

# Signalis Provides VTS Equipment in Northern Africa



## Morocco

In order to appreciate marine traffic management before 2010 it has to be noted that this was managed alone by Spain in the Strait of Gibraltar. At the same time Morocco had no facilities for managing maritime traffic in the southern part of these waters.

Maritime safety was ensured by Spain from the Tarifa Operational Centre receiving all

Report Calls (named GIBREP: GIBraltar REPorts) from vessels approaching from the Atlantic as well as those leaving the Mediterranean.

Since 2010 Morocco has had the capability and authorisation to manage the southern part of the Strait of Gibraltar and IALA Industrial Member SIGNALIS played a valuable part in contributing to maritime safety in these waters.

On 1<sup>st</sup> December 2010 the Centre de Surveillance du Trafic Maritime or CSTM of Tangier, Morocco, was officially designated by IMO to receive GIBREP from all vessels leaving the Atlantic as well as from the ports of Tanger Ville and Tanger Med.

In the same month HM King Mohammed VI inaugurated this centre. It is situated in the Ksar Sghir commune in Fahs Anjra province and the project was worth 50 million dirhams.

Now, some months after the commissioning of the Centre it contributes to improving the efficiency of maritime traffic and the protection of the marine environment of the Strait of Gibraltar.

Tanger Centre operates an integrated system to keep track of vessel movements, commonly called the Tangier VTS. This enables competent authorities to continually

assess the situation in the area in order to prevent accidents, to promote maritime safety and security and, furthermore, to protect the marine environment of the strait.

As built the new centre includes three stations: the main location in Ras Parort (15 km from Tangier), the remote station of Ras Cires (located in the Tanger-Med port) and the intermediary station to interconnect the two previous stations.

Tanger Centre is claimed to be the first of its type in the Arab world and the first on the continent of Africa to be mandated by IMO as a Coastal Vessel Traffic Service with a Mandatory Ship Reporting System.

## Gibraltar traffic

The Strait of Gibraltar has the second highest density of traffic in the world, just behind the Straits of Malacca and Singapore. Every year, over 100,000 merchant vessels transit the Strait, over a third of which (300 vessels per day) transport hazardous materials in and out of the Mediterranean.

On commissioning of the Tangier VTS traffic was expected to grow sharply over the coming years, especially due to the increase in trade through the Port of Tanger-Med.

Elsewhere in Africa SIGNALIS has participated in the improvement of safety and security in the Suez Canal. Other contracts



Tangier VTS inaugurated by King Mohamed of Morocco in 2010





Screen extract showing the Strait of Gibraltar with the extent of Tanger VTS and the Traffic Separation Scheme



Note the extensive antennas and the radar scanners

have provided installations in the Panama Canal, the Straits of Hormuz, Strait of Malacca, and the Pas-de-Calais.

For each of these Straits, ships sail through a TSS (Traffic Separation Scheme) under IMO regulation. These four TSSs are monitored by Coastal VTMIS using infrastructure provided by SIGNALIS.

For Malacca, Pas de Calais and Gibraltar TSSs, all ships are required to follow the compulsory ORC (Obligatory Report Call) that makes them responsible to contact by radio the TSS Authority as soon as they enter the TSS zone in order to transmit or confirm the essential data related to the security of their passage.

The Straits of Hormuz are completely inside the Territorial Waters of the Sultanate of Oman that did not wish to impose ORC regulation. ■

#### Signalis équipe l'Afrique du nord en VTS

Cet article, rédigé par le membre industriel allemand Signalis GmbH, illustre la mise en place d'une gestion du trafic dans les eaux du Maroc, et présente brièvement l'histoire du contrôle du trafic maritime dans la région avant 2010. Le centre de Tanger pilote un système intégré - VTS de Tanger - qui garde trace des mouvements des navires, permettant ainsi aux autorités compétentes d'évaluer en continu la situation du trafic afin de prévenir les accidents, promouvoir la sécurité maritime et protéger l'environnement marin. L'article aborde également la question du trafic dans le détroit de Gibraltar. ◆

#### Signalis proporciona Equipamiento de VTS en el Norte de África

El artículo está escrito por el Miembro Industrial alemán de IALA Signalis GmbH, y resume con ilustraciones la implementación de la gestión del tráfico marítimo en las aguas de Marruecos con breves detalles de la historia del control del tráfico marítimo en la región antes de 2010. El Centro Tánger opera un sistema integrado para hacer el seguimiento de los movimientos de los buques y se lo conoce como VTS Tánger, permitiéndole a las autoridades competentes evaluar en forma continua la situación del tráfico marítimo a efectos de prevenir accidentes, fomentar la seguridad marítima y proteger el medio ambiente marino. También se menciona el tráfico en el Estrecho de Gibraltar. ◆