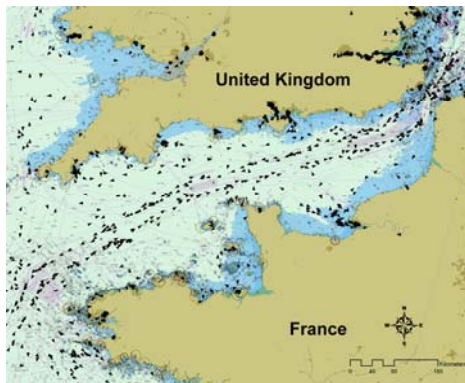# EMSA
European Maritime Safety Agency

EMSA Launches New, Map-based Shipping Surveillance System

From 10th March, EU Member States will have access to a new, user-friendly web service for tracking shipping in European waters. For the first time, EMSA's new SafeSeaNet tracking module — called STIRES — allows authorities to see all commercial vessels in and around EU waters in a single view. This will be closely followed by the picture for the whole world. The information has been available to Member States in the SafeSeaNet system for some time, but this is the first time that users will be able to see it in a fully interactive, multi-functional display.

"This approach will give Member State users a whole range of important new capabilities to work with," said EMSA Executive Director, Willem de Ruiter. "From today, instead of just accessing a database, they will be able to see the whole near-real-time situation for the EU displayed on a map right in front of them, and to select all ships, ports, sea areas and many other elements at the click of a button. Much better still, we will soon be in a position to offer an integrated display system which will be able to identify and locate ships anywhere in the world and also show the EU pollution and accident pictures. The user base is expanding all the time, with port state control officers being among the latest to join the system."

(Images) Left: Vessel traffic in the Channel at a given moment in time. Right: The new SafeSeaNet STIRES application enables authorised users across EU Member States to visualise merchant vessel traffic in Europe in near-real time at the click of a mouse.

Background
The SafeSeaNet system was mandated under Directive 2002/59/EC, and Member States have been involved in the set-up of the system since that time. The near-real-time positioning system is based on Automatic Identification System (AIS) information gathered by a network of receiving stations around the EU coastline,

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and deals with information on ships and their hazardous cargoes in and around EU waters.

Until now, the exercise has involved Member States submitting information to, and receiving information from, the SafeSeaNet database, but the STIRES interface is about to ensure that the work of many years will reap much greater benefits. From today, on a map-based display authorised users will be able to: see the position of any vessel transmitting an AIS signal; find out what hazardous cargo it is carrying; see all high risk ships (within a list of categories); ascertain what is wrong with a ship when it reports an incident; see the complete track of a ship (showing where it was at different times); zoom in from an EU level view to individual quays at any selected port (and anywhere in between); see which port a ship will arrive at (and when) and; many other functions.

On its own, this full EU AIS-based picture will be of major benefit to users, such as port authorities, maritime administrations, search and rescue organisations, port state control officers and many others. However, when STIRES/SafeSeaNet system is integrated with the satellite-based global Long Range Identification and Tracking (LRIT) system and the CleanSeaNet pollution monitoring system in a single display application later this year, the uses will be far greater still. To give two examples among many: the EU anti-piracy force is already using information from the EMSA-operated EU LRIT Data Centre to track ships in the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean, and; port authorities wishing to locate ships that are heading for their ports will be able to see exactly where they are, anywhere in the world.

The quality and performance of the system is monitored 24 hours per day, 365 days per year by the EMSA Maritime Support services team. They focus on ensuring: system availability at all times; comprehensiveness of data; the best possible data quality and; that emergencies are effectively monitored from an EU perspective.

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