

WORK PROGRAMME 2005: PUBLISHED AND DISSEMINATED

This year, the EMSA Work Programme runs to 36 pages. In addition to the listing of 2005 operational and administrative tasks, the programme contains the current organisation chart, the 2005 budget and the indicative establishment plan. A hard copy version was initially distributed to 500 stakeholders (including Members of the European Commission and Parliament, national maritime administrations, industry and the media. Please note that this document is available on the EMSA website (www.emsa.eu.int)

TRAFFIC MONITORING: POTENTIAL FOR EXPANDING AND UPDATING

On 27/28 January, the EMSA workshop on traffic monitoring in European waters took place in Brussels. 50 experts from all Member States (except two landlocked countries) attended the event. They learned more about regional and national systems. They agreed that a common approach at IMO, involving the Commission and EMSA, could be beneficial in decision making when initiatives aimed at expanding Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) coverage in international waters, or at adopting new routing measures, affect several Member States. They also re-affirmed the importance of SafeSeaNet as a tool to facilitate data exchange on maritime safety. However, the majority of Member States believe that it might be too early to set up a network of regional traffic monitoring centres.

CASUALTY INVESTIGATION PROJECT

EMSA has awarded a contract for the development of a marine casualty database & electronic information platform to SSPA Sweden AB and a contract for a fact finding study on investigation practices to Det Norske Veritas. The central European marine casualty database will provide a common means for processing and analysing casualty data in Europe, based on a taxonomy (classification system) developed by EMSA in cooperation with EU Member States. The fact finding study will provide an appreciation: of the range and number of serious marine casualties occurring in different maritime zones; of the extent to which those casualties are fully investigated and reported and; of investigation practices across Europe. The results of these projects will facilitate decision making in improving investigation methods, and will thus contribute to improved safety and pollution prevention at sea.

FIRST EMSA CASUALTY INVESTIGATION WORKSHOP

On 16/17 February, EMSA held its first workshop on marine casualty investigation. To begin the proceedings, DG TREN presented the European policy approach and EMSA highlighted recent important developments, including the creation of a central database for marine casualties. Attendees identified, discussed and exchanged best practices as well as information on current and future projects in Europe. Speakers from Cyprus, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the United Kingdom explained how they currently investigate marine casualties. Participants were informed of recent advances in voyage data recorder downloading and playback, and potential links with other transport sectors in the field of accident investigation and reporting were explored. The global framework was described by the IMO, and approaches to investigator training and casualty data analysis were presented by NGO experts.

EUROPEAN UNION COURT OF AUDITORS VISITS EMSA

A team of auditors from the European Court of Auditors paid a visit to EMSA in early January. This EU body is responsible for the audit of all European Agencies, as well as for certification of the accounts and assessment of the legality of procedures. The EMSA audit proceeded in two stages. In January, they evaluated the contracts and procedures. Following the completion of this exercise, they will finalise the audit with a visit in March.

RECOGNISED ORGANISATIONS: AN EMSA TEAM OF ASSESSORS IN KOREA

A key component of the ongoing work programme is the task to assess the current 12 European Union recognised organisations (classification societies). This work was intensified at the beginning of 2005, when an EMSA team of assessors visited South Korea and made a number of assessments of some of the recognised organisations having branch offices in the area. EMSA is looking to expand the team with further specialised assessors in the near future.

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