EMSA
European Maritime Safety Agency

Network of Standby Oil Spill Response Vessels

Drills and Exercises Annual Report 2015

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In order to provide additional support to the Member States' pollution response mechanisms in a cost efficient way, the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) has built up, in European waters, a network of contracted stand-by oil spill response vessels (hereinafter 'Network'). The vessels are ready to respond to oil spills at sea caused by ships as well as by offshore installations at the request of a coastal State[1], a "Responsible Party"[2], and/or the European Commission. By the end of 2015, the Network comprised 17 fully equipped vessels ready for immediate mobilisation.

To achieve the level of performance for pollution response required by the Agency, vessels and their crews participate regularly in training, drills and exercises. The figures for 2015 are summarised in the table below:

Acceptance Drills: Re-contracted vessels	Acceptance Drills: Newly Contracted Vessels	Acceptance Drills: Improvement projects/new equipment	Quarterly Drills	Operational Exercises	Notification Exercises
4 (1 AT repeated)	**2**	**2**	**62** (2 QD repeated)	**9** (11 Vessels)	**10** (14 Contractors)
Total number of events		**89**			

Table 1. Summary of drills and exercises carried out in 2015

Evaluation of the contractor's performance during drills and exercises by the Agency's staff in line with the "Guidelines on Conducting Drills and Exercises for the EMSA Contracted Vessels" is an effective method to ensure that the level of response preparedness of the Network is adequately maintained. The outcome of drills and exercises carried out during 2015 demonstrated that the service is provided efficiently and in accordance with EMSA requirements.

[1] EU Member States, EU Candidate States, Norway and Iceland as well as those third countries sharing a regional sea basin with the European Union (Regulation (EU) 100/2013).
[2] Responsible Party means the ship owner or oil and gas installation operator controlling the activity causing the marine pollution or the imminent threat of it. The Responsible Party is responsible for the oil spill cleaning operations.

1. INTRODUCTION

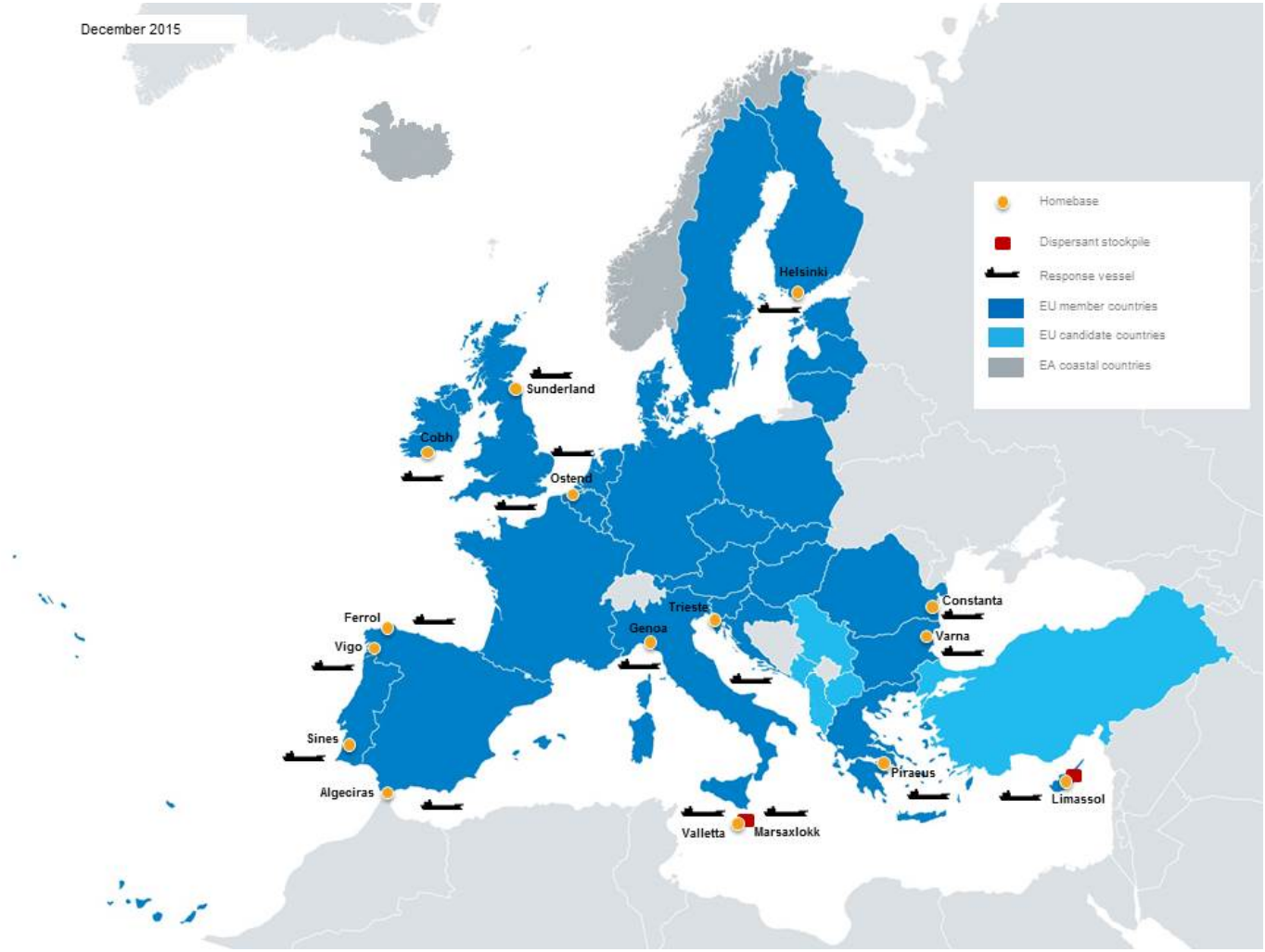
In order to fulfil its obligation to provide additional support to the Member States' pollution response mechanisms in a cost efficient way, since 2005 the European Maritime Safety Agency (hereinafter EMSA) has built up a network of stand-by oil spill response vessels ('Network') operating in European waters.

2015 was the tenth year of implementation of the Vessel Availability Contracts (VAC) for the Network. Contracted vessels were placed in nearly all significant marine pollution risk areas in European waters.

1.1 Vessels and areas covered

At the end of 2015, the Network covered all European sea basins and comprised 17 fully equipped vessels ready for immediate mobilisation. Further information can be found on the EMSA website: http://91.231.216.7/oil-recovery-vessels.html

The distribution of the Network is presented in the following map.



