

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 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)

Kvarken Ports, Port of Vaasa

VHF 12

vaasaport@kvarkenports.com

+358 40 567 2975 (24h On Call)

Pilot Dispatch West Coast Area

Pilot Dispatch West Coast Area

pilotdispatch.westcoast@finnpilot.fi

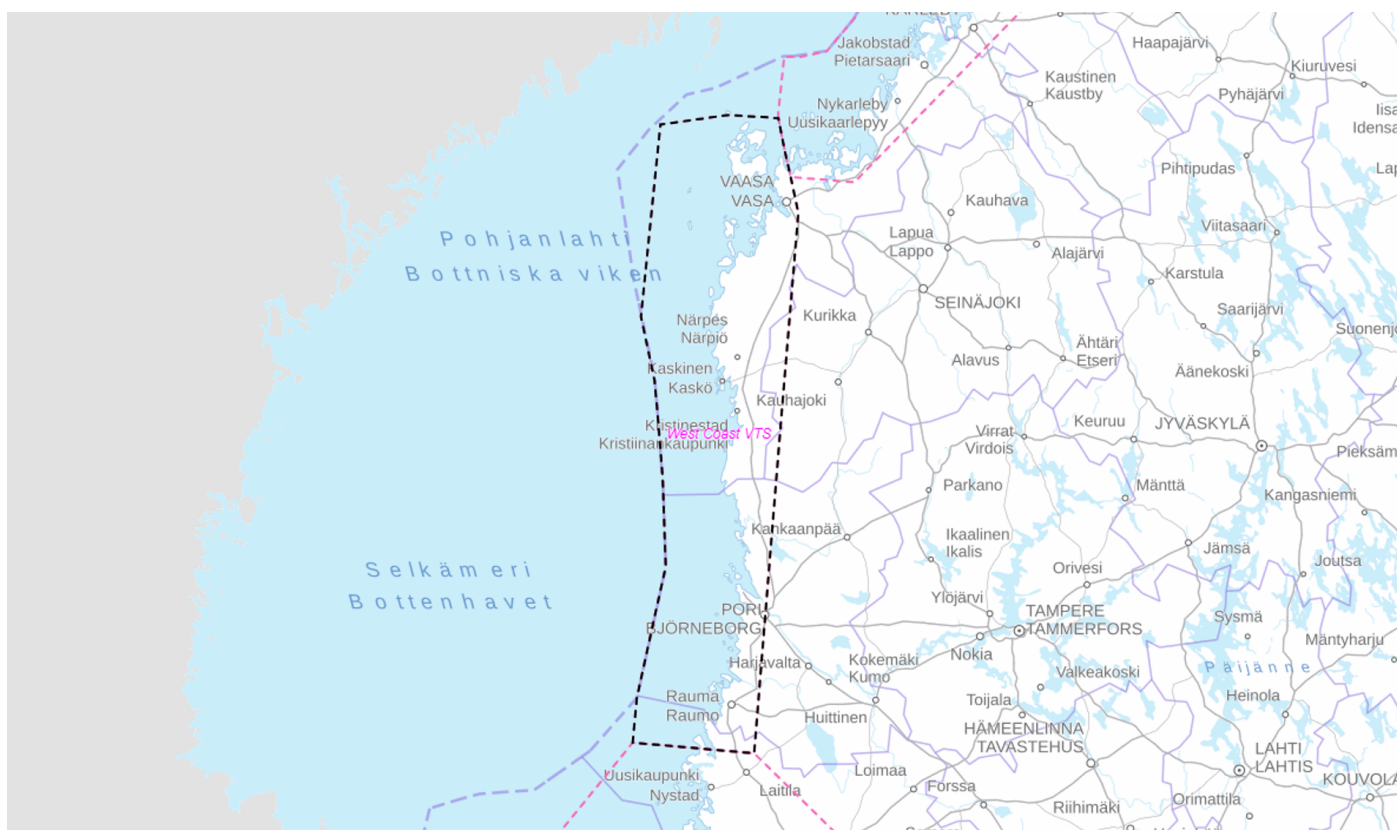
+358 29 5253 450

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: Nygrundin portti–Port of Vaasa between longitudes 021°18.1'E and 021°32.1'E in the 9.0 m fairway.
2. Kaskinen: In the fairway section Buoy Rasken–Port of Kaskinen between latitudes 62°19.3'N and 62°20.8'N in the 9.0 m fairway.

3. Kristiinankaupunki: Kristiinankaupunki Lighthouse–Port of Kristiinankaupunki between longitudes 021°10.2'E and 021°18.5'E in the 12.0 m fairway.
4. Rauma: Rauma southern fairway between longitudes 021°15.5'E and 021°23.8'E in the 12.0 m fairway.

These prohibitions do not apply to meeting and overtaking situations in which at least one of the parties is a tug or a vessel, the size of which is comparable to a tug.

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 Gräsälsgrynnan.

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:

- A. Vessel's name
- B. Which channel or part of channel the vessel is intending to use in a manner that deviates from the channel design
- C. What is the manner that deviates from the channel design
- D. Length between perpendiculars LBP and Breadth
- E. Static Draught
- F. Centre of Buoyancy, KB
- G. Centre of Gravity, KG
- H. Metacentric Height, GM
- I. Block Coefficient, C_b

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 A–C in the e-mail.

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

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.

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.