends of the IJmuiden breakwaters;
- b) the outer harbour of IJmuiden, from the ends of the breakwaters up to the IJmuiden locks complex;
- c) the inner approach channels of the IJmuiden locks complex;
- d) the North Sea Canal and the Afgesloten IJ up to Buoys IJ-10 and IJ-3.

2. Traffic instructions

A traffic instruction is a binding directive issued by an authorised person to one or more traffic participants with the aim of achieving a specific outcome in navigational behaviour. Such an instruction might include a mandatory command or prohibition.

3. Radio Discipline

Communication on VHF channels must be strictly limited to matters concerning safe navigation or the orderly management of vessel traffic. Mutual agreements related to navigation may be made directly between vessels or through the VTS operator. In all cases, strict radio discipline must be maintained. The VTS operator is authorised to issue instructions to ensure this discipline is upheld.

4. Language of communication

Within VTS sectors, the primary language of communication is Dutch, with English as the secondary language. In case of communication difficulties - either between VTS and vessel traffic participants or between vessels themselves - German may also be used as a supplementary language.

5. Announcements to Shipping

When necessary, the VTS operator may issue an announcement to shipping. This allows for the rapid dissemination of information to a wide group of vessel traffic participants. Announcements to shipping are typically used in exceptional circumstances to inform shipping of issues such as marine works, weather conditions, obstructions, incidents, or other relevant developments.

6. Reporting (meldplicht) and listening (uitluisterplicht) obligations for vessel traffic

A. Inland shipping

For all vessels, except small craft not carrying dangerous goods, the following applies:

1. Upon entering a VTS sector, vessels whose destination lies within that sector must report on the relevant VHF sector channel.

This report must include:

- vessel name
- position
- destination.

Vessels in transit through a sector must maintain a continuous listening watch on the relevant sector channel during navigation.

2. Vessels must report their intention on the relevant sector channel before performing any of the following manoeuvres:
 - a) entering or leaving a harbour basin or secondary fairway;
 - b) turning or crossing the waterway;
 - c) anchoring;
 - d) casting off from berth.
3. Any action deviating from normal traffic patterns, including incident reporting, must be communicated on the relevant sector channel.
4. All vessels must maintain a listening watch on the sector channel while underway in the VTS area; and
5. Participate in local communications where necessary.

Vessels requesting the operation of a bridge or lock must do so on the relevant VHF channel for the objects in question. If this requires a temporary suspension in the monitoring of the sector channel, the vessel must inform the VTS. Such interruptions should be kept to a minimum.

Further details regarding reporting and listening obligations are set out in Article 9.07 of the Inland Waterways Police Regulations (BPR) and Appendix 2 of the State Inland Waterways Communication and Dimensions Regulations (Regeling communicatie en afmetingen Rijksbinnenwateren).

An overview of the communication channels is provided in Appendix II.

B. Seagoing traffic

The following applies to all seagoing vessels:

- 1) Report upon arrival in the VTS area, depending on the direction of approach:
 - a) from seaward, at 12 nautical miles from the IJmuiden breakwaters, on VHF Channel 61 (Sector IJmuiden)
 - b) from the Amsterdam-Rhine Canal and Oranjesluis, near Buoy IJ10, on VHF Channel 05 (Sector Stad)
 This report must include:
 - vessel name
 - call sign
 - position
 - destination
 - any relevant particulars.
 - If the vessel is operating under a Pilotage Exemption Certificate (hereinafter: PEC), the following must also be reported:
 - name of the certificate holder
 - certificate number.
- 2) Report on the relevant sector channel when crossing a sector boundary. This report must include:
 - vessel name
 - position
 - destination.
- 3) Report on the relevant sector channel prior to carrying out a special manoeuvre, such as:
 - a) entering or leaving a harbour basin or secondary fairway;
 - b) turning or crossing the waterway;
 - c) intending to overtake another seagoing vessel;
 - d) anchoring or leaving an anchorage;
- 4) Report on the relevant sector channel for any other action that deviates from standard traffic behaviour, including the reporting of incidents;
- 5) Report prior to departure or shifting berth on VHF Channel 68 (Traffic Reporting Point – see page 8);
- 6) Report when casting off;
- 7) Report when moored;
- 8) Report on the relevant sector channel when leaving the VTS area;

- 9) All vessels must maintain a listening watch on the sector channel while underway in the VTS area;
and
- 10) Participate in local communications where necessary.

Vessels requesting the operation of a bridge or lock must do so on the relevant VHF channel for the objects in question. If this requires a temporary suspension in the monitoring of the sector channel, the vessel must inform the VTS. Such interruptions should be kept to a minimum.