Map 1. Distribution of Network of EMSA contracted vessels at the end of 2015

Detailed information on the contracted vessels and the areas covered at the end of 2015 can be found in the table below.

Contractor/Contract N°/Area	Ship/s	Comment
Arctia Icebreaking Ltd VAC 09/NEG/01/2009 Lot 1 **Northern Baltic Sea**	*Kontio*	In service for the whole year 2015.
OW Tankers A/S VAC NEG/01/2011 Lot 1 **Southern Baltic Sea**	*OW Copenhagen*	The contract was terminated on 16/04/2015 due to the bankruptcy of the contractor.
DC Industrial S.A. VAC 08/NEG/03/2008 Lot 2 **North Sea**	*DC Vlaanderen 3000, Interballast 3*	The contract expired on 20/06/2015.
DC Industrial S.A. VAC 2014/EMSA/NEG/1/2014 Lot 3.1 **Channel and Southern North Sea**	*Interballast 3*	The vessel entered into the service on 24/09/2015.
DC Industrial S.A. 2014/EMSA/NEG/1/2014 Lot 3.2 **Channel and Southern North Sea**	*DC Vlaanderen 3000*	The vessel entered into the service on 01/10/2015.
James Fisher Everard Ltd EMSA/NEG/1/2013 Lot 1 **Northern North Sea**	*Mersey Fisher, Thames Fisher*	In service for the whole year 2015.
James Fisher Everard Ltd EMSA/NEG /1/2013 Lot 2 **Atlantic North**	*Galway Fisher, Forth Fisher*	In service for the whole year 2015.
Ibaizabal VAC NEG/01/2012 Lot 3 **Bay of Biscay**	*Monte Arucas*	In service for the whole year 2015.
Remolcanosa 2014/EMSA/NEG/1/2014 Lot 1 **Atlantic Coast**	*Ria de Vigo*	The vessel entered into the service on 12/06/2015.
Mureloil VAC NEG/1/2012 Lot 1 **Southern Atlantic Coast**	*Bahia Tres*	In service for the whole year 2015.
Naviera Altube EMSA NEG/1/2011 Lot 4 **Western Mediterranean Sea**	*Monte Anaga*	In service for the whole year 2015.
Ciane Novela EMSA/NEG/34/2012 **Western Mediterranean Sea**	*Brezzamare*	In service for the whole year 2015.
Castalia EMSA/NEG/1/2013 Lot 4 **Adriatic Sea**	*Marisa N*	The vessel entered into the service on 16/01/2015.

Contractor/Contract N°/Area	Ship/s	Comment
Tankship EMSA NEG/1/2011 Lot 2 **Central Mediterranean Sea**	*Balluta Bay*	In service for the whole year 2015.
SL Ship Management Ltd EMSA NEG/1/2012 Lot 2 **Central Mediterranean Sea**	*Santa Maria*	In service for the whole year 2015.
Environmental Protection Engineering S.A. EMSA/NEG/1/2013 Lot 3 **Aegean Sea**	*Aktea OSRV* *(Aegis I as a back-up vessel)*	The vessels were in service for the whole year 2015.
Petronav EMSA NEG/1/2010 Lot 1 **Eastern Mediterranean Sea**	*Alexandria*	In service for the whole year 2015 (contract renewed from 05/05/2015 for another four years).
Bon Marine Ltd EMSA NEG/1/2011 Lot 5 **Black Sea**	*Enterprise*	In service for the whole year 2015.
Petronav 2014/EMSA/NEG/1/2014 Lot 2 **Northern Black Sea**	*Amalthia*	The vessel entered into the service on 21/08/2015.

Table 2. Summary of the contracted vessels and areas covered at the end of 2015.

1.2 Purpose and types of drills and exercises

The vessels contracted by the Agency are all equipped with state-of-the-art oil slick detection, containment and recovery equipment. In addition some of the vessels have also dispersant spraying capabilities. They are technically capable of achieving high recovery rates and have a sizeable on board storage capacity.

Once the technical requirements of each contract are satisfied, the most important factors determining success of the system are the skills of the vessel's crew for the operation of the equipment and the capability of the oil spill response coordinator on board to lead the response action. Regular training, drills and exercises are essential to achieve and maintain the appropriate level of performance.
Every VAC defines the types and number of drills and exercises to be carried out by each associated vessel. Detailed instructions on conducting drills including their methods of evaluation are provided in the "Guidelines on Conducting Drills and Exercises for the EMSA Contracted Vessels". These Guidelines constitute a component of all contracts. Due to the further development of the pollution response toolbox offered by the Agency, namely new dispersant application systems and dispersant stockpiles in 2015, the Guidelines were revised and updated accordingly. The VAC defines two types of drills: 1) acceptance drills (also referred to as acceptance tests) and 2) quarterly oil pollution response drills; and two types of exercises: 1) notification exercises and 2) at-sea operational exercises.

In 2015, a total of 62 quarterly drills and eight acceptance drills were performed by the vessels under contract to the Agency. The acceptance drills are of particular importance as they are the major milestone for new vessels and/or equipment to enter into the stand-by phase of a contract.

2. DRILLS PERFORMED IN 2015

Over recent years the Network has been maintained at its maximum planned size, and the number of drills and exercises occurring each year has remained relatively stable. A summary of drills performed by EMSA contracted vessels during the period 2006-2015 is shown in the chart below.

Chart 1. Number of drills 2006-2015

2.1 Acceptance Drills

In 2015, eight acceptance drills (seven “first” drills and one repetition) were conducted.

Six acceptance tests were related to the new vessel contracts:

1) 3 re-contracted vessels (*Ria de Vigo, DC Vlaanderen 3000 and Interballast III*);
2) 1 newly contracted vessel (*Amalthea*) to replace the vessel under the expiring contract;
3) 1 newly contracted vessel (*Marisa N*) for a new Network area established in the Adriatic Sea.

Two additional acceptance tests were related to the pollution response capacity improvement projects to establish the dispersant application capability on board the vessels *Alexandria* and *Balluta Bay*.

For the first time, dispersant application systems and 200 tonnes of dispersants stockpiles were incorporated to the services provided. Details of the acceptance tests are demonstrated in the tables below.

