

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MARITIME SECURITY HOSTED BY EMSA

On 22 April EMSA had the pleasure to host the International Conference on Maritime Security organised by the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs under the auspices of the Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the EU. The purpose of the event was to encourage reflection around three panels on the topics of international cooperation, the Atlantic as a case study, and the importance of maritime security in the strategic compass. "By providing security in the maritime domain we protect and preserve resources, and enable economic growth and social stability," said EMSA Executive Director, Maja Markovčić Kostelac during the opening of the conference.



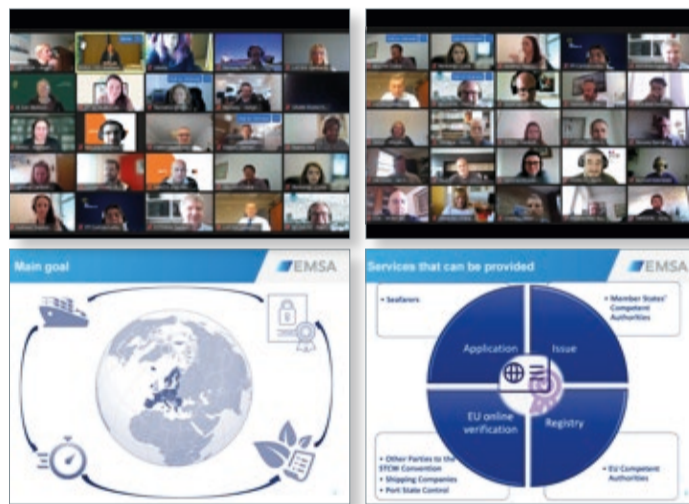
AUSTRIA'S MINISTER FOR THE EU PAYS VISIT TO EMSA

On 23 April, Ms Markovčić Kostelac welcomed Austria's Federal Minister for the EU and Constitution, Karoline Edtstadler to the Agency's premises for discussions on EMSA's work and mandate. Of particular interest were EMSA's activities in the areas of sustainability and surveillance. Both areas were covered in detail with a presentation of the Agency's environmental portfolio and a first-hand view of the Agency's surveillance capabilities in the Maritime Support Services Centre.



EU SEAFARERS' CERTIFICATION PLATFORM – MAKING PAPERLESS SOLUTIONS THE NORM

On 28 April an online workshop was held to present and discuss the concept of an EU Seafarers' Certification Platform to facilitate the issuing and management of e-certificate using paperless solutions. The workshop was attended by 60 participants from most member states, EMSA and the European Commission. Member state representatives had the opportunity to discuss the concept, share their experience and raise any important points that will feed into the next steps of the project. A correspondence group with representatives from interested member states will be established in the upcoming weeks, with the objective of mapping out the member states' needs and interests, and defining the technical specifications and business requirements. The new platform is expected to be developed in 2022.



WORKSHOP ON NEW PRF RULES FOR ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND SHIP WASTE MANAGEMENT

On 7-8 April, a virtual workshop took place on the implementation of the Port Reception Facilities (PRF) Directive and the recently updated guidance document prepared by EMSA. In attendance were some 50 participants from the member states, EFTA and the European Commission's DG MOVE. The workshop was geared towards officials implementing and enforcing the directive, as well as to senior officials and port inspectors working at managerial level. The workshop provided an update on the implementation status of the new PRF Directive – in particular, on the latest ESSF subgroup recommendations for the implementing acts on 'Methods to Calculate Sufficient Dedicated Storage Capacity' and the 'Risk-Based Targeting Mechanism'. The European Commission presented the general context of the directive and EMSA gave an overview of upcoming developments to SafeSeaNet and the THETIS-EU PRF module which will cater for this new directive. The event also provided an opportunity to present the updated 'PRF Guidance for Ship Inspections under the Port Reception Facilities Directive' document and put the preliminary draft forward for discussion and feedback. The guidance document is to be reviewed by member states by means of a written consultation.



