West Coast VTS

About Vessel Traffic Services

The provisions on vessel traffic services are laid down in the Vessel Traffic Service Act 623/2005 and in the Government Decrees on Vessel Traffic Service 763/2005, 1798/2009, 1304/2011, 1216/2018 and 93/2024.

Participation in Vessel Traffic Services

Vessels of 24 metres in length overall or more are obliged to participate in the vessel traffic services.
When navigating in the VTS area, vessels are required to maintain a continuous listening watch on the working channel used in the area. Furthermore, vessels are obliged to obey the rules relevant to the traffic in the VTS area. More detailed instructions about the required reports and working channels can be found in the regional VTS guide.
Vessels navigating in the VTS area, which are not obliged to participate in the vessel traffic services, are recommended to maintain a listening watch on the working channel in the VTS area or sector in question.

Operational hours and location of VTS Centres

In Finland the vessel traffic services (VTS services) are operated by Fintraffic Vessel Traffic Services Ltd (Fintraffic VTS). VTS centres are located in Turku and Helsinki. The sea areas at the Finnish coast are divided into six VTS areas. These are Bothnia VTS, West Coast VTS, Archipelago VTS, Hanko VTS, Helsinki VTS and Kotka VTS. In addition, Saimaa VTS operates in the Saimaa deep water fairway.
Along the coast VTS services are provided 24 h/day throughout the year. There may be operational interruptions due to technical problems or an unexpected shortage of personnel. Information about the interruptions is given as navigational or local warnings. Saimaa VTS only provides services during its period of operations. The period of operations is largely equivalent to the opening hours of the Saimaa Canal, but Fintraffic VTS will provide information about when the operational period begins and ends.

Service and languages

Vessel Traffic Service includes providing information, responding to developing unsafe situations, and organizing traffic.
To improve safety and to create a consistent maritime situational awareness, English is used as the primary communication language in the VTS areas along the Finnish coast. As required, vessel traffic service is also provided in Finnish and Swedish.

Information
is given to all vessels whenever necessary, at set intervals, when they report or when a vessel so requests. The information to vessels comprises matters which affect the vessels' safe and smooth navigation. Such information includes, among other things, traffic in the VTS area, weather conditions, pilotage, icebreaking, towage, and port operations, as well as information on the status of navigational aids and fairways. VTS monitors the movement of vessels and, if necessary, provides information to the vessel about a developing unsafe situation.

Responding to developing unsafe situations:
Identified vessels are assisted in navigation upon request or when deemed necessary by the VTS.
Navigational assistance may include information about the vessel's position and bearings/courses over ground to for example the fairway centre line or the pilot boarding position. Bearings or COG's can also be given so that vessels can pass navigational hazards, for example shoals, at a safe distance.
Assistance is advisory and normative in nature. The responsibility for navigating the vessel remains with the vessel's master.
The information, warnings, advice, and instructions provided by the VTS are based the situational awareness system at the VTS center.

Vessel traffic is organized
in order to improve traffic flow and safety. Methods of organization include, among others, permanent meeting and overtaking prohibition areas, departure procedures for ports, and traffic organization based on time or distance. The aim is to prevent dangerous meeting and overtaking situations and congestion.

Contact information

Emergency number in Finland

Emergency number in Finland
112

Only call the emergency number 112 in real emergencies when you need urgent assistance from the authorities.

Maritime Rescue Centres

National Maritime Search and Rescue alarm number
VHF 16 / DSC 70 / MF-DSC 2187,5 kHz
Alarm hotline +358 294 1000

Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre MRCC Turku
VHF 16 / DSC 70 / MF-DSC 2187,5 kHz
mrcc@raja.fi
Alarm hotline +358 294 1001

Maritime Rescue Subcentre MRSC Helsinki
VHF 16 / DSC 70 / MF-DSC 2187,5 kHz
mrsc.helsinki@raja.fi
Alarm hotline +358 294 1002

West Coast VTS

West Coast VTS
VHF 9
westcoast.vts@fintraffic.fi
+358 20 448 6645

Western Finland Vessel Traffic Centre Supervisor
supervisors.west@fintraffic.fi
+358 20 448 6522

All phone calls will be recorded.