N°	Contract	Contractor	*Vessel*	Home port	Subject	Acceptance Test Date	Results
1	EMSA/NEG/1/2013 Lot 4 - **Adriatic Sea**	Castalia	*Marisa N*	Trieste, Italy	Provision of the new capacity for the Adriatic Sea. 1 new vessel. Acceptance Test for pre-fitting and equipment.	14-15 January 2015	Acceptance Note effective from 16 January 2015.
2	2014/EMSA/NEG/1/2014 Lot 1 **- Atlantic Coast**	Remolcanosa	*Ria de Vigo*	Vigo, Spain	Replacement of the capacity for the Atlantic Coast. 1 re-contracted vessel. Acceptance Test for re-entry into service of 1 vessel.	11-12 May 2015	Acceptance Note effective from 12 June 2015, issued after submission of the final completion Report.
3 & 4	2014/EMSA/NEG/1/2014 Lot 2 - **Northern Black Sea**	Petronav	*Amalthia*	Constanta, Romania	Replacement of the pollution response capacity for the Northern Black Sea. 1 new vessel. Acceptance Test for pre-fitting and equipment.	5-6 August 2015 Repetition: 20 August 2015	Acceptance Note effective from 21 August 2015.
5	2014/EMSA/NEG/1/2014 Lot 3.2 - **Channel and Southern North Sea**	DC Industrial	*DC Vlaanderen 3000*	Ostend, Belgium	Replacement of the response capacity for the Channel and Southern North Sea. 1 re-contracted vessel. Acceptance Test for re-entry into service of 1 vessel.	22 September 2015	Acceptance Note effective from 01 October 2015, issued after submission of the equipment condition statement.
6	2014/EMSA/NEG/1/2014 Lot 3.1 - **Channel and Southern North Sea**	DC Industrial	*Interballast 3*	Ostend, Belgium	Replacement of the response capacity for the Channel and Southern North Sea. 1 re-contracted vessel. Acceptance Test for re-entry into service of 1 vessel.	23 September 20015	Acceptance Note effective from 24 September 2015.

Table 3. Vessel acceptance tests carried out in 2015

N°	Contract	Contractor	*Vessel*	Home port	Subject	Acceptance Test Date	Results
1	EMSA NEG/1/2010 Lot 1 - **Eastern Mediterranean Sea**	Petronav	*Alexandria*	Limassol, Cyprus	Improvement of the pollution response capacity of the *Alexandria.* Test of a dispersant spraying system installed on board.	18 February 2015	Acceptance Note effective from 31 March 2015. The note issued after the submission of the positive equipment condition statement.
2	EMSA NEG/1/2011 Lot 2 - **Central Mediterranean Sea**	Tankship	*Balluta Bay*	Valetta, Malta	Improvement of the pollution response capacity of the *Balluta Bay.* Test of a dispersant spraying system installed on board.	06 May 2015	Acceptance Note effective from 07 May 2015.

Table 4. Oil pollution response capacity improvement acceptance tests carried out in 2015

2.2 Quarterly Drills

According to the contract, the Contractor is obliged to train his crew and to maintain the oil pollution response equipment in order to be ready to carry out oil pollution response services efficiently.

To demonstrate the fulfilment of these obligations, the Contractor is obliged to carry out drills, usually on a quarterly basis. The acceptance of the Contractor's Quarterly Drill Report by the Agency is a condition for the payment of the availability fee by the Agency.

The drills can be assessed by EMSA observers as well as invited observers from the interested Member States. The Agency developed guidelines describing vessel, crew and equipment performance standards. These guidelines compose integral part of the Vessel Availability Contract. The quarterly drill can be accepted only if all required standards have been achieved.

During 2015 two quarterly drills were attended by the representatives of two Member States. For 2016 EMSA will continue to encourage the MS attendance to quarterly drills in order for them to get more familiar with the operational capabilities of the vessel Network.

The summary of the quarterly drills carried out in 2015 is presented in the table below.

N°	Contract	Contractor	Vessel/s	Drill	Date	Results
1	Arctia Icebreaking Ltd VAC 09/NEG/01/2009 Lot 1 **Northern Baltic Sea**	Arctia Icebreaking Ltd	*Kontio*	1Q	11/04/2015	4 drills required annually. All drills were conducted and accepted by EMSA.
				2Q	07/05/2015	
				3Q	22/09/2015	
				4Q	29/10/2015	
2	OW Tankers A/S VAC NEG/01/2011 Lot 1 **Southern Baltic Sea**	OW Tankers A/S	*OW Copenhagen*	1Q	n/a	The contract was terminated on 16/04/2015. No drill performed in 2015.
				2Q	n/a	
				3Q	n/a	
				4Q	n/a	
3	DC Industrial S.A. VAC 08/NEG/03/2008 Lot 2 **North Sea**	DC Industrial S.A.	*DC Vlaanderen 3000* *Interballast 3*	1Q	10/03/2015	The contract expired on 20/06/2015. 2 drills were required in 2015. Both were performed and accepted by the Agency.
				2Q	27/04/2015	
4	2014/EMSA/NEG/1/2014 Lot 3.1 **Channel and Southern North Sea**	DC Industrial S.A.	*Interballast 3*	1Q	n/a	The vessel entered into the service on 24/09/2015. 1 drill required in 2015, performed and accepted by EMSA.
				2Q	n/a	
				3Q	n/a	
				4Q	25/11/2015	
5	2014/EMSA/NEG/1/2014 Lot 3.2 **Channel and Southern North Sea**	DC Industrial S.A.	*DC Vlaanderen 3000*	1Q	n/a	The vessel entered into the service on 01/10/2015. 1 drill required in 2015, performed and accepted by EMSA.
				2Q	n/a	
				3Q	n/a	
				4Q	27/10/2015	
6	EMSA/NEG/1/2013 Lot 1 **Northern North Sea**	James Fisher Everard Ltd	*Thames Fisher* *Mersey Fisher*	1Q	29/04/2015	4 drills required annually. All drills were conducted and accepted by EMSA.
				3Q	22/07/2015	
				2Q	30/06/2015	
				4Q	31/08/2015	
7	EMSA/NEG /1/2013 Lot 2 **Atlantic North**	James Fisher Everard Ltd	*Forth Fisher* *Galway Fisher*	1Q	13/02/2015	4 drills required annually. All drills were conducted and accepted. Repetition of the 4QD was requested by EMSA due to the technical failure of the equipment. The drill was performed and accepted.
				3Q	30/05/2015	
				2Q	24/04/2015	
				4Q	30/09/2015 & 25/11/2015	
8	VAC NEG/01/2012 Lot 3 **Bay of Biscay**	Ibaizabal S.A.	*Monte Arucas*	1Q	23/03/2015	4 drills required annually. All drills were conducted and accepted by EMSA.
				2Q	11/05/2015	
				3Q	26/08/2015	
				4Q	12-13/11/2015	
9	Remolcanosa 2014/EMSA/NEG/1/2014 Lot 1 **Atlantic Coast**	Remolcadores Nossa Terra S.A.	*Ria de Vigo*	1Q	n/a	The vessel entered into the service on 12/06/2015. 2 drills were required in 2015. Both were performed and accepted by the Agency.
				2Q	n/a	
				3Q	14/09/2015	
				4Q	11/11/2015	
10	VAC NEG/1/2012 Lot 1 **Southern Atlantic Coast**	Mureloil S.A.	*Bahia Tres*	1Q	11/03/2015	4 drills required annually. All drills were conducted and accepted by EMSA.
				2Q	27/05/2015	
				3Q	26/08/2015	
				4Q	07/10/2015	