Further details regarding reporting and listening obligations are set out in Article 9.07 of the Inland Waterways Police Regulations (BPR) and Appendix 2 of the State Inland Waterways Communication and Dimensions Regulations (Regeling communicatie en afmetingen Rijksbinnenwateren).

An overview of the communication channels is provided in Appendix II.

7. Responsibility

Nothing in this directive absolves anyone taking part in the vessel traffic of their responsibility to navigate safely. Information provided under this directive is not intended - and must not be used - for disregarding prevailing regulations or neglecting actions necessary from the standpoint of good seamanship.

Any information received from, or provided by, the VTS Authority must be those taking part in vessel traffic to enhance navigational safety. Those participants must provide any information requested by the VTS Authority.

Supporting VHF channels

8. IJmuiden Approaches – VHF Channel 7

VHF Channel 7 is used for traffic-related communication concerning seagoing vessels. Information services only are provided to maritime traffic on this channel. The master must report to IJmuiden Approaches on VHF Channel 7 in the following cases:

- a) Ingoing:
 - i. As soon as VHF contact is possible, the vessel must report the following:
 - Vessel name
 - Call sign
 - Draught
 - ETA at RACON buoy
 - Any missing cargo details and last port of call
 - Any relevant special circumstances.
 - If the master holds a Pilotage Exemption Certificate (PEC): name of the PEC holder + certificate number
 - ii. Second report:
 - When the vessel is at anchor or when switching over to Sector IJmuiden

9. IJmuiden Locks – VHF Channel 22

VHF Channel 22 is used as an information channel for the North Sea Locks, specifically for the planning and allocation of lock passages.

10. Traffic Information (Meldpunt Verkeer) – VHF Channel 68

VHF Channel 68 is used for traffic-related communication concerning seagoing vessels. The master, or pilot acting on behalf of the master, must report to Traffic Information (Meldpunt Verkeer) in the following cases:

- a) When a seagoing vessel intends to depart or shift berth.
 - i. All piloted seagoing vessels must report prior to actual departure or shifting, providing the following information:
 - Vessel name
 - Draught
 - Destination
 - Relevant particulars.
 - ii. All non-piloted seagoing vessels, and those under a Pilotage Exemption Certificate (PEC), must report prior to actual departure or shifting, with the following details:
 - Vessel name
 - Draught
 - Destination
 - Relevant particulars
 - Name of PEC holder and certificate number
- b) Request for pilot, (additional) tug assistance and/or mooring personnel
- c) The pilot or master requires information about the berth
- d) The planned voyage is delayed or cannot proceed, including reason for delay or cancellation.

11. Port Information (Meldpunt Haven) – VHF Channel 14

VHF Channel 14 is used for communication with moored vessels, in support of port management activities.

Non-voyage-related notifications and enquiries may include:

- operational matters, works, and requests for permission for or exemption from carrying out operations and/or exercises;
- start and completion of activities for which prior authorisation has been granted;
- start and completion of ship-to-ship (STS) transfer operations;
- start and completion of harbour works and/or diving operations;
- notifications or enquiries regarding dangerous goods;
- enquiries regarding berth availability;
- questions related to port services and facilities;
- notifications or reports concerning water pollution;
- etc.

12. IVS Notifications – VHF Channel 14

All vessels falling within the scope of the Regeling communicatie en afmetingen State Inland Waterways Communication and Dimensions Regulation (Rijksbinnenwateren) that have a reporting obligation, must submit an electronic IVS notification through the Inland Navigation Information and Communication System (BICS) upon departure from a berth within the jurisdiction of the Central Nautical Management North Sea Canal Area. In the event of a BICS system failure, the required notification may be made through VHF Channel 14

