

measures taken by the Canadian and USA Coast Guards. In March 1975, the two Coast Guards instituted a voluntary traffic separation scheme providing for incoming traffic to use the south (USA) side of the Strait and outbound traffic to exit through the north (Canadian) waters of the Strait.

21. The vessel traffic management system comprises, essentially, a vessel movement reporting system and a traffic separation scheme. The traffic control centres provide timely information and advice to mariners to minimize the risk of collision and grounding. Traffic controllers assess the ability of a vessel to navigate safely through the waters prior to entering the management zone, monitor and regulate vessel movements within the zone, and assist vessels in proceeding to and from their intended destinations in a safe and expeditious manner by providing information on such matters as navigation aids, traffic density, local weather conditions and the status of anchorages. Vessels participating in the scheme communicate with the centres on a common VHF radio frequency. As vessels enter the zone or depart from ports within the zone, they are requested to provide the traffic control centre with information, including the name of the vessel, location, destination, tonnage, cargo, any defects in essential navigation or communication equipment, any deficiencies in charts, and any defects in its propulsion or steering equipment that may affect maneuverability. Through informal inter-agency cooperation, the two Coast Guards have established three vessel traffic management sectors managed, respectively, by the Tofino Traffic Centre, the Seattle Traffic