

POLISH MINISTER VISITS EMSA



Polish Minister of Maritime Economy Rafał Wiechecki (left) with EMSA Executive Director Willem de Ruiter

On 19th June, Mr Rafał Wiechecki Minister of Maritime Economy of the Republic of Poland, paid a visit to the Agency. During the visit, Executive Director Willem de Ruiter presented the EMSA work programme and general activities, with a particular focus on the development of SafeSeaNet and of the STCW seafarer database. In response, Mr Wiechecki presented the position of the Polish government on maritime safety.

ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD ADOPTS 2006 ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

The Administrative Board discussed and adopted the EMSA Annual Activity Report 2006 at its 18th meeting on 12-13th June. The Board acknowledged the Agency's achievements during the year that it relocated to Lisbon and adopted the 2006 accounts (pending certification without reserve by the European Court of Auditors - ECA). The final ECA report will be available in the autumn.

GREEN LIGHT FOR HNS ACTION PLAN

The Administrative Board also adopted the EMSA Action Plan for Hazardous and Noxious Substances (HNS) at its June meeting. The plan provides a concise overview of existing structures for marine HNS pollution response at national (Member State), regional, and international levels. It includes information on seaborne HNS transportation and discusses the potential hazards and risks. Response options are also discussed and illustrated, taking into account case studies on actual HNS incidents. The complete HNS Action Plan can be found on the EMSA website at: www.emsa.europa.eu. The adoption of the plan allows EMSA to advance its activities in

the field and to strengthen existing EU level preparedness and response capabilities. This comes at a good time as the OPRC-HNS Protocol entered into force on 14th June 2007.

EMSA AT "GASCOGNE 2007" EXERCISE

On 21st June EMSA took part in the "Gasconne 2007" anti-pollution exercise. The exercise involved French, Spanish and EMSA vessels and other resources in a simulated tanker accident and oil spill off Biarritz in the south-east of the Bay of Biscay. Twelve oil-recovery vessels and five aircraft from France and Spain took part in the exercise, which was undertaken within the framework of the Biscaye Plan. The EMSA-chartered pollution response vessel *Ile-de-Bréhat* was involved in the oil recovery part of the programme. EMSA also contracted the tanker *Seniority* on an *ad hoc* basis to evaluate the possibilities for the transhipment of recovered oil to a lightering tanker at sea.



Lightering tanker *Seniority*

NO MORE ORGANOTIN COMPOUNDS ON SHIPS

From 1st January 2008, all ships which trade through EU ports (irrespective of their flag) will be required to comply with EU Regulation 782/2003 on the Prohibition of Organotin Compounds on Ships. This means that vessels with an active TBT coating will no longer be allowed to enter Community ports from that date. In order to assist the European Commission in preparing draft modifications to the regulation, EMSA organised a workshop involving experts from Member States on 14th May. The main aims were to discuss possible measures which would allow ships flying the flag of a third country to demonstrate their compliance with the Regulation requirements, and to discuss appropriate procedures for the adoption of the associated port state control (PSC) requirements.

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