

Summary of Decisions 70th EMSA Administrative Board meeting 5-6 June 2024

1. Welcome from the Chairman and adoption of the agenda

New Board Members/alternates were welcomed, as listed below.

No conflicts of interest were declared. The agenda was adopted.

New Board Members and alternates:

Germany

- **Board Member:** Ms Martina Kohlhaas, Director for Shipping, Federal Ministry for Digital and Transport, replacing Achim Wehrmann.

Spain

- **Board Member:** Mr. Gustavo Santana Hernandez, Director General of the Merchant Navy, replacing Mr Benito Núñez Quintanilla.

Iceland

- **Alternate.** Mr. Geir Þór Geirsson, Director of Maritime, Icelandic Transport Authority, replacing Mr Einar Orn Hedinsson.

Norway

- **Board Member:** Mr Alf Tore Sørheim, Acting Director General of Navigation and Shipping, Norwegian Coastal Administration replacing Mr Knut Arild Hareide.

EFTA Surveillance Authority

- **Board Member:** Ms. Valgerdur Gudmundsdottir, Deputy Director General, Transport and Connectivity, EFTA Surveillance Authority
- **Alternate:** Ms. LEMONIA Tsaroucha, Senior Legal Officer, Transport and Connectivity, EFTA Surveillance Authority

Absences:

Austria and Slovakia were not present and did not provide proxies.

Proxies:

The Netherlands were not present, and a proxy was provided to Belgium.

2. Workshop Priorities 2026-2028

The Administrative Board **took part** in the workshop on the Priorities for 2026-2028. The outcome of the discussions at the workshop will feed into the multi-annual programming exercise over the summer in view of preparing the initial draft SPD 2026-2028.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

The Administrative Board **approved** the minutes of the last Administrative Board meeting which took place via video conference on 6 March 2024.

4. EMSA Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2023

Following receipt of the preliminary observations of the European Court of Auditors on 24 May 2024, circulated to the Administrative Board on 28 May and providing a positive opinion on the reliability of the accounts as well as on the legality and regularity of revenue and payments underlying the accounts in all material respects, the Administrative Board **confirmed the adoption** of the EMSA Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2023 in accordance with Articles 15(2)(d) and 10(2)(b) of Regulation (EC) n° 1406/2002 as amended, and its **assessment**, in accordance with Article 48 of the EMSA Financial Regulation.

5. Update on Agency's activities and budget implementation

The Administrative Board **took note** of the information provided by the Agency on:

- (a) General information on work programme and budget implementation
- (b) European cooperation on coast guard functions - 2024 Budget execution
- (c) Relevant tenders and developments in the field of Anti-Pollution Measures

The Administrative Board also **took note** of the current state of the budget and estimated deficit in Title 1 and the future possible shift of appropriations, once the annual update on remunerations and correction coefficients are available. Further information on such transfer, possibly requiring approval of the Administrative Board, would be provided later in the year.

6. HR matters - Outcome of the Staff Survey

The Administrative Board **took note** of the information provided by the Agency on the outcome of the Staff Survey, welcoming the involvement of staff in the process and plans to conduct another survey in two years' time.

7. EMSA Strategy 2020-2024, Assessment and extension

The Administrative Board **took note** of the results of the assessment of the EMSA 5-year Strategy 2020-2024 and **extended** the EMSA 5-year Strategy 2020-2024 until the Commission's legislative proposal concerning the revision of the Agency's mandate is adopted and expected new provisions concerning strategic planning enter into force.

8. Draft Administrative Arrangements

The Administrative Board **considered and did not object** to the draft administrative arrangement with EUROSTAT, as foreseen by Article 10(2)(cc) of the Founding Regulation.

The Administrative Board was also invited to **consider** the Draft Agreement with DG DIGIT – APPENDIX 11 to the Global SLA, for the eSign and eSeal services for the EU Seafarers' Certification Platform. The draft SLA was circulated in the 2nd set of documents and the Administrative Board would consider it with the 4 weeks period foreseen by the EMSA Founding Regulation starting to count from that day. If no objection will be registered by the end of the four weeks period, on 19 June 2024, the Executive Director will be able to proceed with the signature of the SLA.

9. Status of the EMSA Draft Single Programming Document 2025-2027

The Administrative Board **took note** of the information provided by the Agency on the latest operational and budgetary developments with potential impact on the Draft Single Programming Document 2025-2027 and the corresponding Draft Budget and Establishment Plan for 2025, as well as information on planned contract agents and seconded national experts under the EU subsidy and on expected project financed human and financial resources and was invited to provide **written comments by 1 July 2024**.

10. EMSA Capacity Building Activities

The Administrative Board **took note** of the update on the activities of the EMSA Academy and the list of delivered and planned learning services for 2024 and **endorsed** the proposed learning services for 2025 (Annex III).

11. Election of the Deputy Chairmanship of the Agency

The Administrative Board **elected** Mr Eric Banel Deputy Chairman of the EMSA Administrative Board by acclamation.

12. Appointment of the Accounting Officer

The Administrative Board **appointed** Ms Katalin Duarte Accounting Officer of the Agency as from 16 July 2024.

13. Adoption of the list of "A" items

The Administrative Board approved/took note of/adopted the following "A" items en bloc, following the report and positive recommendation of the Administrative and Finance Committee:

13a EMSA Financial Statement 2023 – approved

13b 2024 Appropriations cashed – took note

13c Monitoring of findings and recommendations from internal & external audits & EMSA follow up – took note

13d Implementing Rules to the Staff Regulation empowering the Executive Director to request the Commission's agreement on the adoption of implementing rules by the Administrative Board concerning the probationary period, management trial period and the annual appraisal of the Executive Director of EMSA – **adopted**.