West Coast VTS Ports

Port of Kaskinen
VHF 12
satamapalvelu@portofkaskinen.fi
+358 40 615 2848

Port of Eurajoki
VHF 10
stevedoring@ecoports.fi
+358 44 794 5288

Port of Pori
VHF 12
valvojat.satama@portofpori.fi
+358 44 701 2623 (24h On Call)

Port of Rauma
VHF 10
satamavalvonta@portofrauma.fi
+358 500 597 579 (24h On Call)

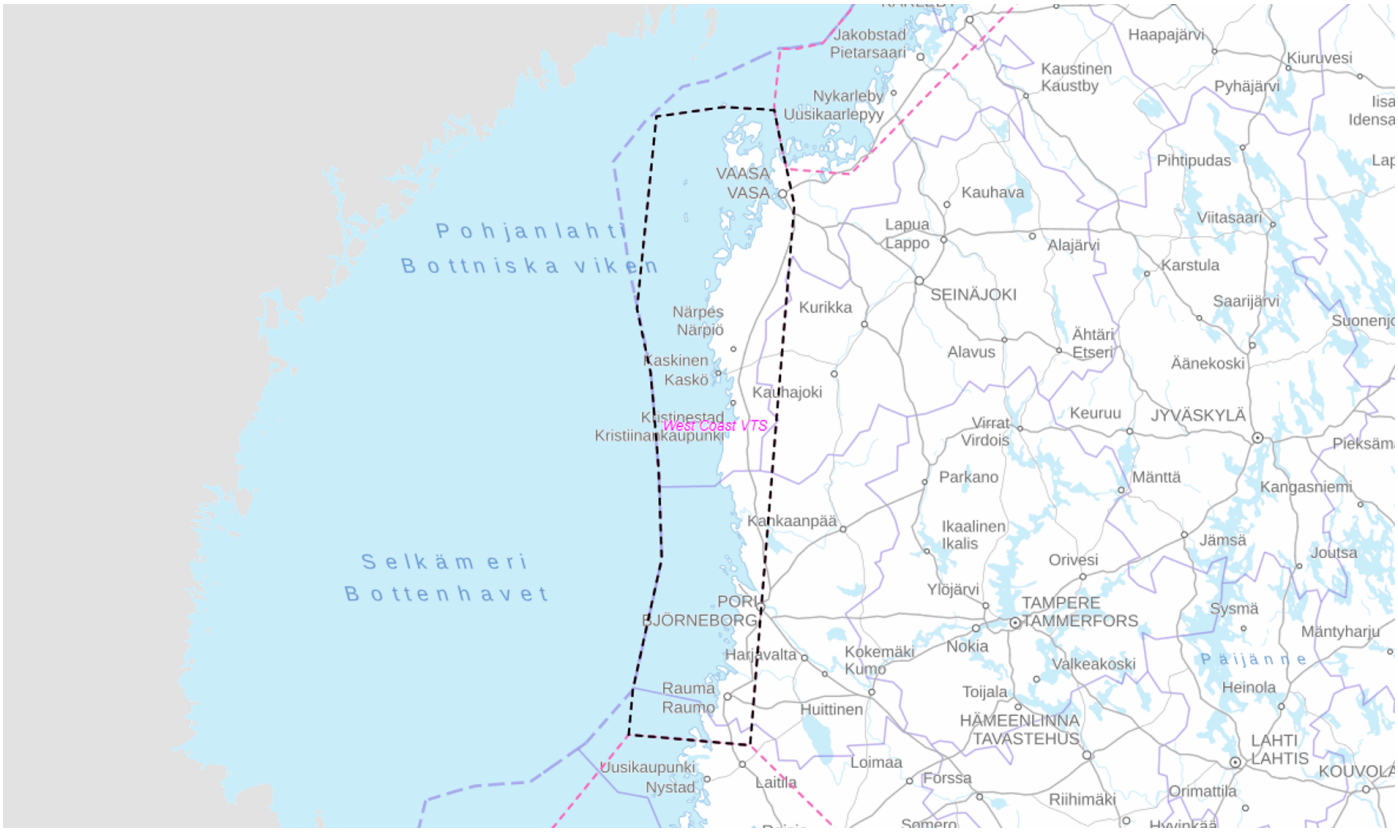
Port of Vaasa
VHF 12
satamavalvonta@portofvaasa.fi
+358 40 567 2975 (24h On Call)

Pilot Dispatch West Coast Area

Pilot Dispatch West Coast Area
pilotdispatch.westcoast@finnpilot.fi
+358 29 5253 450

Get familiar with the West Coast VTS area

The VTS Area covers the coast along the Sea of Bothnia from Hylkkari light to Vaasa including the merchant shipping lanes as well as the areas administered by the Port of Rauma, Port of Pori and the Port of Vaasa. The VTS Area does not cover the areas administered by other ports.
The boundary line of the West Coast VTS Area runs between the following corner points:
1) From Hylkkari light, 60°57.2'N 021°09.5'E
2) westward to position 60°57.2'N 020°46.5'E
3) to the limit of the territorial sea limit 61°07.6'N 020°46.5'E
4) observing the limit of the territorial waters to position 62°36.5’N 020°30.0’E
5) 63°21.5'N 020°30.0'E
6) Valassaaret lighthouse 63°25.3’N 021°04.1’E
7) Ritgrund lighthouse 63°25.5'N 021°30.5’E



West Coast VTS Area Info

Reporting procedures

The working channel of West Coast VTS is VHF 9.