N°	Contract	Contractor	Vessel/s	Drill	Date	Results
11	EMSA NEG/1/2011 Lot 4 **Western Mediterranean Sea**	Naviera Altube S.L.	*Monte Anaga*	1Q	19/03/2015	4 drills required annually. All drills were conducted and accepted by EMSA.
				2Q	26/05/2015	
				3Q	19/08/2015	
				4Q	19/11/2015	
12	EMSA/NEG/34/2012 **Western Mediterranean Sea**	Ciane SpA	*Brezzamare*	1Q	17/03/2015	4 drills required annually. All drills were conducted and accepted by EMSA.
				2Q	14/06/2015	
				3Q	21/09/2015	
				4Q	20-21/10/2015	
13	EMSA/NEG/1/2013 Lot 4 **Adriatic Sea**	R.T.I Castalia	*Marisa N*	1Q	18-19/03/2015	4 drills required annually. All drills were conducted and accepted by EMSA.
				2Q	25/06/2015	
				3Q	25/09/2015	
				4Q	23/11/2015	
14	EMSA NEG/1/2011 Lot 2 **Central Mediterranean Sea**	Tankship Ltd	*Balluta Bay*	1Q	25/03/2015	4 drills required annually. All drills were conducted and accepted by EMSA.
				2Q	30/06/2015	
				3Q	01/09/2015	
				4Q	11/11/2015	
15	EMSA NEG/1/2012 Lot 2 **Central Mediterranean Sea**	SL Ship Management Ltd	*Santa Maria*	1Q	11/03/2015	4 drills required annually. All drills were conducted and accepted by EMSA.
				2Q	17&26/06/2015	
				3Q	01/09/2015	
				4Q	21/11/2015	
17	EMSA/NEG/1/2013 Lot 3 **Aegean Sea**	Environmental Protection Engineering S.A.	*Aktea OSRV*	1Q	07/03/2015	6 drills required annually (4 *Aktea OSRV* and 2 *Aegis I*). All drills were conducted and accepted by EMSA.
				2Q	02/06/2015	
				3Q	04/09/2015	
				4Q	18/11/2015	
			Aegis I (as a back-up vessel)	2Q1	02/06/2015	
				4Q2	11/11/2015	
18	EMSA NEG/1/2010 Lot 1 **Eastern Mediterranean Sea**	Petronav Ship Management Ltd	*Alexandria*	1Q	19/02/2015	3 drills required. 1Q drill under the initial contract and following 2 quarterly drills after the contract renewal. All drills were conducted and accepted by EMSA. The 4QD was repeated upon request of EMSA due to the failure of the boom system.
				2Q	n/a	
				3Q	30/06/2015	
				4Q	12/11/2015 & 02/12/2015	
19	EMSA NEG/1/2011 Lot 5 **Black Sea**	Bon Marine International Ltd	*Enterprise*	1Q	28/01/2015	4 drills required annually. All drills were conducted and accepted by EMSA.
				2Q	14/05/2015	
				3Q	16/09/2015	
				4Q	15/10/2015	
20	2014/EMSA/NEG/1/2014 Lot 2 **Northern Black Sea**	Petronav Ship Management Ltd	*Amalthia*	1Q	n/a	The vessel entered into the service on 21/08/2015. 1 QD required in 2015. The drill performed and accepted by EMSA
				2Q	n/a	
				3Q	n/a	
				4Q	13/10/2015	
TOTAL			**62 Quarterly Drills**			

Table 5. Summary of the quarterly drills carried out in 2015

The outcome of the quarterly drills carried out during 2015 demonstrated that the service is operated efficiently and in accordance with EMSA expectations. Overall, the Network achieved a satisfactory level of preparedness for oil pollution response. However, two drills had to be repeated due to equipment issues.

Checking the technical status and completeness of the oil pollution response equipment on board the vessels is an important element of each drill attended by EMSA observers.

For better management of EMSA's oil spill response equipment, the "Equipment Policy" was implemented in 2015. This included the annual verification of the equipment stockpiles. During each drill and exercise attended by the Agency, the condition of the equipment was closely assessed and recorded. This record allows the Agency to obtain a broader overview of the performance of different types and brands of equipment. Identification of the most frequent technical problems leads to prevention of failures during actual pollution response and also helps the acceptance process for equipment arrangements in the framework of the vessel tenders and improvement projects.

Based on the equipment records, the overhaul or replacement plan is being established in order to improve services and reduce the probability of equipment failure.

Some older equipment systems show signs of ageing and may require overhauling and/or replacement in 2016.

In 2015 EMSA started to develop a horizontal assessment procedure that analyses and incorporates all data collected from the drill reports. Equipment wear and tear, technical problems and effectiveness of equipment deployment and use are all monitored. EMSA gathers and analyses all current and historical information from drills and exercises activities in order to draw appropriate conclusions regarding the improvement of the Network performance.

The summary of results related to equipment performance assessed during 2015 is presented in the table below. The results are presented in the scale from 0 (the worst performance) to 4 (the best performance).

Equipment Set	Condition	Deployment	Recovery	Readiness	Average
Booms	3.18	3.18	3.1	3.36	3.2
Sweeping Arms	3.4	3.6	4	3.77	3.69
Skimmers	3.11	3.78	3.67	3.88	3.61
Average	3.23	3.52	3.59	3.67	3.5

Table 6. Average scorings related to equipment performance, assessed during EMSA attendance at drills and exercises (0-4 scale).

