

Draft Workshop Report

13th Mediterranean AIS Expert Working Group

Held in Rome on

17 November 2015

Draft version

Date: 9 February 2016

Introduction

The 13th Workshop for Mediterranean Member States, Expert Working Group (EWG) on the Mediterranean AIS Regional Exchange System (MAREΣ) took place in Rome on 17th November 2015. All the documents for the meeting had been circulated prior to the meeting and made available through the EMSA website at: <http://emsa.europa.eu/workshops-a-events/188-workshops.html>

The meeting was attended by delegations from: Romania, Slovenia, Croatia, Malta and Italy; apologies were received from Bulgaria and UK for not being able to take part.

Representatives from Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan and Israel attended the meeting as observers due to their participation in SAFEMED III project. Mr Lazaros Aichmalotidis of EMSA chaired the meeting.

The list of participants is attached as **Annex 1**. A copy of the Agenda is included as **Annex 2**.

Objectives

The Chairman introduced the main objectives of the meeting as follows:

- Present the activities carried out through the intersessional period;
- MAREΣ Member states and the SafeMed beneficiaries to update the EWG about the current status of AIS developments;
- Discuss about the Adriatic Ionian initiative and a proposal from Italy on how to progress the regional cooperation in the area based on the MAREΣ infrastructure;
- Present the request of UK for the inclusion of Gibraltar in the MAREΣ exchange of AIS data;
- Discuss and approve the revised terms of reference of MAREΣ.

Workshop Programme

I. Agenda Item 1: Opening of meeting and approval of agenda

Rear Admiral Piero Pellizzari Head of the ICT and Traffic Monitoring Department of the Italian Coast Guard welcomed the participants and congratulated the Group for the achievements. He thanked the participants for their commitment and expressed his conviction that the works of EWG could contribute in increasing the safety of navigation and optimizing the maritime traffic in the region.

Mr Lazaros Aichmalotidis thanked Italy on behalf of the Group for hosting the meeting and reviewed the objectives. The Group **approved** the proposed agenda.

II. Agenda Item 2: Wrap up of previous meeting - approval of the minutes

EMSA introduced the minutes of the previous meeting, noting that no further comments had been received. The EWG **approved** the minutes.

III. Agenda Item 3: MAREΣ network activity and monitoring

Italy informed the participants about the general activities carried out by MAREΣ throughout the intersessional period (from October 2014 to September 2015) in terms of: amount of vessels monitored per month, AIS information gathered from each participating Country, network malfunctions and incidents.

Italy highlighted that the number of detected vessels increased during the summer period due to the duck effect; this boosts the AIS radio coverage. Italy mentioned as example that its base stations can detect vessels till the straits of Gibraltar and the station of Cyprus till the Red Sea.

Italy mentioned that MAREΣ provides the possibility to increase the standard update rate of 6 minutes to 1 minute. **Italy** reminded that **Spain** and **France** make use of this functionality and invited **Slovenia** and **Croatia** to test it as well. **Both countries replied positively** and stated their readiness to test it (**Action Point 1**).

Malta asked if they should maintain the XML AIS connection to SSN in parallel to the AIS streaming interface through MAREΣ. EMSA reminded the decision of the HLSG which recommends the phasing out the AIS XML interface.

Romania mentioned that they receive alerts from the MSS when they do not send AIS through XML. **EMSA** promised to investigate the case and report to Romania (**Action Point 2**).

Jordan reported a problem they experience in relation to their connection to MAREΣ (they face difficulties when trying to re-enter the application after losing the internet connection). **Italy** suggested Jordan to check their infrastructure for possible malfunctions.

Italy mentioned that MAREΣ detected 100 network malfunctions (incidents), involving national proxies and requiring a human intervention in order to restore normal operations. The reported incidents were caused mainly due to breakdowns in communications between the MAREΣ core application and the national proxies.