14. Any Other Business

None tabled.

Dates of next EMSA's Administrative Board Meeting:

(subject to availability of the final Hungarian Presidency Council calendar of meetings)

Administrative and Finance Committee: Monday 25 November 2024 morning, online meeting

Administrative Board: Wednesday 27 and Thursday 28 November 2024

Detailed Minutes of the 70th EMSA Administrative Board meeting 5-6 June 2024

1. Welcome from the Chairman and adoption of the agenda

New Board Members/alternates were welcomed, as listed below.

The agenda was adopted. No conflicts of interest were declared.

New Board Members and alternates:

Germany

- **Board Member:** Ms Martina Kohlhaas, Director for Shipping, Federal Ministry for Digital and Transport, replacing Mr Achim Wehrmann.

Spain

- **Board Member:** Mr Gustavo Santana Hernandez, Director General of the Merchant Navy, replacing Mr Benito Núñez Quintanilla.

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EFTA Surveillance Authority

- **Board Member:** Ms Valgerdur Gudmundsdottir, Deputy Director General, Transport and Connectivity, EFTA Surveillance Authority
- **Alternate:** Ms LEMONIA Tsaroucha, Senior Legal Officer, Transport and Connectivity, EFTA Surveillance Authority

Absences:

Austria and Slovakia were not present and did not provide proxies.

Proxies:

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2. Workshop Priorities 2026-2028

The EMSA Single Programming Documents (SPD) contain an annual work programme covering the first year of the document, in this case 2026, as well as a multi-annual section covering a three-year period including the first year, in this case 2026-2028.

The purpose of the workshop on the three-year period 2026-2028 was to provide a clear and advanced opportunity for the Administrative Board to shape the focus of the Agency's activities over several years in the medium-term.

In addition, according to the proposal tabled by the European Commission for an amendment of the EMSA Founding Regulation, the Agency will no longer have a separate 5-year Strategy. EMSA's strategic outlook will be contained entirely in the multi-annual programming section of the SPDs (section 2).

Considering the current status of negotiations of this piece of EU legislation, one could expect to implement these new provisions from the 2026-2028 SPD onwards.

The objective of the exercise was to discuss and assess the draft strategic objectives and strategic actions for the future SPD 2026-2028 indicating clearly where the Administrative Board would like to see EMSA focusing in the mid-term.

The outcome of the discussions at the workshop would feed into EMSA usual multi-annual programming exercise over the summer in view of preparing the initial draft SPD 2026-2028.

Board Members broke out into 4 groups, each hosted by a Board Member and supported by key EMSA staff. The group discussions were framed by the following themes:

- Sustainability,
- Safety & Security,
- Surveillance & Maritime Awareness,
- Open (any other topic).

All Board Members with the exception of the four hosts rotated after each round to a new theme according to a roster determined randomly beforehand by the EMSA Secretariat.

The background documents provided for the workshop were the Draft Strategic Objectives 2026-2028, for which the Administrative Board's input was sought in order to be taken into account for drafting the future EMSA Single Programming Document 2026-2028, and the existing Section II of the Draft EMSA Single programming Document 2025-2027, which described the activities already planned for the multiannual period 2025-2027.

To conclude, the main ideas emerging from the groups were presented by the hosts. The Executive Director welcomed the input and highlighted some common threads across the different groups, notably the suggestion to introduce a system of prioritisation, the need to further raise awareness about EMSA activities, as well as strong support for continuing to export EU solutions by extending technical assistance beyond the EU, within the established criteria.

The Chairman thanked the Executive Director for organizing the workshop.

Ms Markovčić Kostelac thanked the Administrative Board Members for their active participation and confirmed that the Agency would assess the outcomes of the discussions in the context of the first drafting of the multiannual programme 2026-2028.

The Administrative Board took part in the workshop on the Priorities for 2026-2028. The outcome of the discussions at the workshop will feed into the multi-annual programming exercise over the summer in view of preparing the initial draft SPD 2026-2028.

Start of the 2nd day of the 70th EMSA Administrative Board

The restart of the 2nd day of the 70th Board meeting was preceded by a presentation on the EFTA Surveillance Authority by Ms Lemonia Tsaroucha, Senior Legal Officer, Transport and Connectivity.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

The draft minutes of the 69th EMSA Administrative Board online meeting from March 2024 were circulated on 3 April 2024 and no comments were received.

The Administrative Board approved the minutes of the last Administrative Board meeting which took place via video conference on 6 March 2024.

4. EMSA Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2023

The Chairman recalled that the Board discussed, adopted and provided its Assessment of the EMSA CAAR 2023 at the March meeting taking into account the European Court of Auditors' observations of previous years and subject to the preliminary observations of the European Court of Auditors. Following the receipt of the Court's preliminary observations on the Agency's accounts for 2023, on 24 May 2024 providing a positive opinion on the reliability of the accounts as well as on the legality and regularity of revenue and payments underlying the accounts in all material respects, the role of the Administrative Board at this meeting was to confirm its adoption and Assessment.

As usual, the accounts 2023 will be formally approved by the Board once the formal approval of the Court of Auditors becomes available in early autumn.