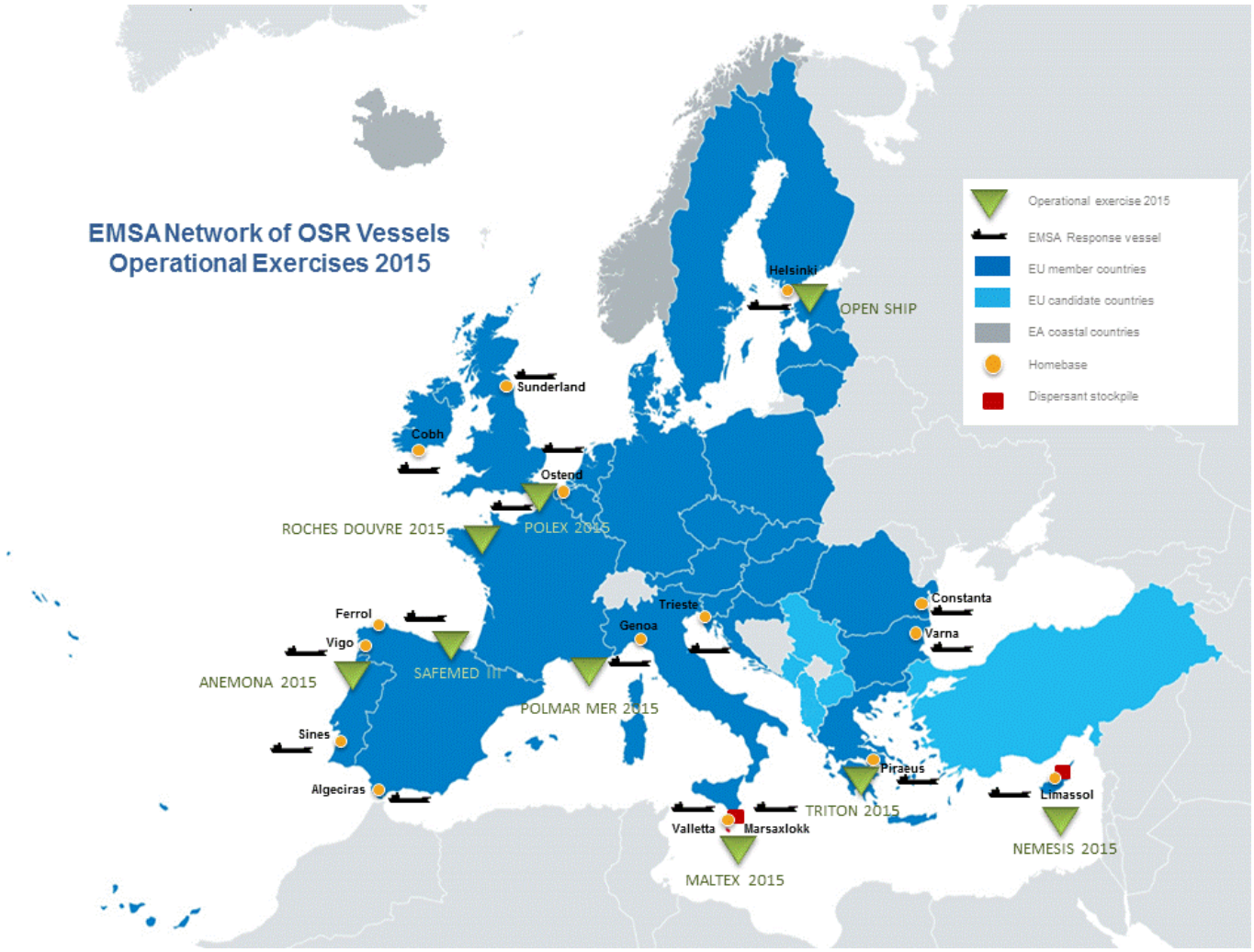
3. EXERCISES PERFORMED IN 2015

At-sea operational exercises assist the integration of EMSA's resources within the response mechanisms of Member States, improving the necessary coordination and cooperation of the EMSA vessels with the coastal State response units. In 2015 EMSA planned and participated in the exercises using a new procedure for the internal/external exercise coordination in order to provide the full set of services (CleanSeaNet, vessels, Mar-ICE) in a harmonised manner as well as to receive the appropriate feedback from the Member States after the exercises.

3.1 Operational Exercises

In the course of 2015, 11 EMSA Stand-by Oil Spill Response Vessels participated in nine at-sea operational exercises, organised in cooperation with EU Member States and/or Regional Agreements. These events took place in the Baltic Sea, North Sea, Atlantic Coast and Mediterranean Sea.

The geographical spread of operational exercises in Europe with EMSA vessel participation is shown in the following map:



Map 2. Operational exercises 2015

The summary of operational exercises performed by EMSA contracted vessels during the 2015 is shown in the table below.

N°	Name	Date	Location	Participating Parties	EMSA vessel/s
1	**SAFEMED III**	21-23 April 2015	Bilbao, Spain	EMSA, Observers from SAFEMED III beneficiary countries	*Monte Arucas*
2	**POLMAR MER 2015**	12-13 May 2015	Port of Sete, France	France, EMSA	*Brezzamare*
3	**ANEMONA 2015**	13-14 May 2015	Leixoes, Portugal	Portugal, Spain, EMSA	*Monte Arucas*
4	**ROCHES DOUVRES**	27-28 May 2015	Port Saint Malo, France	France, EMSA	*Forth Fisher*
5	**TRITON 2015**	03 June 2015	Gulf of Elefsis, Greece	Greece, EMSA	*Aktea OSRV, Aegis I*
6	**NEMESIS 2015**	01 July 2015	Limassol, Cyprus	In the pollution response part of the exercise: Cyprus, Greece, EMSA.	*Alexandria*
7	**MALTEX 2015**	2 September 2015	Valetta, Malta	Malta, EMSA	*Balluta Bay, Santa Maria*
8	**POLEX 2015**	2 September 2015	Ostend, Belgium	Belgium, The Netherlands, EMSA	*Mersey Fisher*
9	**KONTIO OPEN SHIP**	23 September 2015	Helsinki, Finland	Finland, EMSA	*Kontio*
TOTAL			**9 EXERCISES**	**9 MS and 5 SAFEMED beneficiary countries**	**11 VESSELS**

Table 7. Operational exercises carried out in 2015

A detailed overview of the operational exercises carried out in 2015 is presented in Annex 1.

3.2 Notification Exercises

Notification exercises are usually conducted in conjunction with operational exercises. In addition, 'standalone' notification exercises are occasionally carried out. The aim of these exercises is to test and implement agreed procedures and lines of communication for reporting incidents and for requesting and providing assistance.

