

**LATEST SEAFARER EDUCATION AUDITS**

*Students at engineering classes in Sri Lanka*

During November and December, EMSA teams (comprising two inspectors each) visited Sri Lanka, Egypt and Morocco to verify the ways in which these countries are implementing the STCW Convention. None of these countries have yet had their maritime education and training systems recognised at Community level. The mission to Sri Lanka involved the inspection of the maritime administration in Colombo, together with three education and training institutions located close to Colombo and one institution located in the southern city of Galle. Due to the present political instability in the country, the visit took place only after the EMSA team was ensured that all the possible safety measures were in place. The visits to Egypt and Morocco comprised inspections of the maritime administrations and maritime colleges in Alexandria and Casablanca, respectively.

**ACTIVE YEAR FOR SAFESEANET**

The SafeSeaNet team organised its second 2006 general workshop in November at the end of a programme comprising two general workshops, respective preparatory meetings, one SafeSeaNet training session and two regional workshops. At present, 19 Member States plus Norway and Iceland are actively involved in the project. 10 of these are at the operational stage (Belgium, Germany, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden), 5 are in the commissioning stage (Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Malta), 5 are in the test phase (Cyprus, Denmark, Greece, Iceland, Latvia) and 2 are in the preparatory stage (Estonia, United Kingdom). The system has grown exponentially in terms of operational transactions (May 2005 - 3,563 transactions; October 2005 - 243,843 transactions; October 2006 - 863,790 transactions). Additionally, 19,960 ships were registered in the data base in November 2006.

**WILLEM DE RUITER AT MARITIME SAFETY CONFERENCE**

Willem de Ruyter was invited by the French Préfet Maritime (the national government representative for the Atlantic Coast) to take part in a regional conference entitled "New Tools for Maritime Safety," which was held in Brest on 14<sup>th</sup> December. While there, he took the opportunity to present the different tasks of the Agency, with a special focus on the SafeSeaNet project. EMSA presentations were also given on the chartering of anti-pollution vessels and the future role of EMSA in the provision of satellite services.

**TRAINING FOR NEWCOMERS**

During December, EMSA organised the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> sessions in its series on 'Training for Newcomers in EU Maritime Legislation.' The first session took place on 5-6<sup>th</sup> December, and involved 27 EU Member State participants, while the second was organised on 13-14<sup>th</sup> December for 16 participants from Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia and Turkey. The sessions are run under the EMSA technical assistance programme and are targeted at officials who have recently commenced working within their national administrations. The objective is to provide participants with an overview of EU maritime legislation, the associated issues and the role of EMSA.

**EMSA EXTERNAL EVALUATION**

On 24<sup>th</sup> November, the Administrative Board discussed and approved the preparatory actions for the external evaluation of EMSA. This is the first step that will allow the Administrative Board to commission an independent external evaluation on the implementation of the EMSA founding regulation and aims to assess the impact of the Agency and its working practices, as required after 5 years of existence. Led by Vice-chairman Mr Francis André Vallat, a working group consisting of representatives of the Commission, Greece, Finland, the Netherlands, Germany and France met for the first time on 11<sup>th</sup> December to prepare the draft terms of reference for the independent external evaluation. These terms of reference will be presented at the next meeting of the Administrative Board. The results of the evaluation may also influence future activities of the Agency and the report is due to be finalised in 2008.

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