The Administrative Board confirmed the adoption of the EMSA Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2023 in accordance with Articles 15(2)(d) and 10(2)(b) of Regulation (EC) n° 1406/2002 as amended, and its assessment, in accordance with Article 48 of the EMSA Financial Regulation.

5. Update on Agency's activities and budget implementation

(a) General information on work programme and budget implementation

Ms Markovčić Kostelac provided an overview of the planned budget implementation for 2024, stating that the goal was to execute approximately 99% of the available financial resources, committing to maintaining the positive trend observed in recent years.

She also provided an update on the forecasted salary expenditure deficit in Title 1 amounting to 2.5 M €, compared to what was announced already in March when an expected deficit ranging from 1.5 M € to 2.3 M € had been reported.

In this respect, she mentioned that an intermediate adjustment in salaries was to materialise already in the June payslip with retroactive effect since January and another final adjustment of about +3.5% is expected to occur at year end.

The Executive Director presented a plan to cover the financial gap within the existing EMSA budget and pre-notified the Board of the future possible shift of appropriations, once the annual update on remunerations and correction coefficients are available. Further information on such transfer, possibly requiring approval of the Administrative Board, would be provided later in the year.

The relevant presentation has been made available to the Board.

The Administrative Board took note of the information provided by the Agency on General information on work programme and budget implementation.

(b) European cooperation on coast guard functions - 2024 Budget execution

The Executive Director presented to the Board an overview of ongoing activities and a complete picture of the status of implementation of the 2024 coast guard budget.

She explained the continuous focus on improvements of the IMS services, the multipurpose RPAS operations and Earth Observation services as well as the implementation of the Capacity Building activities within the context of the EMSA Academy and financed through the coast guard cooperation budget. She provided a detailed picture of the breakdown of the relevant envelope. In addition, she informed the Administrative Board that 0.76 M € and 0.43 M € in commitment and payment appropriations were earmarked for a potential transfer to Title 1 by year-end.

The Chairman invited the Chairman of the Administrative and Finance Committee to report on its discussions on the projected 2024 budget execution in this field. Mr Eric Banel confirmed a positive opinion of the Committee on the status of implementation of the overall coast guard budget envelope for 2024, and on the very positive estimated total execution both in commitment and payment appropriations.

The Administrative Board took note of the information on the European cooperation on coast guard functions 2024 Budget execution.

The relevant presentation has been made available to the Board.

The Administrative Board took note of the information provided by the Agency on the European cooperation on coast guard functions - 2024 Budget execution

(c) Relevant tenders and developments in the field of Anti-Pollution Measures

Ms Markovčić Kostelac provided detailed information on the recent developments, with 13 response vessels on stand-by service, 1 vessel in preparation phase (Norden Baltic Sea to be ready in July), 1 intermediate storage vessel, 5 EAS, 11 vessels equipped with RPAS and 7 dispersant stockpiles.

She also informed the Board on the future additional studies on alternative fuels and their accidental release into the marine environment, which will cover biofuels, ammonia, and others, with a focus on characterization, behaviour, response strategies and technical equipment.

The Executive Director also reported the donation of two sets of fence booms, stored in the EAS in Varna, to Ukraine following their request for assistance through the ERCC of floating booms and sorbents for localization and elimination of oil spills due to the sinking of two vessels and three damaged and in critical condition, with risks of pollution into the Dnieper River. The costs of this donation were borne by the Black and Caspian Sea Project (BCSEA II) following the green light from DG NEAR. A specific contract for the replacement of the booms donated had already been signed and delivery was expected shortly.

As foreseen in the SPD, options to make the toolbox future proof and adapt the existing technical and operational capacities to address new challenges were being explored, with further discussions expected to kick off at the November Board meeting.

The planned execution in this area of activities was of 100% in both commitment and payment appropriations, and included all internal transfers and a reserve of 0.48 M € in commitment appropriations and 0.81 M € in payment appropriations for a potential transfer to Title 1 by year-end.

The Chairman welcomed the donation and support to Ukraine, as well as discussions on the toolbox for the next Boards to come.

On another topic, but still relevant for 2024, the Belgian representative Ms Els Claeys updated the Board on the legislative process on the revision of the EMSA Founding Regulation on behalf of the Belgian Presidency, reporting five rounds of discussions at the Shipping Working Party in the past weeks that would be finalised during the next Presidency, following the compromise to be reached later in June.

The Commission representative (Ms Fotini Ioannidou) highlighted the Commission's concerns with the compromise against the Commission's intent to equip the Agency with a clear and futureproof list of tasks. While welcoming the fact that a general approach had been reached, she considered it of high importance that the Agency be supported by the appropriate resources and governance structures, therefore concerns would be raised in the context of the negotiations to come once the new Parliament is in place.

Mr Banel also thanked the Belgian Presidency for the compromise reached, stating the importance of the milestone.

The Chairman thanked Ms Claeys for the report on the process stating the importance of its advancement.

The Administrative Board took note of the information on the relevant tenders and developments in the field of Anti-Pollution Measures.

The relevant presentation has been made available to the Board.

The Administrative Board took note of the information provided by the Agency the relevant tenders and developments in the field of Anti-Pollution Measures

6. HR matters - Outcome of the Staff Survey

The Executive Director recalled the adoption in March 2023 of the first HR Strategy with approximately 80 planned implementing actions.

One of the actions was the launch of the first EMSA Staff Satisfaction Survey, with as overall objective to better understand the strengths and areas for improvement of the Agency.