Reports should include the following information:

- Name of the vessel
- Name of reporting point
- Destination
- Intended route. If an alternative route is selected, this must be reported

Required reports:

- Upon entry into the VTS Area
- Before anchoring
- Before leaving an anchorage
- After berthing
- Before leaving port; for Port of Rauma, Port of Pori and Port of Vaasa, see chapter “Permission to depart from the ports of Rauma, Pori and Vaasa”
- At the reporting points in the area:
    - Southbound vessels shall report 20 minutes before passing Hylkkari light to Archipelago VTS on VHF channel 71.
    - Northbound vessels shall report 20 minutes before passing Hylkkari light to West Coast VTS on VHF channel 9.

Departure permissions

Before departure from Port of Rauma, Port of Pori and Port of Vaasa, vessels shall request a permission to depart from VTS.
The permission to depart issued by the VTS is valid for 20 minutes. The vessel is required to give a report when underway. If the vessel’s departure is delayed, it will have to request a new permission to depart.
At the Port of Vaasa, passenger vessels operating according to a regular timetable in liner service have the right of way.

Meeting and overtaking prohibitions

Meeting and overtaking is permanently prohibited in the following areas covered by West Coast VTS:

1. **Vaasa**
   : Buoys Nygrund S and Nygrund N - Port of Vaasa between longitudes 021º 18,1’E and 021º 32,1’E in Vaasa fairway. The prohibition does not apply to meeting and overtaking situations in which at least one of the vessels has a maximum length

of less than 45 meters.

2. **Kaskinen**
   : Buoy Rasken - Port of Kaskinen between latitudes 62º 19,3’ N and 62º 20,8’ N in Kaskinen fairway. The prohibition does not apply to meeting and overtaking situations in which at least one of the vessels has a maximum length of less than 45 meters.

3. **Kristiinankaupunki**
   : Kristiinankaupunki Lighthouse – Port of Kristiinankaupunki between longitudes 021º 10,2’ E and 021º 18,5’ E in Karhusaari fairway. The prohibition does not apply to meeting and overtaking situations in which at least one of the vessels has a maximum length of less than 45 meters.

4. **Merikarvia:**
   Buoys Marjakari and Rosagrund – buoys Brändöö and Silkrunni between latitudes 61° 53,6′ N and 61° 50,8′ N in Merikarvia northern fairway.

5. **Eurajoki:**
   Buoys Eurajoki 4 and Eurajoki 7 – buoy Eurajoki 31 between longitudes 021° 22,3′ E and 021° 28,9′ E in Eurajoensalmi fairway.

6. **Rauma:**
   Edge mark Erkki - buoy Hans-kloppi between longitudes 021º 15,5’ E and 021º 23,8’ E in Rauma southern fairway. The prohibition does not apply to meeting and overtaking situations in which at least one of the vessels has a maximum length of less than 45 meters.

The meeting and overtaking prohibition areas do not apply to tugs when they are assisting within the meeting and overtaking prohibition area, or to vessels performing icebreaking assistance.

Speed limits

1. The Rauma Valkeakari fairway (7.5 m) has an 8 kn (15 km/h) speed limit for vessels with a draught of 7 m or more.
2. In Vaasa the 6,5 m fairway has a 9,5 kn (18 km/h) speed limit between Nygrund-Stor Hästen.
3. In Vaasa the 9 m fairway has a 15 kn (28 km/h) speed limit between the breakwater and Gråsälsgrynnan.

Anchoring

A vessel must always notify both the VTS and the Finnish Border Guard when anchoring in Finland's territorial waters. The vessel must make the notification either itself or through its agent. In addition, a vessel anchoring in territorial waters is required to make an electronic customs declaration, even if the vessel is not going to call at a Finnish port.
After leaving a port in Finland, the vessel must also check with the Finnish Border Guard whether anchoring in Finnish territorial waters is possible. Also in this case, a vessel remaining at anchor must make an electronic customs declaration.

Aids to Navigation

1. Remotely operated AtoNs
Upon request, West Coast VTS can adjust the brightness of Aids to Navigation:

- in the Rauma 12 m fairway, and;
- at the Port of Kaskinen.

2. Permanent Virtual AtoNs (V-AIS)
There are following permanent V-AIS-AtoNs in the West Coast VTS area:

- Reilander Virtual 61° 08,10'N 021° 04,12'E

3. Fault Reporting
AtoNs not working correctly? Please inform West Coast VTS by VHF radio on channel 9 or call Turku Radio 0800-181818.