Based on EMSA's mandate, the Network can be activated by the following Requesting Parties:

- EU Member States;
- EU Candidate Countries;
- European Free Trade Association (EFTA)/European Economic Area (EEA) coastal Member States;
- Third countries sharing a regional sea basin with the Union;
- Responsible Parties[3].

Notification exercises involve EMSA, one or more Requesting Parties, EMSA's vessel contractor(s) and the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC), operated by DG ECHO. The main criterion for the evaluation of the notification exercise is the time needed for the Incident Response Contract-Vessel (IRC-V)[4] to be signed by both the EMSA contractor and the Requesting Party.

In 2015, the Agency participated in 10 notification exercises, involving activation of 14 EMSA contractors.

The number of notification exercises carried annually over the years 2006-2014 is shown on the chart below.

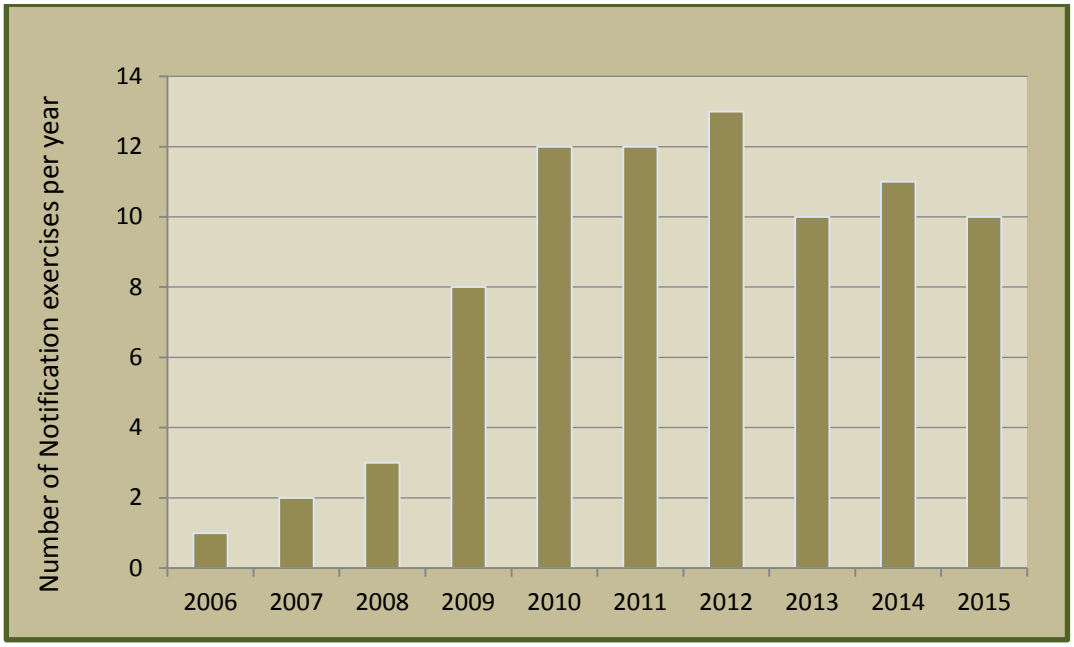


Chart 2. Number of notification exercises 2006 – 2015

[3] "Responsible Party" means the ship owner or oil and gas installation operator controlling the activity causing the marine pollution or the imminent threat of it.

[4] "Incident Response Contract - Vessel": This contract is to be concluded between the ship operator and the affected State. This pre-established model contract addresses the actual oil recovery operations. It covers the terms and conditions of the service and includes the associated daily hire rates. Following a request for assistance, EMSA will activate or even pre-mobilise the vessel to facilitate the operation. The command and control during an incident rests with the coastal State using the vessel.

During the notification exercise, the time counting starts at the moment the formal assistance request is received by EMSA. Taking into account variables such as the time of day, the day of the week, the contractor's location and other factors, six hours is considered as an acceptable target deadline for all parties to sign the Incident Response contract for the vessel (IRC-V). During the exercise, the Agency provides any assistance necessary to the Member State to help them in the process of completing and signing the IRC-V.

It must be noted that of the 10 notification exercises carried out in 2015, only six exercises included the full procedure of EMSA vessel mobilisation (completed by the signature of the IRC-V) and in total 15 IRCs were signed by the EMSA contractors. This was a result comparable to that achieved in 2014. Some Member States hosting the exercises lost an excellent opportunity to test their internal channels and procedures for the mobilisation of EMSA's vessels.

In 2015 the Common Emergency Communication and Information System (CECIS) operated by DG ECHO was the common tool for conducting the notification exercises in the field of response to marine pollution. Not all notification exercises were conducted with the use of CECIS. Some Member States trying to use CECIS experienced problems such as lack of personnel trained to use CECIS, lack of constant CECIS monitoring during the exercise, lack of knowledge regarding access to CECIS. EMSA's Maritime Support Services encountered some technical problems with the system; some of the programme features didn't work properly. EMSA should strongly encourage the use of this emergency communication system during notification exercises and real incidents. Nevertheless, all deficiencies related to the use of CECIS during notification exercises should be reported to the system administrator (DG ECHO).

Member States should be aware that it is their legal obligation to provide notifications via SafeSeaNet about any incident that may affect other countries. As part of the POLREP[5] system, POLWARN and POLINF messages should be introduced in SafeSeaNet. An automatic forwarding to CECIS was implemented in 2015.

POLFAC messages including the assistance request should be introduced directly to CECIS. In future, additional training for Member States on the use of SafeSeaNet and CECIS should be considered.

A description of the notification exercises carried out in 2015 can be found in the table below.

N°	EXERCISE NAME/DATE	PARTICIPATING PARTIES: MS/CONTRACTOR/ VESSEL MOBILISED	RESULTS	COMMENTS
1	**KEMI – ARCTIC 2015** **23-24/03/2015**	Finland, EMSA/ Arctia,*Kontio*	The IRC form was filled in properly and signed by EMSA's Contractor and by the Member State in about 4 hours from the delivery of the assistance request.	Technical problems with CECIS caused delay in receiving the assistance request.
2	**ANEMONA 2015** **05/05/2015**	Portugal, EMSA/ Ibaizabal/ *Monte Arucas*	The IRC form was filled in properly and signed by EMSA's Contractor and by the Member State.	MS had problems with the use of CECIS. It took 2h15min for the Contractor to return the IRC-V signed to the MS. The exercise was suspended by MS on 5 May at 17:30 due to the unavailability of the responsible person at the MS to sign the IRC on 6 May around 10:00.