The survey was inspired by the Commission's survey and was designed in consultation with the EMSA management and the Staff Committee. It was carried out from 8 to 26 January, had a 63% participation rate and gathered 212 qualitative comments.

In respect of **overall satisfaction**, 95% of staff members expressed positive views: 74% with a very high and 21% with a high or moderate level of satisfaction and 5% of staff members expressing a low satisfaction level.

Divided in 7 categories, the survey further gathered information on specific areas namely **organisation, position, working together, management, work environment, working methods** as well as **career & development**. 5 out of 7 areas achieved a positive outcome.

One area identified for improvement were **working methods**, with results suggesting that there was a need to focus on fostering a culture that embraces change and innovation.

Career & Development showed the weakest results, with mixed views on career opportunities, learning and development, career development and transparency of promotion processes and mobility within EMSA.

While recognising that addressing these issues would contribute to a more supportive and conducive environment for professional growth within EMSA, the Executive Director also recognised that this category would be also the most challenging taking into account a relatively small size of the Agency and its highly technical nature.

Ms Markovčić Kostelac also explained the dynamic brainstorming session with the EMSA staff that took place in late April when staff was encouraged to put forward proposals for improvement. Staff members were randomly divided into seven groups, corresponding to the categories in the survey.

At the conclusion of the brainstorming session, each rapporteur presented possible improvements for the identified focus areas. The proposals were brought back to the management to be reflected in the action plan for the implementation of the strategy.

The Executive Director further stated that the exercise would be repeated every 2 years. In the meantime, the Agency would pursue its efforts to increase the staff motivation as one of the key elements for the success of the organisation.

The Chairman first invited Mr Banel to report on the discussions held at the Administrative and Finance Committee on the outcome of the Staff Survey. Mr Banel welcomed the survey as well as the foreseen action plan to be implemented as a follow-up to the results. While highlighting the importance of internal mobility, he also stressed its challenges in middle sized organisations where bottle neck effects may arise.

Ms Martina Kohlhaas (Germany) welcomed the results of the Staff Survey and noted that it could be useful to compare them amongst other EU Agencies.

The Commission representative (Ms Fotini Ioannidou), confirmed the career management difficulties in an organisation of this scale but also the importance of appropriate follow-up for the credibility of the exercise for staff. In relation to the inter-agency mobility and echoing the statement from Germany, she recognised that, while the framework existed, inter-agency mobility was not always easy as changes of locations with families may prove difficult.

Ms Cuadra Garcia (Commission) stressed the importance of repeating the surveys every two years as per the relevant guidelines of the central services which provide for a minimum of every 3 years. While acknowledging that some sort of benchmark between Agencies could be an interesting exercise, she warned that the various questionnaires of the different Agencies were not comparable.

The Executive Director thanked the Board for the valuable comments.

The Chairman concluded the discussions and welcomed an update of the action plan. He stressed the importance of understanding the perception of staff and its motivation and looked forward to the follow-up in this matter.

The relevant presentation has been made available to the Board.

The Administrative Board took note of the information provided by the Agency on the outcome of the Staff Survey.

7. EMSA Strategy 2020-2024, Assessment and extension

The Executive Director recalled the development of the EMSA 5-year Strategy as one of her first tasks that actively involved the participation of the Administrative Board. She also recalled the commitment to conduct an assessment towards the end of the period, covering on the one hand, the **achievement of the multi-annual strategic objectives**, based on consolidated data provided yearly in the framework of the CAAR exercise on the Agency's performance indicators and outputs and the contribution of the annual activities to the strategic objectives, and on the other hand the views of **EMSA stakeholders**.

In terms of achievements of strategic objectives, overall, the data reported annually from 2020 to 2023 on the implementation of the annual work programmes and the contribution of this work to the multi-annual strategic objectives was very positive.

The challenges experienced in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021 were largely mitigated by the implementation of alternative methods and the rescheduling of activities and/or resources to **ensure ongoing support and services to stakeholders and maximum budget execution**.

Development of new methodologies for training and workshops and for remote visits and inspections, diversification and enhancement of the pollution response toolbox, development of new crisis monitoring data services, enhanced focus on digitalisation and consolidation of information are some examples. In addition to mitigating the impact of the pandemic these developments have provided lasting added value to the range, reach and quality of the Agency's services, achieved with essentially stable resources from 2020-2023.

In relation to the views of the EMSA stakeholders, the overall perception of the level of achievement of the Agency's strategic priority in each of the different areas of work was very positive, with 69% of respondents rating the level achievement as excellent or very good, 29% as good and only 2% as weak.

The overall level of satisfaction related to specific products and services was high with on average 88% strongly agreeing or agreeing to the positive impact in the relevant sphere of work, 11% partially agreeing and only 1% disagreeing.

Taken individually a few services, of those proposed for assessment, CleanSeaNet, the safety studies (CARGOSAFE & STEERSAFE), THETIS and PSC technical assistance, RPAS services including emissions monitoring, Earth Observation services, Satellite AIS coverage, Integrated Maritime Services, SafeSeaNet and RuleCheck and MAKCs stood out with 90% or above strongly agreeing or agreeing they add value to the relevant sphere of work.

Most other products and services, of those proposed for assessment, fell in the 80-90% strongly agreeing or agreeing range.

Italy and Belgium expressed satisfaction for the assessment of the EMSA 5-year Strategy.

The Commission representative (Ms Fotini Ioannidou) also expressed appreciation for the good outcome of the survey in particular with the increased number of services as well as her support for the extension of the Strategy until the new legislative basis for the Agency.

