

20TH EMSA BOARD MEETING IN ATHENS

The 20th meeting of the Administrative Board took place in Athens on 6th March, back-to-back with the Mare Forum Conference entitled "Maritime Transportation of Energy from Russia and Central Asia - Challenges and Opportunities," and co-hosted by the Hellenic Ministry for Mercantile Marine, the Aegean and Island policy. The main topics for discussion by the Board were: the preliminary work programme and budget 2009: SafeSeaNet; the New Information System for Port State Control and; the European Union Long Range Identification and Tracking (LRIT) Data Centre. These will continue to represent the main challenges for EMSA in 2009. The Board also had the opportunity to discuss the final outcome of the independent external evaluation of the Agency.

LRIT EXPERT GROUP FIRST MEETING

The first LRIT Expert Group meeting took place at EMSA on the 25-26th February, bringing together 24 Member States, the European Commission and EMSA. The main objectives of the meeting were: to present the EU LRIT Data Centre Implementation Plan to the Expert Group; to discuss the main steps in the project; to consult the group on key issues relating to the development of the various parts of the project and; to ensure that Member States' suggestions for technical improvements were taken into account. All presentations and the meeting report can be found (using existing SafeSeaNet login and passwords) on the EMSA LRIT website at: <http://www.emsa.europa.eu/end907d003.html>

POLLUTION RESPONSE VESSEL NETWORK STRENGTHENED



Piraeus-based pollution response vessel Aktea OSRV

On 8th March, a new procurement procedure for the EMSA Stand-by Oil Spill Recovery Vessels Service (SOSRVS) covering the Black Sea and the North Sea areas was launched.

The deadline for the submission of applications for the first phase of the procedure is 29th April 2008. All the relevant documentation and information can be accessed via "Invitation to Apply And Application Specifications" at:

<http://www.emsa.europa.eu/end185d014d013d001.html>

The aim is to strengthen the vessel network by filling some of the remaining gaps. This will be done by setting in place three year renewable contracts with commercial ship-owners and/or operators and/or spill response organisations/manufacturers. The EMSA "Effective At-Sea Pollution Response" leaflet describes the service in more detail, and this can be seen at:

http://www.emsa.europa.eu/Docs/opr/leaflet_effective_pollution_response.pdf

WORK PROGRAMME 2008 ON LINE

The EMSA 2008 work programme has recently been published, and this substantial 60 page document reflects the growth in the Agency's responsibilities. It comprises concise descriptions of: the operational and administrative work packages; the current organisation chart; the 2008 budget and; the indicative establishment plan. The work programme is available on line at:

<http://www.emsa.europa.eu/Docs/workprogramme/wp2008.pdf>

WORLD HYDROGRAPHIC DAY AT EMSA

On 24th June, EMSA will host the 2008 World Hydrographic Day in Lisbon. It will be organised by the International Hydrographic Organization and will be attended by delegates from many different hydrographic institutes around the world. The event will provide delegates with the opportunity to better understand the activities of EMSA and the International Hydrographic Organization, and it will underline the importance of "Capacity building as a vital tool to assist the International Hydrographic Organization in achieving its mission and objectives." In this context, a Memorandum of Understanding will be signed between the IHO and EMSA, with the aim of strengthening cooperation between complementary public institutions in order to achieve the common goal of improving the safety of maritime traffic.

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