

COMMISSIONER GEORGIEVA ON-BOARD OIL SPILL RESPONSE VESSEL



EMSA Executive Director Willem de Ruiter, clarifies EMSA's oil-spill response role with Commissioner Georgieva

On 14 October, **Kristalina Georgieva**, Commissioner in charge of International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response, paid a visit to EMSA in Lisbon. A tour was first organised on board the *Ria de Vigo*, one of the vessels that EMSA can mobilise in case of maritime pollution incidents. Ms Georgieva saw a demonstration of oil recovery equipment, and talked with experts and crew. A subsequent tour of EMSA focused on the EMSA-managed monitoring systems such as **SafeSeaNet**, the **EU LRIT Data Centre** and **CleanSeaNet**.

THE CTG MPPR, DECIPHERED



CTG MPPR may seem like a difficult *Scrabble* hand, but not at EMSA. October 26 saw the 5th meeting of the *Consultative Technical Group for Marine Pollution, Preparedness and Response* (photo, above). Established in 2007, the group helps to improve European preparedness for - and response to - marine pollution from ships. Its projects include: **EU States Claims Management Guidelines**; a common assessment framework for lessons learned following pollution incidents; training on marine pollution surveillance; plus EMSA's **EMPOLLEX** (exchange of marine pollution experts) programme.

EU PARLIAMENT EYES EMSA ROLE IN OFFSHORE OIL DRILLING SAFETY



Europe is responding to the aftermath of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. An EU Parliament **resolution** of October 7 envisages comprehensive EU legislation on oil platforms. In addition, a Commission **Communication on the safety of oil and gas activities** proposes a role for EMSA. These initiatives are likely to extend the Agency's marine pollution activities beyond a focus on ship-sourced pollution to include oil spills from offshore drilling platforms (see related article, top right).

NEW TASKS COME KNOCKING AT EMSA'S DOOR

Following the publication in May of EMSA's **five-year strategy**, the European Commission adopted on October 28 a detailed proposal to amend EMSA's basic regulation (1406/2002) in a number of ways. The **full document** is far too long to summarise here, but we'll try! The general emphasis is on continuity and clarification: the Agency is now in a consolidation phase, and so the proposal envisages keeping up the good work, and some pinpoint-targeted extensions towards new tasks. Among these tasks are: actions linked to implementing the **third maritime safety package**; analysis of research projects; an enhanced maritime surveillance role; pollution response tasks linked to oil spills caused by offshore oil installations; an amended role in technical cooperation with neighbouring countries; assistance in the development of implementation of EU policies such as **Motorways of the Sea**, e-maritime and the environmental aspects of shipping including climate change; and a clarified role in the area of maritime security inspections. Read the **full proposal** on **Eur-Lex**.



EU LRIT DATA PASSES FIRST IMO EXAM

Long Range Identification and Tracking (LRIT) is how merchant vessels, according to IMO rules, communicate their position via satellite worldwide. **IMSO**, the LRIT Coordinator checks that LRIT data centres, which manage these ship-broadcasted messages, are performing properly. **IMSO** recently audited the EMSA-operated **EU LRIT Data Centre** for the period June 2009-June 2010. Auditors verified sample data - all LRIT transactions recorded in a single month - to check that requirements were met. Results were very positive: the LRIT Coordinator will now submit a comprehensive audit report to the IMO's Secretary-General, and a summary to the IMO Maritime Safety Committee meeting in November.

TRAINING ON BALLAST WATER



In October EMSA hosted a first training event to help Member States prepare for ratification of the IMO's **Ballast Water Management Convention**. This was attended by lawyers, PSC officers, policy officials and environmental experts from 19 Member States. It covered issues such as methodologies involved in implementing the Convention, problems likely to be encountered, and methods to solve these problems.

ON THE EMSA WEBSITE

Documents: Training & Cooperation: Newsletter no.5.

Recruitment: Project Officer for LRIT (Seconded National Expert).

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