

## EMSA ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD UNANIMOUSLY RENEWS MS MARKOVČIĆ KOSTELAC'S MANDATE

Maja Markovčić Kostelac will continue to lead the Agency after the Administrative Board on 14-15 June unanimously welcomed the proposal of the European Commission to renew her mandate. Having skillfully steered the Agency through the COVID pandemic and full sail into its 20<sup>th</sup> year as a key partner in supporting a safe and sustainable maritime sector in Europe, she now has the challenge of taking EMSA to the next level envisaged in the proposal to extend the Agency's mandate as part of a full package of legislative proposals to modernise maritime safety rules and tackle ship-source pollution. Decarbonisation and digitalisation were high on the agenda. The Board approved a transitional measure to provide the Agency with the resources needed to start preparatory work for the implementation of the future Fuel EU Regulation and to capitalise on synergies with the Agency's ongoing work to support the extension of ETS to maritime transport. In a workshop setting, the Board also brainstormed on the future of services for maritime awareness, analytics and enforcement, taking into account the current EMSA services, new technologies and emerging needs.



Administrative Board members engaged in focused discussions, pooling their expertise to tackle maritime challenges

## FIRST EMSA-LED MULTIPURPOSE MARITIME OPERATION UNDERWAY IN THE BALTIC SEA

EMSA, in collaboration with maritime authorities from Finland, Latvia, and Estonia, has initiated a Multipurpose Maritime Operation in the Central and Eastern Baltic Sea. The operation, launched at the request of Finnish authorities, aims to enhance maritime safety, search and rescue efforts, border control, fisheries control, maritime surveillance, and environmental protection and response across the Estonian, Finnish, and Latvian maritime jurisdiction areas. Running until 31 August, the operation involves EMSA, EFCA and Frontex, providing comprehensive support to coast guard functions in the three participating Member States. The MMO was formally launched on 5 June from on board the OPV Turva in Helsinki where EMSA Executive Director Ms Markovčić Kostelac met alongside Chief of the Finnish Border Guard, Lieutenant General Pasi Kostamovaara, and the Deputy Chief, Real Admiral Markku Hassinen. The services and assets deployed as part of this MMO are unique, enhancing situational awareness over four domains: sea surface (with the integrated maritime picture); underwater surveillance (ROV); aerial oversight (RPAS) and Earth Observation (CleanSeaNet and Copernicus Maritime Surveillance).



The MMO launch was also the occasion to meet with the Finnish Transport and Communications Agency, Traficom, as well as with the Finnish Meteorological Institute for exchanges on possible areas of collaboration.

## ANNUAL EUROPEAN COAST GUARD EVENT FOSTERS COOPERATION ACROSS BORDERS AND SECTORS

Representatives from coast guard authorities across the EU recently convened at the Annual European Coast Guard Event held at EMSA premises in Lisbon on 27-28 June. The event served as a platform for fostering collaboration, discussing interagency cooperation, and presenting concrete initiatives within the European coast guard cooperation framework. The event kicked off with welcome addresses from distinguished guests, including Mr José Maria Costa, Portuguese Secretary of State for Maritime Affairs, and Mr Carlos Moedas, Mayor of Lisbon. Ms Fotini Ioannidou, Head of the Maritime Safety Unit at DG MOVE, European Commission, provided a European perspective on maritime safety and related legislative developments.



A high-level panel of speakers engaged in discussions on interagency cooperation in action. The panel featured Ms Maja Markovčić Kostelac, Executive Director of EMSA; Dr Susan Steele, Executive Director of EFCA; Dr Lars Gerdes, Deputy Executive Director of Returns and Operations from Frontex; Mr Eric Banel, Director General for Maritime Affairs, Fisheries and Aquaculture – France; Rear Admiral Giuseppe Aulicino, Head of Personnel of the Italian Coast Guard; and Commodore Tom Hanén, Chief of Personnel of the Finnish Border Guard.

