CLAIMS

1. A system for assisting a marine vessel to maneuver, said system comprising:
at least one tugboat suitable for assisting said marine vessel to maneuver, said tugboat being configured to be able to deliver a bollard pull of at least 40 tons, and
a remote control unit configured for wirelessly controlling the operation of said at least one tugboat from a position remote from said at least one tugboat, said position comprising a position on said marine vessel, said remote control unit being configured to transmit thrust commands wirelessly to said at least one tugboat in the form of a vector in relation to the hull of the assisted marine vessel, and said tugboat being configured to carry out a thrust command wirelessly received from said remote control unit, also when the magnitude of the thrust command is 40 tons or more.

2. A system according to claim 1, wherein said remote control unit is configured to transmit follow the assisted marine vessel instructions to said at least one tugboat and said tugboat being configured to follow the assisted marine vessel, preferably autonomously, even more preferable at a constant distance to the assisted marine vessel.

3. A system according to any one of claims 1 or 2, wherein said at least one tugboat comprises:
a communication device configured to wirelessly receive instructions received from said remote control unit, and
a controller configured to execute the instructions received by the communication device.

4. A system according to any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein said remote control unit comprises a user interface configured to receive input from a pilot or other human operator, said user interface preferably including a touchscreen.

5. A system according to claim 3 or 4, wherein said tugboat comprises a plurality of sensors, including at least a position sensor, and wherein said control and communication device is

configured to wirelessly transmit information from said plurality of sensors to said remote control unit.

6. A system according to any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein said remote control unit comprises an inbuilt or associated position sensor or position beacon.

7. A system according to claim 6, wherein said tugboat is provided with a sensor for locating said position sensor or said position beacon.

8. A system according to any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein said tugboat is provided with a sensor indicative of the bollard pull strength and/or direction that the tugboat applies to a towing line or to said assisted marine vessel via the bow of the tugboat, and wherein said remote control unit is configured to inform the pilot or human operator of the bollard pull strength and/or direction as detected with the sensor.

9. A method for assisting a marine vessel to maneuver, said method comprising:
wirelessly controlling at least one tugboat from a remote position, said tugboat being configured be able to deliver a bollard pull of at least 40 tons, said remote position preferably being on the assisted marine vessel,
transmitting a thrust command in the form of vector in relation to the hull of the assisted marine vessel from a remote control unit at said remote position to said tugboat,
receiving said thrust command on said tugboat, and
carrying out said thrust command with said tugboat using a controller on said tugboat by applying a thrust of a magnitude and direction to the hull of said assisted vessel in accordance with the thrust command received by the tugboat from said remote position, also when the magnitude of the thrust command is 40 tons or more.

10. A method according to claim 9, further comprising issuing a follow assisted marine vessel command from said remote position to said at least one tugboat and said at least one tugboat following said assisted marine vessel in accordance with instructions received from said remote position, preferably said tugboat following said marine vessel at a constant

distance and even more preferably said tugboat following said assisted marine vessel at a constant distance and a constant relative position with respect to said assisted marine vessel.

11. A method according to any one of claims 9 or 10, further comprising wirelessly sending sensor data from sensors on said tugboat to a receiver at said remote position.

12. A method according to claim 11, further comprising reproducing sensor data wirelessly sent by said tugboat via a user interface at said remote location.