The Chairman thanked the Agency for the presentation of the assessment of the survey and confirmed the extension of the EMSA 5-year Strategy 2020-2024 until end of 2025.

The relevant presentation has been made available to the Board.

The Administrative Board took note of the results of the assessment of the EMSA 5-year Strategy 2020-2024 and extended the EMSA 5-year Strategy 2020-2024 until the Commission's legislative proposal concerning the revision of the Agency's mandate is adopted.

8. Draft Administrative Arrangements

Mr Leendert Bal, Head of Department 3 - Digital Services & Simplification - presented the new draft Service Level Agreement with EUROSTAT to define the conditions for the provision and use of EMSA data (in aggregated format and anonymized) provided by the Agency to EUROSTAT focussing on port call information. The new draft agreement represented a stronger partnership compared to the previous Memorandum of Understanding following the agreement of the Board at its 65th meeting, in November 2022. The new agreement would be valid for a period of 1 year, with all the SLA conditions automatically renewed except the technical implementation cost which will be paid by EUROSTAT during the first year.

Previous comparative analysis of EUROSTAT and EMSA data showed methodological differences and the need to analyse further the Agency's and EUROSTAT's data sources. For this purpose, EMSA and EUROSTAT services launched a study using EMSA aggregated data and the new EUROSTAT Statistical Methodology Framework contract under the coordination of EUROSTAT.

For the provision of EMSA data, a specific service would be developed by EMSA to transfer the data to EUROSTAT as automated as possible. For this development the agreement included a maximum of 30,000 € covering the cost for the technical implementation of the service, with no further costs foreseen after the implementation of the service.

The Administrative Board considered and did not object to the draft administrative arrangement with EUROSTAT, as foreseen by Article 10(2)(cc) of the Founding Regulation.

Mr Leendert Bal also presented to the Board the draft agreement with DG DIGIT for the eSign and eSeal services for the EU Seafarers' Certification Platform.

He recalled that following the approval of the project idea on the EU Platform for Seafarers' Certification at the Administrative Board meeting in March 2021, in October 2021 a Correspondence Group comprising Member States, the Commission and EMSA was established to map the needs of the Member States and identify requirements for the development of the EU Platform for Seafarers' Certification Project.

In December 2023, EMSA started the development of the first 2 modules of the system, namely Certificates Search and Verification module and eSign/eSeal module. This work was ongoing and it required integration with the DG DIGIT's standardized building-block supporting eSign/eSeal to be implemented in order to complete this phase of the project by April 2025.

The eSign/eSeal service ensured that a digital signature and seal has the same value as a hand-written signature needed for the Member States to produce and issue to the seafarer a digital certificate using the EU Platform.

The DG DIGIT eSign and eSeal service under the SLA will have a cost of 653,000 € for a period of four years.

The values for provisioning of the initial 50 signing certificates and 30 sealing certificates for the years 2024 and 2025 are already accommodated in the EMSA budget.

The EU Platform for Seafarers' Certification will complement national STCW systems by providing to each Member State the possibility to digitally sign and seal seafarers' certificates as well as make them available for verification of authenticity and validity by any interested party. The development of "one solution-serving all" is expected to result in economies of scale, enable the transition of the EU maritime sector to paperless environment (greening) and reduce the administrative burden of the competent authorities of the Member States.

In response to Poland (Ms Sonia Knobloch-Sieradzka, expert) who thanked the Agency for this important project, Mr Bal clarified that the project was available to all interested Member States.

Denmark (Ms Rikke Wetter Olufsen) also intervened in support of the project stating the importance of a genuinely digital solution for seafarers not a mere digital version of the current paperwork.

The Executive Director recalled that the Agency had previously presented the STCW certification platform project and committed to an update on the status of its realisation, including its building blocks and the obligations of the participating Member States at the November meeting.

The Commission representative (Ms Fotini Ioannidou) welcomed the agreement with DG DIGIT. She further suggested that draft administrative arrangements become part of the mandate of the Administrative and Finance Committee. The Chairman recalled that proposed changes to the mandate of the Administrative and Finance Committee are discussed as a separate agenda item at the November meeting.

The Administrative Board was also invited to consider the Draft Agreement with DG DIGIT – APPENDIX 11 to the Global SLA, for the eSign and eSeal services for the EU Seafarers' Certification Platform. Given that this draft SLA was circulated in the 2nd set of documents, the Administrative Board would consider it with the 4 weeks period foreseen by the EMSA Founding Regulation starting to count from that day. If no objection will be registered by the end of the four weeks period, on 19 June 2024, the Executive Director will be able to proceed with the signature of the SLA.

9. Status of the EMSA Draft Single Programming Document 2025-2027

The Executive Director recalled once again the cycle of the document. Since the initial DB 2025 figures provided at the November meeting, endorsed by written procedure in January, two changes had occurred:

- (1) In January 2024, the assigned revenue deriving from previous year's surpluses decreased by 403,422 € further to the calculation of the Budget outturn of 2023, resulting in an increase of the EFTA contribution and, of the total revenue by 14,442 €. The total revenue was set to 104,274,121 €.
- (2) In May 2024, the actual EFTA proportionality factor for the 2025 Budget had been provided and was lower than the estimated value applied on 31 January 2024 (2.79% rather than 3.58%) with a negative impact on the total revenue of 788,151 €.

In conclusion, the DB2025 was set to 103,485,970 € which represented a decrease of - 0,74% compared to the figures presented in November last year and endorsed by written procedure in January.