This event was the occasion to present the many concrete and tangible services being delivered as part of the framework of European cooperation on coast guard functions. EMSA and sister agencies EFCA and Frontex presented on information sharing and surveillance services; capacity building and risk assessment; and the concept of Multipurpose Maritime Operations. Two Multipurpose Maritime Operations have already been launched this year with Frontex leading an MMO in the Black Sea and more recently EMSA leading its first MMO in the Baltic Sea, in collaboration with Finnish, Estonian, and Latvian authorities.

Interactive breakout sessions were held to gather valuable input from stakeholders to eventually feed into the Annual Strategic Plan, ensuring close alignment with emerging needs and user requirements.



The Annual European Coast Guard Event also marked the handover of the rotating leadership of the Tripartite Working Arrangement. This role now passes to EFCA to steer the work of the cooperation framework moving forward.

The ability to hold the event in person, to talk face to face and exchange experiences was highly beneficial for everyone, strengthening the ongoing cooperation at strategic and operational level.





## EMSA HOSTS 6<sup>TH</sup> RPAS USER GROUP TO SHARE VALUABLE OPERATIONAL EXPERIENCE

As many as 38 representatives of maritime authorities from 19 Member States, international organisations and EU Agencies, met in Lisbon to share their experience in the use of Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems for civil maritime surveillance. The level of participation reflects the increasing number of Member States using RPAS services on a permanent basis. A tour de table and breakout sessions provided an opportunity for each Member State and Agency to share their experience with RPAS for civil maritime surveillance, and their plans for establishing RPAS operations in the coming years, either with or without EMSA support. EMSA gave an overview of its RPAS services provided in the last six years and shared information on the 2023 activities: nine major RPAS operations this year; long endurance RPAS operations in the Baltic, North Sea, Atlantic and Mediterranean, as well as multipurpose operations in Lithuania, Germany and France with emissions monitoring capabilities, and two operations on board EFCA patrol vessels. In 2023 it is planned also to have 13 EMSA oil pollution response vessels equipped with RPAS on board to support pollution response operations. The breakout session allowed EMSA to gather additional valuable feedback on the operational use of RPAS by each maritime authority, to exchange best practices, CONOPS and examples of use of RPAS per coast guard function. These functions included: general maritime monitoring and surveillance, maritime safety, maritime search

and rescue, ship casualty and maritime accidents, maritime security, port security, maritime environmental protection and pollution response, fisheries, customs, maritime border control and prevention and suppression of trafficking and smuggling and connected maritime law enforcement.

## IMS FOR MEMBER STATES: 20<sup>TH</sup> USER CONSULTATION MEETING

IMS for Member States held the 20<sup>th</sup> user consultation meeting on 25 May, during which EU Member States' IMS representatives met at EMSA and connected online to discuss current state and further development of the enhanced maritime traffic picture services. The user consultation process is crucial for the effective management of the service. By engaging with users, EMSA gained valuable insights into their needs, preferences, and priorities in terms of data, interfaces and specific functionalities like: 'always on' Automated Behaviour Monitoring (ABM) algorithms, advanced analytical tools, drifting modelling, and SAR toolbox. Operational feedback from the users helped to refine features, to enhance usability, and to deliver a user-centric IMS interfaces. The meeting fostered innovation based on the discussion on new technologies (AI, Cloud, Big Data). It also ensured that IMS meet Member States' users' expectations, ultimately supporting collaboration under Vessel Traffic Monitoring and Information (exchange) System.



## HANDS-ON TRAINING IN BALTIC SEA: DEMONSTRATING THE CAPABILITIES OF EMSA'S OIL SPILL RESPONSE EQUIPMENT

As part of our first Multipurpose Maritime Operation (MMO) in the Baltic Sea region, a three-day hands-on training was delivered on the use of EMSA's Oil Spill Response Equipment available from the local stockpile in Tolkkinen, Finland. Eight officials with responsibilities in oil spill response from Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Latvia, the Netherlands and Finland, experienced first-hand the use of the equipment - its preparation, deployment and operation. On display were the various capabilities of the Current Buster 6, EMSA's work boat, an oil storage barge, a ro-trawl system, and a fence boom. These capabilities are available for rapid deployment around-the-clock in case of a pollution event anywhere in European waters and shared sea basins.