LAUNCH OF ONLINE COURSE ON EU MARITIME LEGISLATION

An online course on EU institutions and EU maritime legislation kicked off at EMSA in April. The course is being delivered on a part-time basis over a period of nine, non-consecutive weeks, with presentations for a total of two hours a day from Monday to Thursday, and a quiz and questions & answers wrap-up session on Friday. It is mainly directed to newcomers in the maritime administrations of EU member states, Iceland and Norway, and aims at providing a general overview of the main components of EU maritime legislation. The online course consists of five blocks: introduction; ISM, maritime security and human element; maritime safety; sustainability; digitalisation and simplification. The first block was delivered from 19 to 23 April 2021 and introduced to the participants the EU's institutional setting, with a focus on the EU treaties and institutions, the EU legislative process, the EU's maritime transport policy, the EU agencies and EMSA in particular. It also included information on the IMO and its Conventions and Codes, the IMO Member State Audit Scheme and the role of the EU at the IMO. The block was attended by 48 participants from 16 member states, as well as one staff member from EFCA and one from Frontex. The second block on ISM, Maritime Security and Human Element will be delivered over two weeks, from 24 May until 4 June. The course will end at the beginning of October.

BALTIC COUNTRIES BENEFIT FROM EMSA'S REGIONAL RPAS SERVICE FOR ENHANCED MARITIME SURVEILLANCE

EMSA's regional RPAS service for enhanced maritime surveillance in the Baltic Sea began mid-April under the coordination of the Estonian Police and Border Guard, following initial steps taken in 2020. Using remotely piloted aircraft to gain a better picture of what is happening at sea is particularly useful in this region where busy shipping lanes and high cargo traffic make maritime safety and security a challenge. The RPAS service is currently hosted by the Estonian Police and Border Guard and will be followed by the Finnish Border Guard later in the year. Independently of where the flights are taking off, operational cooperation is possible among all the participating member states which, in addition to Estonia and Finland, also include Latvia and Sweden. The information collected on board the remotely piloted aircraft is being shared simultaneously with these neighbouring countries, thereby helping them to create a common maritime picture and respond in close coordination with each other.

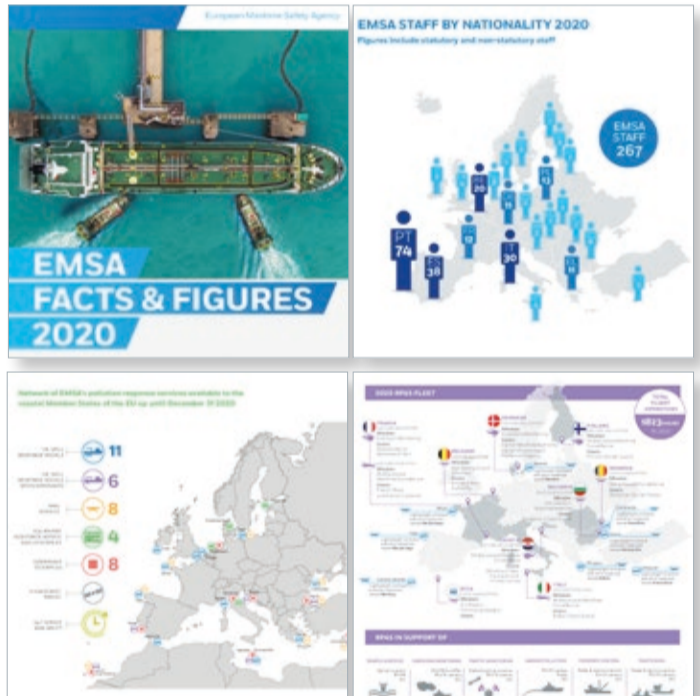


EMSA CONDUCTS MOCK AUDIT FOR BULGARIA IN PREPARATION FOR IMSAS

EMSA carried out a mock audit on 12-16 April for Bulgaria as part of the country's preparations for the IMO Member State Audit Scheme (IMSAS). The mock audit took place within the context of EMSA's capacity building activities to support EU member states and is designed to familiarise staff of the Bulgarian Maritime Administration with IMSAS procedures and interview techniques. It is also an opportunity to identify any possible gaps in the country's preparation for the actual IMSAS audit which is scheduled for 2022. Seven Bulgarian competent authorities participated in the mock audit alongside a representative from the Irish maritime administration who participated as an observer in anticipation of the IMSAS audit on Ireland in 2022. During the closing meeting, the audit team shared their findings with the Bulgarian authorities and exchanged views on how best to prepare for the actual audit. The IMSAS – which became mandatory in 2016 – aims to promote the consistent and effective implementation of applicable IMO instruments and to help member states to improve their capabilities, while contributing to the enhancement of global and individual member state's overall performance.