[5] Pollution report notifications (POLREP) are used to exchange information between interested parties whenever the environment is affected or is likely to be affected after a confirmed or possible spill or an illegal discharge. POLREPs have up to three components, and can be used to warn (POLWARN), inform (POLINF) or exchange information on facilities and operations (POLFAC).

3	**POLMAR MER 2015** **12-13/05/2015**	France, EMSA/ Ciane/ *Brezzamare*	The IRC was not signed. The IRC could not be filled in because the Requesting State didn't provide contact details - phone, fax, email and the name of the responsible person authorized to sign the IRC (despite of several requests by EMSA MSS).	EMSA and EMSA Contractor reacted to the assistance request quickly and efficiently. After receiving and accepting an offer of assistance from EMSA CECIS was not monitored by the Requesting State.
4	**ROCHES DOUVRES 2015** **27-28/05/2015**	France, EMSA/ DC Industrial, James Fisher Everard, Ibaizabal/ *DC Vlaanderen 3000, Interballast III, Thames Fisher, Forth Fisher, Monte Arucas.*	The Requesting State requested assistance of 5 vessels from 3 EMSA contractors. The IRCs for 4 vessels were filled in properly and signed by EMSA's Contractor and by the Requesting State in about 4 hours. One IRC signed by the contractor was rejected by the Requesting State because The IRC-V was not properly filled in.	The exercise took 2 days. Day 1 Request for information regarding available EMSA resources. Day 2 acceptance of the assistance offer and mobilisation procedure. Positive result of the exercise. Timing in general satisfactory but one contractor fails in the IRC-V completion. Some CECIS deficiencies were encountered by EMSA and the Requesting State.
5	**TRITON 2015** **02/06/2015**	Greece, EMSA/ EPE/ *Aktea OSRV*	The mobilisation procedure was conducted with a positive result and the IRC-V was signed by the requesting Member State and the EMSA Contractor. Time from the request for assistance to the contract signature by both parties was less than 4 hours.	Technical problems with CECIS experienced by MSS.
6	**NEMESIS 2015** **30/06/2015**	Cyprus, EMSA/ Petronav Ship Management/ *Alexandria*	The IRC form was filled in properly and signed by EMSA's Contractor and by the Member State in about 5 hours from submitting to EMSA the request for assistance.	Positive result of the exercise. Acceptable time for the completion of the IRC signing. Problems with CECIS communication due to the fact that Member States had no access to CECIS. EMSA MSS was involved to fill the communication gap.
7	**MALTEX 2015** **01-02/09/2015**	Malta, EMSA/ Tankship Management, SL Ship Management/ *Balluta Bay, Santa Maria*	The IRC form was filled in properly and signed by both EMSA's Contractors and by the Member State. For one contractor it took 3 hours for the other there was a significant delay of 8 hours.	The result satisfactory for one contractor The delay of the second one was caused by the unavailability of the contractor's emergency contact person and technical problems with printing in the requesting Party office.
8	**VEITIKKA** **02/09/2015**	Finland (SYKE), EMSA/Arctia *Kontio*	The exercise was concluded without signature of the IRC between the requesting party and the Agency's contractor. EMSA offer of assistance was accepted. The IRC form was filled in properly signed by EMSA's Contractor and sent to the Requesting State. The Requesting State confirmed receipt of the signed IRC. Instead of signing it and sending back informed about the time of signature if the case would have been a real accident.	Positive result of the exercise. Acceptable time for the completion of the IRC signing. Time from acceptance of the offer by the Requesting Party to receiving copy of the IRC - V signed stated by the requesting Party was 2 hrs 39 min. Time from the dispatch of the Notice of Pollution Response until time of receiving copy of the IRC signed by the EMSA Contractor was 27 minutes.
9	**BALEX DELTA 2015** **09/09/2015**	Poland, EMSA/ Arctia/ *Kontio*	The exercise was concluded without signature of the IRC between the requesting party and the Agency's contractor. EMSA offer of assistance was accepted. The IRC form was filled in properly signed by EMSA's Contractor and sent to the Requesting State. The Requesting State didn't send the signed IRC to the EMSA Contractor	EMSA and EMSA Contractor reacted to the assistance request quickly and efficiently. Time from receiving the assistance request from the requesting party to the signature of the contract by the EMSA contractor was 1 hour 40 min.

10	**NotEx DENMARK 2015** **22/09/2015**	Denmark, EMSA/ James Fisher Everard, Arctia/ *Thames Fisher, Kontio*	The exercise was concluded without acceptance of EMSA offer in CECIS and without signature of the relevant IRCs between the requesting party and the Agency's contractors. The Agency submitted an offer for 2 vessels around 2 hour after receiving the request.	After receiving from EMSA information regarding the available vessels, equipment and their cost the Danish authorities informed EMSA that the exercise is completed. Timing of EMSA's reaction was fully satisfactory.
TOTAL	**EXERCISES: 10**	**VESSELS: 16**	**IRCs SIGNED BY EMSA CONTRACTORS: 15**	

Table 8. Notification execises carried out in 2015

4. CONCLUSIONS/HIGHLIGHTS

- The outcome of the drills and exercises carried out during 2015 demonstrated that the service is operated efficiently and in accordance with EMSA requirements. Overall, the Network achieved a highly acceptable level of preparedness for oil pollution response.

- The evaluation of drills and exercises either based on observations by EMSA staff present on board or on the contractor reports provided a number of lessons learned with regard to the technical condition of the equipment and performance of the crew.

- Participation of the MS representatives in quarterly drills on board the EMSA Network Vessels promotes the pollution response services available from EMSA and enhances the integration of the EMSA vessels into MS response mechanisms.

- The number of equipment failures was higher than in previous years, in particular with regard to certain oil boom types. Two quarterly and one acceptance drills had to be rejected and subsequently repeated by the contractors due to the technical issues.

- In 2015 new dispersant spraying capability was introduced on board two vessels. Drill evaluation guidelines for dispersant spraying systems and dispersant quality assurance procedures were implemented.

- Most of the technical deficiencies identified in 2015 could have been prevented by a thorough check of the equipment directly before the quarterly drill, as well as during the regular maintenance provided in accordance with the Maintenance Plan. The contractors should be requested to put more effort into the quarterly drill preparations. The Agency should examine closely the monthly maintenance reports and any signs of deterioration of the equipment condition due to inadequate maintenance. During the annual verification of the Equipment Inventory, special attention should be paid to deterioration of the condition of the equipment purchased in 2006 -2007.