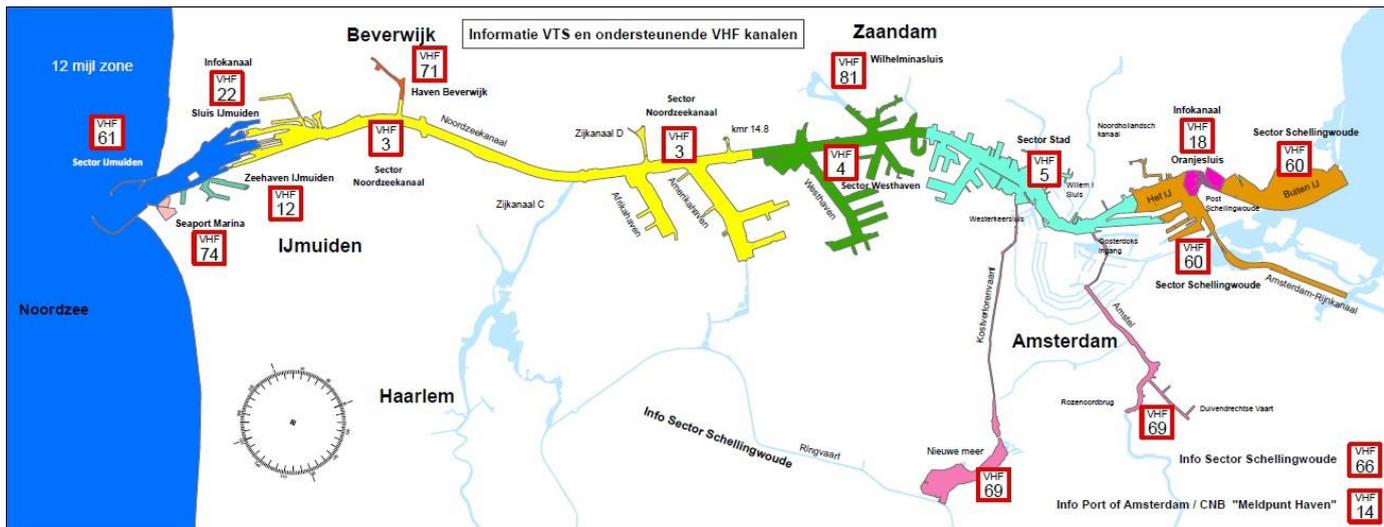
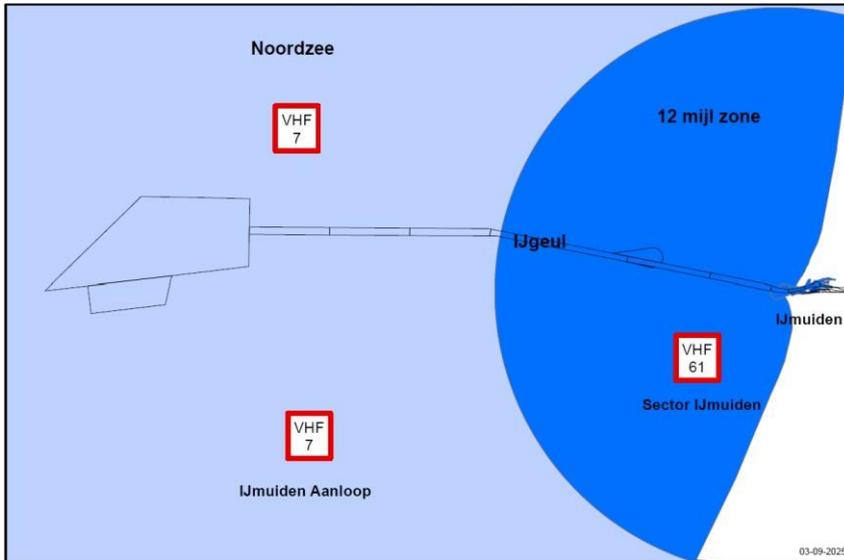
- Port Information (Meldpunt Haven).

Entry into force

This directive will be published and enter into force on 30 September 2025, and shall be cited as: “Directive on VTS communication and other VHF services and channels” (Regeling communicatie VTS en overige VHF-diensten en kanalen).

This directive replaces the previous “VTS Communication Directive” (Communicatieregeling VTS) dated 15 December 2013, which is hereby revoked.

Appendix I: Scope of application and basic rules



1. Responsibility of safe navigation always remains with the master on board the vessel
2. Continuous listening watch should be maintained on appropriate VHF channel
3. Information should be given on request by VTS-authority
4. VTS provides information, navigation assistance and when deemed necessary give instructions on behalf of the Harbour Master
5. All communication should be brief and relevant
6. Any particulars with the regard of navigation or equipment should be reported
7. Language is Dutch or English for the inner area and English or Dutch for the outer area

Appendix II: VHF channels

Call sign	VH F ch an ne l
IJmuiden approaches	07
Sector IJmuiden	61
Sector North Sea Canal	03
Sector Westhaven	04
Sector Stad (City sector)	05
<i>Communication with Port of Amsterdam patrol vessels is possible on all sector-specific VHF channels listed above.</i>	
Sector Schellingwoude	60
Traffic Information (Meldpunt Verkeer) (vessels leaving or shifting berth)	68
Port Information (Meldpunt Haven) (operational matters + IVS-next)	14
Weather warnings anchorage areas (when expecting Beaufort 7 or higher, wave height \geq 3 metres)	07/ 61
Port services - Port of IJmuiden	12
Port services - Beverwijk	71
Bridge – Side Canal C (Buitenhuizer bridge)	18
Bridge - Side Canal G (Dr. J.J. Den Uyl Bridge)	20
Lock Zaandam (Wilhelmina Lock)	81
Westerkeersluis (lock)	22/ 69
Oosterdoksbrug (bridge)	22/ 69
Lock Noordhollandsch Kanaal (Willem I Locks)	20
Oranjesluizen (locks)	18