Italy noted that MAREΣ monitored the availability of the links, including the connection between the national systems and MAREΣ, as well as between MAREΣ and the SSN central application. The total downtime was 2.059 hours and the malfunctions processing time varied from 3.67 to 528 hours per month. The number show that the average times to recovery the incidents is still high.

Italy reported minor problems related to the connection of the MAREΣ with SSN and mentioned that EMSA does not send the “keep alive” message. **EMSA** promised to investigate the issue and report to Italy (**Action Point 3**).

IV. Agenda item 4: MAREΣ AIS status

The MAREΣ Member states presented the status of the AIS in their respective countries as follows:

Italy: 63 Base Stations (BS) in operation; two additional stations are planned for 2016 to reinforce the coverage in the Adriatic and in Sicily.

Malta: 4 BS in operation; BS and the national server were upgraded.

Croatia: 18 BS in operation and 4 additional planned to be installed by the end of November.

Slovenia: 2 dual BS operation in operation; Slovenia plans to comply with the comment block features.

Romania: 6 BS in operation; maybe updated next year.

V. Agenda item 5: Status of AIS at sub-regional level

Italy on behalf of **Montenegro** reported the successful implementation of the national VTMISS. The project includes 3 BS covering the entire coast.

EMSA mentioned that the Agency is in contact with **Albania** working on the possibility of sharing the AIS information with MAREΣ; the process needs some more time.

Italy presented the arrangements made in MAREΣ that enable the sharing/exchange of AIS data between the states at sub-regional level.

VI. Agenda Item 6: The Adriatic-Ionian initiative

Italy presented the current status of the Adriatic-Ionian initiative project and possible ideas for developing the MAREΣ platform for the purposes of the initiative.

Italy proposed to study the feasibility of a Common Adriatic-Ionian Vessel Traffic Monitoring and Information System development in order to reduce administrative burden and unnecessary duplication of data flows collected by national VTMISS infrastructure as well as to implement a new ADRIREP. The objective of the proposal is to ensure that data providers submit information only once and the information submitted is available to the national VTMISS).

The common Adriatic - Ionian VTMISS could be based on the Adriatic virtual sub-regional server of MAREΣ platform (possibly extended to Greece) in order to integrate all maritime traffic information collected by EU and national systems (i.e. T-AIS, S-AIS, LRIT, VMS) as well as to provide services to the Adriatic NCA (e.g. ADRIREP MRS, SSN port notification and incident reporting interface, BWM DSS, etc.). It would have to be implemented with no impact on the provision of the existing MAREΣ functionalities to the participating MSs.

The meeting **agreed** that the Adriatic-Ionian initiative is an important project that can be developed using the existing functionalities of MAREΣ and thus to support regional cooperation.

The countries concerned (Italy, Slovenia and Croatia) agreed to organize a meeting to define the next steps and an implementation plan with the participation of EMSA. The meeting will take place after March 2016 (**Action Point 4**).

VII. Agenda item 7: SAFEMED III project status

EMSA illustrated the status of the SAFEMED III project and the status of SLAs signed between EMSA, Italy and the SAFEMED III beneficiary Countries. The Group was informed about future steps to be taken towards SAFEMED IV.

Morocco mentioned that they have signed the SLA.

VIII. Agenda item 8: SAFEMED III – Status of AIS

The SAFEMED III countries presented information on the status of the AIS in their respective countries as follows:

Jordan: one BS in operation in Aqaba; Jordan plans to install 3 additional BS in the coming 6 months.

Tunisia: an AIS network has been already developed by the Navy but the Ministry of Transport will develop its own for civilian purposes. One (1) BS should be put in place by February 2016 while 2 additional BS should be provided by EMSA through the SAFEMED III project. Tunisia mentioned that 5 stations will be needed to cover their entire coast. EMSA will explore the possibilities of providing the additional 3 BS (**Action Point 5**).

Israel: already have in place a network ready to be connected but no date was mentioned. Israel asked if EMSA could provide satellite images to Israel for detecting small boats approaching their area of responsibility. EMSA mentioned that this request is outside the scope of the MAREΣ EWG.