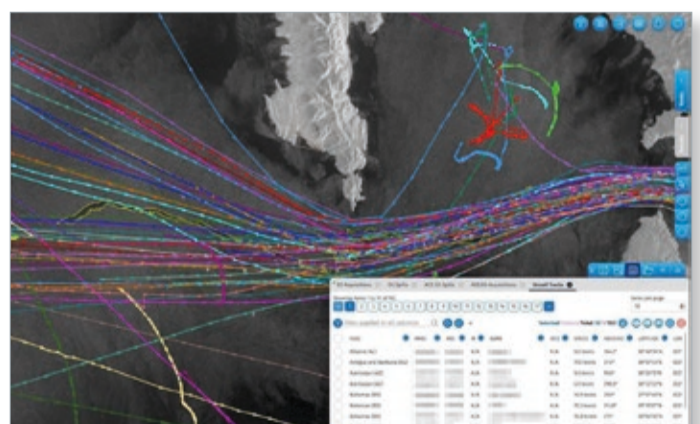
EMSA FACTS & FIGURES 2020 REPORT NOW ONLINE

The [EMSA Facts & Figures](#) report for 2020 is now available for download from the Agency's website, setting out the main achievements over the course of last year. While the Covid-19 pandemic overshadowed all activities in 2020, the work – like that of the maritime community as a whole – continued at an increased pace. EMSA continued to give full support to the maritime sector and to all those using the Agency's services. Weekly reports on the effect of the pandemic on the sector were issued, guidance on the resumption of cruise ship operations was published jointly with the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, and the Agency pioneered remote visits and inspections. This edition is the first overview of the Agency's work under the five-year strategy. It shows how the Agency is delivering across its five pillars of sustainability, surveillance, safety, security and simplification, and pays tribute to the resilience and capacity of staff to produce high quality work for stakeholders, users and European citizens alike.



SAFESEANET ECOSYSTEM GRAPHICAL USER INTERFACE GETS AN UPGRADE – SEG V1.11 GO LIVE

On 20 April 2021, a new release of the SafeSeaNet Graphical User Interface (SEG) was successfully deployed into production. This new release brings significant improvements to the way Integrated Maritime Services users interact with the system and, in particular, facilitates the operational analysis of vessel activities. In addition, via the new pre-set mode functionality, users have the possibility to customise the interface even further to match their specific needs.



VESSEL TRAFFIC MONITORING SYSTEM GETS AN UPGRADE – SSN V4.5 GO LIVE

On 13 April, EMSA successfully launched a new release of the EU's vessel traffic monitoring and information system, SafeSeaNet (version 4.5). New additional functionalities to retrieve port call information are now available to users. Following feedback received from member states, the performance of SafeSeaNet was enhanced. This was the last update of SafeSeaNet as a new major release is expected by the end of 2021. As SafeSeaNet continues to evolve and support new and revised EU rules, SafeSeaNet version 5 will support the changes in the legal requirements of the amended Directive 98/41/EC on the registration of persons on board passenger ships, and Directive EU 2019/883 on port reception facilities for the delivery of waste from ships (repealing Directive 2000/59/EC). The work continues for this new development both at EMSA and within the member state's own national systems.

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VACANCIES: Reserve List for a Financial Verifier/Initiating Agent (ASTI) (24/5/2021); SNE positions in Sustainability & Regulatory Compliance (17/5/21)

PROCUREMENT: Lightweight RPAS Services Supporting Pollution Response and Multipurpose Maritime Surveillance (26/5/2021); Development of a QMS and related implementing procedures for the maritime administrations of IPA [...] (24/5/2021). See website for more.