The EU Subsidy also included 291,000 € for FuelEU Maritime. In addition, 9,739,000 € were proposed in relation to the revision of the EMSA Founding Regulation and the new Maritime Safety package.

The Agency was in the process of assessing the best option to absorb this decrease, most probably in Title 3.

Ms Markovčić Kostelac presented also the expected project financed resources stating that these amounts were indicative and may change.

In terms of the Agency's establishment plan, the planning reflected expected additional human resources as from 2025 that were foreseen under the revision of the EMSA Founding Regulation and the maritime package Directives:

- in 2025 there will be a total of 229 staff (+16AD and 1AST) of which 5 for the new tasks of EMSA mandate and 12 for the new tasks of the maritime safety package

- in 2026 there will be a total of 238 staff (+8AD and 1AST) of which 4 for the new tasks of EMSA mandate and 5 for the new tasks of the maritime safety package
- in 2027 there will be a total of 239 staff (+1AD) 1 for the new tasks of EMSA mandate.

In addition to the establishment plan, the full EMSA staff body also counts Contract Agents and Seconded National Experts, both EU subsidy and project financed. Under the EU subsidy for 2025 the Agency plans a total of 37 CAs and 18 SNEs which included 6 CAs foreseen under the revision of the EMSA Founding Regulation (intended for Maritime Support Officers).

In addition, 40 CAs were expected for the project financed activities which included 8 Contract Agents for the next phase of the CISE project.

Mr Banel reported the discussions held at the Administrative and Finance Committee and conveyed its positive opinion on the resource-related aspects of the document.

The Commission representative (Ms Fotini Ioannidou) announced the Commission formal opinion on the document as per deadline of 1 July, which was already going through the Inter-Service Consultation and thanked the Agency in advance for incorporating the comments in the document upon their receipt.

She also thanked the Agency for preparing ahead for the new legislative tasks in the framework of the Maritime Safety Package, recalling nevertheless that the process needed to be finalised before the commitment of funds for the recruitment of relevant staff. She also highlighted the Important role of the Agency in relation to sanctions in support to the Member States. She further stated that the Agency's support to FIT for 55 was crucial, especially on the setting up of the data bases but also in its support at the IMO level on the sustainability aspects, in particular in the area of greenhouse gases, which would be expressed in the Commission opinion.

Ms Cuadra Garcia (Commission) also thanked the Agency for already including the Maritime Safety Package staff but stated that a cautious approach was needed until the legislative process is finalised, welcoming in this context the planned redeployment of current staff for certain tasks and the reinforcement offered by project financed activities.

The relevant presentation has been made available to the Board.

The Administrative Board took note of the information provided by the Agency on the latest operational and budgetary developments with potential impact on the Draft Single Programming Document 2025-2027 and the corresponding Draft Budget and Establishment Plan for 2025, as well as information on planned contract agents and seconded national experts under the EU subsidy and on expected project financed human and financial resources and was invited to provide written comments by 1 July 2024.

10. EMSA Capacity Building Activities

Manuela Tomassini recalled that the highlights of the Capacity Building activities for 2024 were already provided under agenda item 5b, with the presentation related to the Coast Guard budget execution, which financed many of the Capacity Building activities, such as the different learning services and several tools.

The list of proposed learning services for 2025 was circulated in the 2nd set of documents as the outcome of the Training Needs Analysis foreseen by the EMSA Academy Quality Management System, taking into consideration all the requests that were received from the Member States, EMSA Business Units as well as ENP/IPA beneficiaries through their respective Steering Committees, following a bottom-up approach.

The Chairman invited the Member States to comment on the learning services for 2025, having in mind that their representatives in the Consultative Network for Technical assistance (CNTA) had already discussed and endorsed the list, and subsequently endorse the list of services planned for 2025.

Poland (Ms Sonia Knobloch-Sieradzka, expert) highlighted the role of EMSA in Capacity Building and thanked the Agency on its excellent work, in particular in the area of maritime cybersecurity and SAR, which was a proof that EMSA responded to needs and requests made by the Member States. She further welcomed learning services related to the extension of the ETS to maritime transport and FuelEU Maritime, as well as in support of the implementation of the new Ship Source Pollution Directive.

Belgium (Ms Els Claeys) expressed satisfaction for the new learning service on alternative fuels and already expressed interest for a session at regional level. In reply to a question on the new short course on Duly Authorised Officers within the context of Maritime Security, it was clarified that the learning objectives will be defined in close consultation with the so-called Subject Matter Experts and MARSEC.

Finland (Mr Mikko Simola, expert) expressed the wish to have a higher priority assigned to the course on Ship Source Pollution and to the one on HNS. EMSA clarified that the priority is assigned in line with a pre-defined methodology that takes into consideration the number of requests received and the number of participants expected.

The Administrative Board endorsed the proposed learning services for 2025.

The Administrative Board took note of the update on the activities of the EMSA Academy and the list of delivered and planned learning services for 2024 and endorsed the proposed learning services for 2025 (Annex III).

11. Election of the Deputy Chairmanship of the Agency

The Chairman recalled the information received from the Deputy Chairman Mr Benito Núñez Quintanilla on 24 April 2024 that he would cease to be a member of the Administrative Board with effect from the 70th Board meeting as from which the office of Deputy Chairperson would be vacant. For this reason, it was necessary to elect a new Deputy Chairperson from among the Administrative Board members.