EMSA's Oil Spill Response Equipment is made available to maritime authorities for rapid deployment in case of a pollution event.

## EMSA BOOSTS POLLUTION RESPONSE CAPABILITIES IN UKRAINE AND GEORGIA

Under the BCSEA II project, EMSA has donated to Ukraine and Georgia eight sets of pollution response equipment (two medium-sized oil recovery skimmer systems and two low speed containment V-sweep systems per country). The equipment has now reached Odessa (Ukraine) and Batumi (Georgia) after the signature of the respective Donation Agreements. Dedicated training sessions for relevant staff from Ukraine and Georgia were held, thereby ensuring familiarisation with the equipment. The latest two-day session took place on 8-9 June in Batumi, Georgia and involved nine staff from the Georgian Maritime Transport Agency - the beneficiary

institution in the country. The first day included a theoretical session explaining the technical specifications and capabilities of the donated equipment. The second day provided a hands-on experience in operating the donated equipment in real conditions, including deployment in water. Another action aimed at building up the pollution response capacities of the ENP Beneficiary Countries under the BCSEA II project was therefore completed, thereby contributing to the protection of the marine environment in the Black Sea.



## EMSA SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETES EU-FUNDED PROJECT TO STRENGTHEN MARITIME CAPACITIES IN IPA II BENEFICIARIES

EMSA has completed the "Preparatory measures for the future participation of relevant IPA II beneficiaries in the European Maritime Agency" project which ran until 30 June, with a budget of 625 000 EUR. Originally scheduled for 32 months, the project was extended to 38 months and focused on several key areas. These included the transposition of EU maritime legislation into the national legislation of Serbia, Montenegro, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Furthermore, the project supported the transposition of MARPOL Annex VI into Montenegro's national legislation, capacity building in Recognised Organisation monitoring (Albania), auditing of maritime training institutions (Albania), development of a Maritime Strategy adhering to the IMO III code for Albania and Montenegro, establishment of a Quality Management System for Albania's maritime administration, and provision of essential tools and services to the beneficiaries (CSN, RuleCheck, MAR-CIS, MAR-ICE, MaKCs). The project also facilitated contributions to the region's maritime infrastructure. Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina received AIS BASE stations and central nodes, while a comprehensive study on the adequacy of Port Reception Facilities in Montenegro was commissioned. Looking ahead, the European Commission, as the Contracting Authority, plans to enter into a new Contribution Agreement with EMSA to support IPA III Beneficiaries. This forthcoming action is expected to start on 1 September 2023, spanning a duration of 48 months with an overall budget of 800 000 EUR.



## FIRST ISO-CERTIFIED COPERNICUS MARITIME SURVEILLANCE TRAINING

The Copernicus Maritime Surveillance (CMS) training sessions were successfully conducted on 23-24 May, attracting operational users from various national authorities responsible for maritime activities. This training aimed to familiarise participants with the CMS product portfolio, the process of requesting CMS services, and practical exercises utilising the SEG interface. Throughout the sessions, interactive Q&A sessions were integrated to foster regular engagement between learners and trainers, ensuring a comprehensive grasp of the material. The training received positive feedback from participants, who commended its quality and usefulness for CMS end-users. Notably, this was the first CMS training to receive ISO certification, representing a significant milestone in the EMSA Academy's Learning Services Catalogue. The course's structure and content were updated to align with the EMSA Academy guidelines, ensuring adherence to ISO standards regarding training requirements and targeted competences. In addition to the in-person training sessions, participants have access to an e-learning course via EMSA's Maritime Knowledge Centre. This online component complements the face-to-face training, providing participants with additional resources and flexibility in their learning experience.



