COAST GUARD HANDBOOK: MEETING WITH MEMBER STATE REPRESENTATIVES

On 29 January, a kick-off meeting got underway for the development of a Handbook on European Cooperation on Coast Guard Functions. This handbook is the follow up from the 2016 amendments to the Founding Regulations of EFCA, EMSA and Frontex and is created in the context of interagency cooperation to provide support to Member State organisations tasked with coast guard functions. Some 32 member state experts, appointed by the administrative board members, attended the kick-off workshop in Lisbon. Also in attendance were representatives from the European Commission (DG HOME, MARE and MOVE) as well as the three agencies. Overall good initial progress was made with the general scope being agreed in principle: namely a catalogue of services available through the agencies that could support member state organisations carrying out coast guard activities as well as a fact sheet identifying the relevant organisation per coast guard function per country. Member states supported the initiative of a Coast Guard Handbook recognising the potential benefits for them and their users.

NEW DISPERSANT STOCKPILE SET UP IN RAVENNA WITH POSSIBILITY OF MOBILISATION ACROSS EU WATERS

EMSA has established a new dispersant stockpile associated with its Equipment Assistance Service (EAS) in the Adriatic Sea, Ravenna (Italy). The dispersant stockpile consists of 200 tonnes of Radioactive OSD and 200 tonnes of Dasic Slickgone NS. The new dispersant stock is intended to be primarily used with a spraying capability for Vessels of Opportunity. EMSA will provide a portable spraying system for the EAS arrangement in the first half of 2019. Currently, EMSA maintains six operational portable spraying systems comprising a total of 1400 tonnes, four associated with the vessel network and two with EAS arrangements.

EUROPOL TO BENEFIT FROM EMSA’S INTEGRATED MARITIME SERVICES

EMSA and the European agency for law enforcement cooperation, Europol, are to cooperate more closely together following the signature of a working arrangement by their respective executive directors on 29 January, representing the start of a new arrangement. EMSA will provide Europl with access to maritime and surveillance information services to support Europl activities. User training, feedback mechanisms and the collection of Europol requirements will be integrated into this cooperation. EMSA’s Integrated Maritime Services will be used by Europl staff in the areas of law enforcement and organised crime activities at sea. They will be able to access a comprehensive and up-to-date maritime picture tailored directly to their specific needs. Both the IMS historical track and Automatic Behaviour Monitoring capabilities will be particularly useful to follow vessels of interest and support relevant investigations.

COOPERATION TO RAISE CYBERSECURITY AWARENESS ACROSS TRANSPORT MODES

The first European Conference on Transport Cybersecurity was held in EMSA’s premises in Lisbon on 23 January, gathering 170 representatives from across the various transport modes. The conference was organised by the EU Agency for Networks and Information Security (ENISA) in close cooperation with the European Commission (DG MOVE), the EU Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), the EU Agency for Railways (ERA) and EMSA. The conference gave participants from both the public and private sphere the opportunity to look at cybersecurity from a multifaceted and multidimensional perspective. They discussed the legal framework in place for cybersecurity at EU level and its relevance for the transport sector, as well as the need for cooperation in the future. In this increasingly digital age, we face borderless cybersecurity risks and we must take a borderless response to our cooperation across all transport modes,” said Maia Markovic Kostelic, EMSA’s Executive Director.

INTEGRATED MARITIME SERVICES EUROPOL TO BENEFIT FROM EMSA’S INTEGRATED MARITIME SERVICES

EMSA’s service of Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems is being used by the Spanish maritime safety agency SASEMAR in the southern province of Huelva for the purpose of identifying and monitoring oil spills as well as for additional assistance during search and rescue missions. SASEMAR is using this opportunity to see first-hand how RPAS can be of value to multipurpose maritime surveillance operations. The RPAS drone operations, running until early March, will be coordinated at a distance and the data monitored by officers at the SASEMAR Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre in Huelva. The remote pilot and payload operator will be directing the RPAS flights from a ground control station at the Instituto Nacional de Tecnica Aerospacial (INTA). From Madrid, the national search and rescue coordination and operations centre will participate in the operations monitoring the following EMSA’s RPAS data centre. This data centre offers an online user interface displaying the flight data in detail (images, videos, flight path, etc.).

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