The Executive Director recalled that the current Chairperson, Mr Wojciech Zdanowicz (Poland) and Deputy Chairperson, Mr Benito Núñez Quintanilla (Spain) were elected at the 68th meeting in November 2023 and assumed office on 4 December 2023 for their first three-year term, expiring on 3 December 2026.

On 30 April 2024 the Executive Director informed the Administrative Board of this situation and invited the members of the Administrative Board who may be interested in this position to inform her by 15 May 2024 in order to prepare the election at this Board meeting.

Mr Eric Banel (France) was the only member who lodged his interest for the position.

In line with the provisions of the Rules of Procedure (Annex 1), the term of office of the newly elected Deputy Chairperson shall be valid for the remainder of the predecessor's term of office, expiring latest in December 2026, subject to remaining a member of the Administrative Board.

Mr Banel first praised the contribution of Mr Núñez Quintanilla both as Deputy Chairman and the Chairman of the Administrative and Finance Committee and recalled his own career alongside the Agency and its evolution throughout the years with the Member States. He further stated that he would be proud to continue this work with the Chairman and the Executive Director.

The Chairman confirmed the Board had an excellent candidate for the Deputy Chairman position and suggested Mr Banel be elected by acclamation. The suggestion was accepted by the Administrative Board

and Mr Eric Banel was elected Deputy Chairman of the EMSA Administrative Board until December 2026, subject to remaining a member of the Administrative Board.

He further confirmed that Mr Banel would remain the Chairman of the Administrative and Finance Committee.

The Executive Director congratulated Mr Banel both on behalf of the EMSA staff and on her personal behalf.

The Administrative Board elected Mr Eric Banel Deputy Chairman of the EMSA Administrative Board by acclamation.

12. Appointment of the Accounting Officer

The Executive Director recalled that revised documents for this agenda item which were circulated on 3 June. She recalled the appointment of the current Accounting Officer Mr Davide Mola in July 2018 and his communicated plans for departure on unpaid leave from 16 July 2024 until 15 July 2025.

In order to ensure business continuity and taking into account the available expertise at EMSA, it was proposed to proceed with an internal transfer to fill the position of Accounting Officer. The CV of the proposed staff member – Ms Katalin Duarte – had been provided in the 2nd set of documents.

Mr Banel reported on the discussions held at the Administrative and Finance Committee, thanking Mr Mola for his work. After having heard Ms Duarte's at its meeting on 3 June, the Committee was able to provide a positive opinion to the Board on her appointment as Accounting Officer.

The Commission representative Ms Cuadra Garcia also wished the best to Mr Mola in his future endeavours as well as to Ms Duarte in her new functions, stating that this was an excellent example of internal mobility which is very important for the motivation of staff. She further recalled that this position required full independence which was the reason the Board was the appointing authority in this particular case.

Ms Duarte introduced herself and her past experience, both in the private sector and EU Institutions.

The Chairman confirmed the appointment of Ms Katalin Duarte as Accounting Officer as from 16 July 2024.

The Administrative Board appointed Ms Katalin Duarte Accounting Officer of the Agency as from 16 July 2024.

13. Adoption of the list of "A" items

The Administrative Board approved/took note/adopted of the following "A" items en bloc, following the report and positive recommendation of the Administrative and Finance Committee:

The Chairman of the Administrative and Finance Committee, Mr Eric Banel, reported that the necessary quorum for the meeting had been in place with the participation in the meeting of the representatives from Belgium, France, Poland, Sweden, Germany and the Commission. Relevant EMSA staff members and management were also present. The Committee had reviewed all the "A" points and could recommend that the Administrative Board approve, take note or adopt them as appropriate, "en bloc".

13a EMSA Financial Statement 2023 – approved

The Agency presented the accounts for 2023 and the summary of the Financial Statement for 2023:

The total balance for the year was 68.4 M (-0.23%) mainly due to a decrease in equipment (-2.4 M) and a decrease in cash (-2 M).

The economic outturn of the year was 0.09 M (vs. -3.1 M in 2022) and the total revenues were up +0.89% due to the increase in Commission subsidy and prefinancing for project financed activities (+1.9 M) which together are representing 99% of the total revenues.

The budgetary execution for C1 (credits of the year) was again high: 99,94% of commitment execution and 98.44% of payment execution.

There were no changes in the documents compared to the March meeting.

The ECA preliminary observations were received on 24 May and circulated on 28 May 2024.

These preliminary observations on the annual accounts 2023 contained one observation which did not affect the legality or regularity of the annual accounts or underlying transactions.

13b 2024 Appropriations cashed – took note

Andrea Tassoni, Head of the Executive Office, informed the Administrative and Finance Committee on the 2024 Appropriations cashed for a total of € 8,272,828 that had been received since March.

Further updates would be provided at the next meeting and the final amounts will be recorded and adopted by the Administrative Board through the final budget amendment after 31st December.

13c Monitoring of findings and recommendations from internal & external audits & EMSA follow up – took note

The Agency provided the usual summary table showing all the recommendations that were issued during the last two years. At the current moment, all the previous recommendations had been properly addressed and closed. The Agency had no pending actions in relation to audit.

Also, the draft report of the ECA was issued in May. The draft report contains one finding which does not affect the legality or regularity of the annual accounts. The Agency, in close cooperation with the Commission, was in the process of preparing its reply which will be reflected in the final report. The final report will be issued before the next Administrative Board meeting.

The Administrative and Finance Committee congratulated the Agency in relation to the follow up on audits.