## CISE OPERATIONAL PHASE DISCUSSED AT 13<sup>TH</sup> STAKEHOLDER GROUP MEETING

On 21 June, more than 60 nominated experts and observers from 16 Member States and seven European bodies gathered in preparation for the approaching Operational Phase of CISE, starting in 2024. During the meeting, the European Commission's DG MARE presented the proposed framework for the Operational Phase of CISE, which will continue to

be executed by the CISE Stakeholder Group (CSG) with the coordination role of EMSA. Moreover, the stakeholders presented various ongoing and concluded pre-operational exercises. The presented activities demonstrated the real added value of CISE in addressing different maritime challenges and threats, such as protection of critical infrastructures, search and rescue, drug trafficking and monitoring of vessels sanctioned by the EU, etc. The CSG was also updated on the recent results in the implementation of CISE, namely the signature of the Cooperation Agreement by another two stakeholders: EFCA and Cyprus, and the installation of another two operational nodes by Cyprus and Belgium.



## POTENTIAL FOR CISE USE IN CROSS-BORDER ANTI-DRUG TRAFFICKING OPERATIONS

The representatives of the French Customs, the Spanish Customs, and the Italian Guardia di Finanza met to elaborate an anti-drug trafficking operational scenario with use of CISE. The [workshop on 30-31 May](#) followed a series of meetings and discussions which had taken place since 2022 with a group of CISE stakeholders' law enforcement authorities. The ultimate goal is to make use of CISE for anti-drug trafficking operations requiring cross-border information exchange. The scenario agreed during the meeting entails the use of the CISE Operational Services, namely the "Vessel of Interest (VOI) list" and "Request for Operational Assistance (Assets)", with the aim of improving the authorities' capabilities to observe events at sea, and to respond to them even more effectively.

## EUROPEAN MARITIME DAY 2023: ADVANCING MARITIME SECURITY AND COLLABORATION

The 2023 edition of the European Maritime Day (EMD) was held in Brest, France, on 24-25 May, bringing together Europe's maritime community for dynamic discussions and collaborative efforts towards a sustainable blue economy. Organised by the European Commission, the Metropole of Brest, the Secretariat General for the Sea, the Region of Brittany, and the department of Finistère, this year's edition included active participation from EMSA. As a key player in the maritime domain, EMSA contributed to the event's discourse and activities. One notable highlight was the high-level panel dedicated to "Maritime Security: The EU Maritime Security Strategy; the role of the EU Agencies and inter-Agency cooperation." During this session, EMSA - alongside EFCA and Frontex - presented the collaborative framework and engaged in fruitful discussions on tackling emerging security challenges. EMSA's involvement extended further with a dedicated workshop solely focused on the Common Information Sharing Environment (CISE). This workshop provided an opportunity to delve into the significance of effective information sharing and collaboration in maritime operations. Beyond the sessions, EMSA also actively participated in the EMD exhibition area, where information stands were set up by institutional organisations and private entities. This platform allowed EMSA to raise awareness of the Agency's many areas of activity while fostering valuable networking opportunities. Next year's edition will take place in Svendborg, Denmark on 30-31 May.



## FUTURE OF CISE A TOPIC OF INTEREST AT EUROPEAN MARITIME DAY 2023

More than 50 participants took part in the **CISE workshop** organised on 24 May by EMSA and the CISE-ALERT project consortium, comprised of eight EU Member States. The main points concerned the future of the Common Information Sharing Environment (CISE), and the role of the CISE-ALERT project in the transition of CISE to an operational network. Much emphasis was placed on how the CISE-ALERT project will help address the operational needs of maritime authorities in terms of data access and sharing, and in doing so define tailor-made services to answer these needs. Other topics addressed during the workshop included the role of CISE in the updated **EU Maritime Security Strategy** (EUMSS), and the strong support of the Member States which is reflected in various documents such as the Council conclusions on maritime security from June 2021.



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**VACANCIES:** Project Officer for Sustainability (28/6/23); See website for more.

**PROCUREMENT:** Procurement of SAT AIS Data Services (10/7/2023); Provision of ICT services for the SSN Ecosystem (11/7/2023); See website for more.