

## PRESS RELEASE

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### Italian Coast Guard deploying EMSA remotely piloted aircraft over the Gulf of Genoa for increased maritime surveillance

From the air base of Sarzana, the Italian Coast Guard has been deploying EMSA's remotely piloted aircraft to gain increased maritime awareness over the Gulf of Genoa since 16 June. The flights are being used to enhance general maritime safety and security, as well as to assist in search and rescue missions. Protection of the marine environment is another important aspect of the operation and flights will be used to monitor whale migration within the Pelagos Sanctuary, a protected area for marine mammals.



This multipurpose operation allows the Italian Coast Guard to assess how remotely piloted aircraft can be deployed as part of their standard operating procedures to provide enhanced situational awareness. This will be particularly useful for monitoring whale migration and merchant vessels transiting the protected marine area of the *Santuario dei Cetacei* or Pelagos Sanctuary, located between the French and Italian coastlines. By using the EMSA RPAS data centre, the flights can be directed

and followed remotely from six locations including the Sarzana airbase, Imperia, Savona, La Spezia, Genoa and Rome.

The aircraft being used is an AR-5 Evo unmanned fixed wing aircraft and it is under contract to EMSA from the REACT consortium, comprising the companies CLS and Tekever. It can fly more than 10 hours and beyond radio line of sight using satellite communications. It has several features making it suitable for performing both day and night operations including optical and infrared cameras, a maritime radar, an AIS receiver and an emergency position-indicating radiobeacon (EPIRB) antenna. The aircraft can also be equipped with an inflatable life raft for eight persons to be dropped in support of Search and Rescue operations.

#### ABOUT RPAS

Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS) services are offered free to all EU member states by EMSA. They have been developed to assist in maritime surveillance operations and ship emission monitoring and can operate in all seas surrounding the European Union. RPAS services can provide support to traditional coast guard functions, including search and rescue and pollution prevention and response. The services are offered to member states individually and as part of EMSA's regional RPAS strategy, which allows multiple coast guard functions in several EU member states to be supported by one or more RPAS services. See [where EMSA is flying here](#).



European Maritime Safety Agency

## **ABOUT EMSA**

The European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) is a decentralised agency of the EU, based in Lisbon, Portugal. EMSA serves the EU's maritime interests for a safe, secure, green and competitive maritime sector, delivering value for member states through [support for pollution prevention and response](#), [maritime surveillance](#), [safety and security](#), [digitalisation and the provision of integrated maritime services](#), and [technical assistance](#).

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