Morocco: 14 BS network are in operation with some problems with the connections of the BS to the national server. The SLA is signed and sent to EMSA.

The meeting **noted** the information provided.

IX. Agenda item 9: Status and developments of other regional AIS servers

Norway presented the status of the North Atlantic and the North Sea AIS Regional server.

Norway presented the particularities of the North Atlantic regional server highlighting the inclusion of Satellite AIS data collected via the Norwegian satellites. The collection of the satellite AIS data enables the North Atlantic regional participating countries to monitor a wider sea area including the Arctic Sea.

Norway invited Italy to share relevant information about the tools used by MAREΣ to automatically produce statistics. **Italy** mentioned that the statistics are produced by querying the MAREΣ database and promised to provide the relevant information on the database structure and the queries used to Norway (**Action Point 6**).

X. Agenda Item 10: Connection of Gibraltar to MAREΣ

EMSA introduced the background of the request related to the inclusion of Gibraltar in MAREΣ and the request of UK for connecting Gibraltar to the MAREΣ AIS Regional server.

The Gibraltar Port Authority intends to remove the AIS XML connection to SSN and connect their AIS notification data feed to the MAREΣ Regional AIS Server instead.

Italy mentioned that the Italian Coast Guard technical team commenced the technical preparatory work and could activate the link when the approval should be granted by the group.

The meeting **approved** the request of UK for connecting Gibraltar to the MAREΣ AIS Regional server.

XI. Agenda Item 11: New Terms of Reference of the MAREΣ EWG

EMSA presented background information about the setting-up of the AIS EWG and the new Terms of Reference of the MAREΣ EWG. The ToR reflect the existing possibilities of MAREΣ geographical expansion (e.g. to SAFEMED countries) and the potential use of MAREΣ to support the users in the area of the environment (by integrating MAREΣ with the EMSA oil spill monitoring system CleanSeaNet and the national oil spill models operating in the MAREΣ region).

The draft of the new Terms of Reference of the MAREΣ EWG were presented and discussed. The meeting **approved** the ToR.

XII. Agenda Item 12: Any other business

The provisional date of the next EWG meeting is October/November 2016.

Annexes

Annex 1 – List of participants

Annex 2 – Workshop Agenda

Annex 1 – List of participants



European Maritime Safety Agency

MAREΣ

AIS Mediterranean Regional Server - 13th EWG Meeting
- Rome, 17th November 2015 -

List of participants

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Annex 2 – Meeting Agenda

Agenda: 13th Mediterranean AIS Expert Working Group meeting

Coast Guard Headquarters, Viale dell' Arte 16 – Rome, Italy, 17 November 2015

Tuesday, 17 November 2015

Time	Agenda Item	Speakers
MAREΣ EWG meeting		
09:00	Registration and coffee	
09:30	Opening of meeting and approval of agenda	EMSA/Italy
09:45	Wrap up of previous meeting/approval of minutes	EMSA
10:00	MAREΣ network activity and monitoring	Italy
11:00	Coffee break	
11:20	MAREΣ AIS status	MAREΣ Member states
12:00	Status of AIS at sub-regional level	Montenegro, Albania
12:15	The Adriatic-Ionian Initiative	Italy
12:30	SAFEMED III project status <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Status of SLAs signed by EMSA, Italy and the SAFEMED Countries - Future steps to SAFEMED IV 	EMSA
13:00	Lunch break	
14:30	SAFEMED III – Status of AIS	SAFEMED countries
14:50	Status and developments of other regional AIS servers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HELCOM and North Sea AIS EWG (Denmark) - North Atlantic AIS EWG (Norway) 	Denmark Norway
15:10	Connection of Gibraltar to MAREΣ	EMSA/UK
15:30	New Terms of Reference of the MAREΣ EWG	All
16:15	Coffee break	
16:30	Any other business	All
17:00	End of meeting	

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