13d Implementing Rules to the Staff Regulation empowering the Executive Director to request the Commission's agreement on the adoption of implementing rules by the Administrative Board concerning the probationary period, management trial period and the annual appraisal of the Executive Director of EMSA – adopted.

EMSA has in place a Decision of the Administrative Board of 20th of November 2009 concerning the appraisal of the Executive Director.

The afore-mentioned decision was outdated in several aspects as it preceded the latest revision of the Staff Regulations which entered into force since 1 January 2014 and in particular the six-month

probationary period foreseen under the current rules should be extended to nine months, in line with the situation of all other temporary agents under Article 14.1 of the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants.

Therefore, it was necessary to propose an amendment to the current Decision.

The Staff Committee had been consulted and agreed on the proposed way forward.

Request was made to the Administrative Board to mandate the Executive Director to request the Commission's agreement on the adoption of new ED appraisal rules.

The Commission requested that the future appraisal rules contain general references to the Founding Regulation, to allow for the foreseen new Founding Regulation, and specify that the number of members of the Reporting Panel.

Once approval for DG HR was obtained the future appraisal rules of the Executive Director will be presented for Administrative Board approval, to be applicable for the next Executive Director.

14. Any Other Business

None tabled.

Dates of next EMSA's Administrative Board Meeting:

(subject to availability of the final Hungarian Presidency Council calendar of meetings)

Administrative and Finance Committee: Monday 25 November 2024 morning, online meeting

Administrative Board: Wednesday 27 pm and Thursday 28 am November 2024

Signed:



Wojciech Zdanowicz

Chairman of the EMSA Administrative Board

Done at Lisbon, 27 November 2024

List participants

70th Meeting of the Administrative Board, Lisbon, 5-6 June 2024

MEMBER STATES	
BELGIUM	
Els Claeys	Board Member
BULGARIA	
Ventsislav Ivanov	Board Member
CROATIA	
Siniša Orlić	Board Member
Toni Maričević	Alternate Member
CYPRUS	
Costas Costaras	Alternate Member
DENMARK	
Rikke Wetter Olufsen	Board Member
ESTONIA	
Kristjan Truu	Board Member
FINLAND	
Juha-Matti Korsi	Board Member
Mikko Simola	Expert
Eero Hokkanen	Expert
FRANCE	
Eric Banel	Board Member – Chairman of the Administrative and Finance Committee
Anne Legregeois	Expert
GERMANY	
Martina Kohlhaas	Expert
GREECE	
Andreas Spanos	Board Member
HUNGARY	
Csaba Bellyei	Board Member
IRELAND	
Eamonn Kelly	Board Member

Noelle Waldron	Alternate Member
ITALY	
Enrico Castioni	Board Member
LATVIA	
Jānis Krastiņš	Board Member
LITHUANIA	
Linas Kasparavicius	Board Member
LUXEMBOURG	
Marc Siuda	Alternate Member
MALTA	
Fritz Farrugia	Alternate Member
POLAND	
Wojciech Zdanowicz	Board Member - Chairman of the EMSA Administrative Board
Sonia Knobloch-Sieradzkaa	Expert
PORTUGAL	
José Simão	Board Member
Paolo Pamplona	Alternate Member
ROMANIA	
Gabriel Trafandir	Board Member
Lacrima Hornet	Alternate Member
SLOVENIA	
Jadran Klinec	Board Member
Aleš Rotar	Alternate Member
SPAIN	
Benito Núñez Quintanilla	Board Member – Deputy Chairman of the EMSA Administrative Board
Gustavo Santana Hernández	Expert
SWEDEN	
Pernilla Wallin	Board Member

ESA - EFTA SURVEILLANCE AUTHORITY	
Lemonia Tsaroucha	Alternate Member
EUROPEAN COMMISSION	
Magda Kopczynska	Board Member
Anne Montagnon	Board Member
Fotini Ioannidou	Alternate Member
Barbara Sellier	Alternate Member
Cristina Cuadra Garcia	Alternate Member
Kristel Jurado	Expert
EFTA STATES	
ICELAND	
Jon Gunnar Jonsson	Board Member
NORWAY	
Alf Tore Sørheim	Board Member
PROFESSIONAL SECTOR	
Thomas Kazakos	Board Member
EMSA	
Maja Markovčić Kostelac	Executive Director
Manuela Tomassini	Head of Department 1, Sustainability
Leendert Bal	Head of Department 2, Safety, Security & Surveillance
Peter Kirov	Head of Department 3, Digital Services & Simplification
Dominika Lempicka-Fichter	Head of Department 4, Corporate Services
Andrea Tassoni	Head of Unit Executive Office, Board Secretariat
Frédéric Hébert	Head of Unit 1.1
Mario Mifsud	Head of Unit 1.2
Georgios Christofi	Head of Unit 1.3
Santiago Encabo	Head of Unit 2.1
Lukša Čičovački	Head of Unit 3.1
Cristina Romay-Lopez	Head if Unit 4.1

Andrea Iber	Head of Unit 4.2
Tom Van Hees	Internal Control Coordinator
Michael Risley	Chairman Staff Committee
Simone Balboni	Co-Chairman EMSA Staff Committee
Davide Mola	Accountant
Katalin Duarte	Senior Financial and Procurement Assistant
Marco Ingrosso	Budget and Finance Specialist – Planning and Monitoring
Soraya Obura	Senior Assistant for Planning and Reporting – Planning and Monitoring
Selena Matic	Senior Administrative Assistant – Planning and Monitoring

