

BOARD RE-ELECTS WILLEM DE RUITER

The 19th meeting of the Administrative Board took place on 28th November in Lisbon. During the meeting, the Board unanimously endorsed the proposal put forward by the European Commission to renew the mandate of EMSA Executive Director, Willem de Ruiter. His second five year term will begin on 16th March 2008. The Board also adopted the Agency's accounts for the 2006 financial year, following approval by the Court of Auditors (certification without reserve). After an extensive discussion, the EMSA 2008 Work Programme and the related budget and establishment plan were also adopted. The Board noted that the projects on the EU LRIT Data Centre, SafeSeaNet, CleanSeaNet and the New Information System for Port State Control will represent some of the major challenges for EMSA in 2008.

GALP MARINE'S FIRST SPILL EXERCISE



On 15th November, within the framework of the Portuguese "Blue Waters 2007" exercise, the EMSA contracted bunker tanker *Galp Marine* (based in Sines, Portugal) took part in its first oil spill exercise at sea, together with tugs and Portuguese naval vessels. The exercise, which was led by the Portuguese Navy, allowed the *Galp Marine* and her crew, together with the supporting tugs, to demonstrate their ability to use specialised equipment such as booms and sweeping arms to remove pollutants from the surface of the sea. The exercise was completed as planned under the watchful eyes of observers from the national maritime authorities and EMSA.

SECOND EMSA HNS WORKSHOP

The new EMSA Action Plan for HNS Pollution Preparedness and Response was presented to Member States at the second EMSA workshop on accidental chemical pollution on 21-22nd November. Among the participants were experts from Member State maritime administrations, the IMO, the US Coastguard and industry. The event included comprehensive presentations on risk

assessment methodologies, case studies and recent developments relating to preparedness and response options both within and outside the EU. Speakers also provided detailed accounts of resources, expertise and initiatives in the private sector. The participants concluded that such workshops are of significant benefit in terms of the exchange of information and best practice relating to the response to hazardous and noxious substances.

EMSA AT CIVIL PROTECTION FORUM

On 22-23rd November, as a key player in the EU civil protection network, EMSA participated in the Second Civil Protection Forum in Brussels. The event was organised by the European Commission Directorate General for the Environment, and allowed participants to discuss ways of improving EU emergency response capabilities. EMSA participated in the associated exhibition, and took the opportunity to present its overall role in the field of marine pollution response, and in particular, its network of contracted oil recovery vessels.

PIONNEER IB MATTHIESEN RETIRES



Ib Matthiesen (left) and Willem de Ruiter

Ib Matthiesen, head of EMSA's Safety Assessments & Inspections Unit, and the Agency's first ever head of unit (he arrived in 2003), retired this month. At his farewell drink, Executive Director Willem de Ruiter recalled that, among many other things, Ib took charge of the Agency's first port state control and classification society inspections in 2003. He also highlighted his role as chairman of the high level panel on double hull tankers. Ib now intends to spend most of his time in the south of France, and has declared his intention to remain one of the newsletter's most faithful readers.

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