Notice of channel use

Use of channels that deviates from the channel design refers to a situation where a vessel uses a channel in a manner that deviates from the channel's design and the adequacy of the channel space cannot be ensured based on the design. If the vessel's static draught is greater than the channel's design draught taking into account the current water level, the vessel shall ensure that her net under keel clearance remains adequate and demonstrate it to the VTS Centre that is responsible for monitoring the fairway.
Vessel's operator, agent or master shall give the notice of channel use at least 24 hours before its arrival at the pilot boarding position, or if the vessel is expected to arrive in less than 24 hours, no later than when the vessel has left the port of departure for a Finnish port. A vessel departing a Finnish port shall give the notice of channel use as soon as possible, at latest when the departure report is given.

The notice of channel use shall include the following items:
1. Ship identification details
2. The channel or channel section the ship intends to use in a manner deviating from

the channel design
3. Planned control measures for maintaining the net underkeel clearance
4. Length between perpendiculars and maximum breadth (LBP, Breadth)
5. Static draught
6. Centre of buoyancy (KB)
7. Centre of gravity (KG)
8. Metacentric height (GM)
9. Block coefficient (Cb)
10. Individual underkeel clearance calculation based on the information above
When ensuring the adequate net UKC and giving the notice of channel use, it is recommended to utilize the tools provided by the Finnish Transport and Infrastructure Agency. The notice of channel use can be given in the form of a squat calculation made with the Squat Calculator with regard to items D–I. The calculation can be shared as a link, or as a pdf-printout sent by e-mail to the VTS Centre. When using the Squat Calculator, it is enough to write the information of points 1.–3. in the e-mail.

Special situations
The notification obligation will be considered fulfilled in a situation where:

1) a deck officer on board the ship has a valid Pilot Exemption Certificate (PEC) issued in compliance with section 39 of the Pilotage Act (561/2023) that grants an exemption from compulsory pilotage for both the channel and the ship in question; and
2) underkeel clearance calculations that cover the prevailing conditions have been prepared for the ship and the channel in question; and
3) the ship in question operates in the relevant channel in a scheduled service referred to in section 2, subsection 1, paragraph 28 of the Vessel Traffic Service Act.

Sending the notice
In Archipelago VTS, Bothnia VTS, Saimaa VTS and West Coast VTS monitoring areas the notice of channel use should be sent to the email address supervisors.west@fintraffic.fi. Title the email “Notice of channel use”.

Harbour areas

Pori
Vessel mooring and unmooring must be ordered from Port Control at least two hours before the required mooring and unmooring time. Icebreaking assistance must be ordered from Port Control following the guidance of the Port of Pori.
Sludge disposal must be ordered directly from the service provider of the Port of Pori by email: sludge@veikkolehti.fi.

Port control contact information:

- telephone +358 (0)44 701 2623
- e-mail valvojat.satama@portofpori.fi
- VHF channel 12

Rauma
Port control contact information:

- telephone +358 (0)500 597 579
- e-mail satamavalvonta@portofrauma.com
- VHF channel 10

Vaasa
Port control contact information:

- phone +358 (0)40 567 2975
- e-mail vaasaport@kvarkenports.com
- VHF channel 12

Pilot boarding positions

- Kaskinen N

62°17.90′N 21°11.50′E

- Kaskinen S

62°15.51′N 21°5.11′E

- Kristiinankaupunki

62°11.48′N 21°6.08′E

- Pori N

61°36.80′N 21°17.00′E

- Pori S

61°34.00′N 21°22.10′E

- Rauma S

61°7.25′N 21°10.75′E

- Vaasa N

63°15.78′N 20°51.19′E

- Vaasa S

63°12.10′N 20°45.38′E

- Valkeakari

61°10.76′N 21°13.48′E

Accidents and incidents

Accidents and incidents

In coastal areas vessels involved in an accident or in imminent danger shall first contact the MRCC or MRSC (tel. +358 294 1000).

Vessels must immediately report all accidents and incidents relating to maritime safety to the VTS centre. Some examples of such accidents and incidents are listed in section 23 in the Finnish Vessel Traffic Service Act.

Exceptional situations

In exceptional situations, such as extraordinary weather conditions, search and rescue situations or any other incidents in which vessel traffic is restricted or put at risk, the VTS can temporarily close a fairway or fairway section, issue speed limits or instruct vessels to anchor.

Unable to participate?

If the master of the vessel, for a valid reason relating to the vessel’s safety, is unable to participate in the vessel traffic services, or to follow the instructions given by the VTS in exceptional situations, he must immediately inform the VTS about this.

The vessel’s participation in the vessel traffic services does not affect the master’s responsibility for manoeuvring the vessel.