- In 2016 EMSA should continue encouraging Member States to conduct the complete notification exercises for the mobilisation of EMSA's vessels, including the signature of the IRC.

- CECIS simplifies and facilitates mobilisation of assistance to a Member State affected by a pollution incident and EMSA should strongly encourage the use of this system during the notification exercises. All deficiencies related to the use of CECIS during notification exercises should be reported by EMSA and Member States to the system administrator (DG ECHO) in order to trigger the appropriate intervention.

- It is recommended to continue using SafeSeaNet and CECIS in future notification exercises conducted in relation to the EMSA's Network of Vessels. Training users in use of both systems would help to improve emergency communication during the exercises and real incidents.

- The newly developed procedure for the internal/external exercise coordination in order to provide the full set of services (CleanSeaNet, vessels, Mar-ICE) in a harmonised manner, as well as to receive the appropriate feedback from the Member States after the exercises, proved to be an added value to the exercise execution, assessment and follow-up.

- In 2015 EMSA started to develop a horizontal assessment tool that analyses and incorporates all data collected from the drill reports. In 2016 EMSA will continue to gather and analyse all recent and historical information from drills and exercises activities in order to draw appropriate conclusions regarding the improvement of the network performance.

Network of Stand-by Oil Spill Response Vessels: Drills and Exercises
Annual Report 2015

ANNEX 1: Overview of the Operational Exercises 2015

CONTENT

SAFEMED III – 2015

- **Place and date**

The pollution response exercise SAFEMED III was conducted off Bilbao, Spain on 21 - 23 April 2015.

- **Organiser**

The exercise was organised and coordinated by the European Maritime Safety Agency.

- **Background for the exercise**

This exercise was held in the context of SAFEMED III project (2013-2016) implemented by EMSA and was included under Activity 4: Protection of the Marine Environment.

- **Participants**

EMSA and observers from the SAFEMED III beneficiary countries (Algeria, Israel, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia).

- **Objective of the exercise**

The objective of this exercise was to provide training on oil pollution response to national experts from the maritime administrations of the SAFEMED III beneficiary countries.

- **Scenario of the exercise**

The scenario simulated the collision between the container vessel *MS Telia* with the oil tanker *MT Lostoil*. The incident originated a spill of 4.000 tonnes of oil.

- **Participating vessels**
  - EMSA Vessel: *Monte Arucas*;
  - Tug boat: *Aitor Uno*;
  - Tug boat: *Ibaizabal 11*.

- **Task for the EMSA vessel**

The *Monte Arucas* was tasked with:
-Deployment of the boom (both reels, 500 m) with the assistance of the tug boat *Ibaizabal 11*;
-Transfer of the boom end to the *T/V Aitor Uno*;
-Following with the sweeping arms deployed open U-configuration of the boom towed by the tugs.

- **Performance of the EMSA vessel**

Performance of the *Monte Arucas* can be summarised as follows:
  - Overall the crew performed very well during the exercise;
  - The level of coordination of the *Monte Arucas* with the assisting ships was very good;
  - The equipment (sweeping arms system, 500 meters of booms and high capacity skimmer) was satisfactorily tested at sea.

- **General conclusion from the exercise**

The exercise was a good opportunity for the participants to be familiarized with EMSA's Oil Pollution Response Services and to observe an at-sea exercise with the deployment of OPR equipment. Therefore, the objective of the Agency for the "SAFEMED III – 2015" exercise was achieved. The participants also provided a very positive feed-back in the Evaluation Questionnaire distributed on the last day of the event.

Fig.1. *Monte Arucas* and *Ibaizabal 11* deploying the boom

Fig.2. SAFEMED observers on board *Monte Arucas*

POLMAR MER 2015

- **Place and date**

The exercise POLMAR MER 2015 was held in approaches to the port of Sete, France on 12-13 May 2015.

- **Organiser**

Prefecture maritime de la Méditerranée Toulon (France)

- **Background for the exercise**

Exercise POLMAR is held annually in the French waters in the Mediterranean Sea.

- **Participants**

France, EMSA

- **Objective of the exercise**

The objective of the exercise was to test the international/national/local emergency response procedures, train personnel and exercise cooperation between response units, including EMSA assets.

- **Scenario of the exercise**

The exercise scenario simulated a collision between two vessels of which one was an oil tanker. The collision resulted in serious oil spill.

- **Participating vessels**
  - *BSAD Ailette* (OSC)
  - *Remorqueur Bora*
  - *Abeille Flandre*
  - *MT Brezzamare (EMSA)*
  - Fishing boats *Louis Gaëtane 2* and *Danaé Circé*
  - *VCSM Hérault* (GM)
  - *DF 95 and DF 16 (*Customs)
  - *ORV Thomsea*
  - Navy aircrafts

- **Task for the EMSA vessel**

The *Brezzamare* was tasked with oil spill search through a slick detection system and recovery with the sweeping arm system.

- **Performance of the EMSA vessel**

The *Brezzamare* performed well. The vessel found the oil slick using the on board slick detection system. Oil was successfully recovered by means of sweeping arm system. *Brezzamare* fulfilled the role assigned by the exercise commander and also met the expectations of the Agency.

- **General conclusion from the exercise**

The POLMAR MER 2015 Exercise was a positive experience for all the participants. The coordination between the different units was positively tested.

The communications between the participating French units were in French and in English between *Brezzamare* and *BSAD Ailette.* The exercise strengthened the integration of the EMSA vessel at the operational level with the French ships and the command structure.

Fig.3. POLMAR MER 2015 - French vessels exercising oil recovery seen from the deck of the *Brezzamare*

ANÉMONA 2015

- **Place and date**

The exercise took place at Leixões, Portugal on 13 - 14 May 2015.

- **Organiser**

Portuguese Maritime Authority

- **Participants**

Portugal, Spain, EMSA

- **Objective of the exercise**

The aim of this exercise was to strengthen the integration at the operational level of the EMSA contracted vessel with the Portuguese and Spanish marine pollution response units.

- **Scenario of the exercise**

The scenario included oil recovery with a formation of 4 oil recovery vessels in a column, the first two in an open U formation, the second in a J formation followed by the EMSA vessel with sweeping arms. The exercise was co-ordinated by the Portuguese Supreme on Scene Commander from the bridge of Spanish SAR vessel *Don Inda*.

- **Participating vessels**

There were 1 aircraft and 6 vessels (4 of which were response vessels) participating in the off shore scenario exercise:

- 1 EMSA contracted vessel M/T *Monte Arucas* – Contractor Ibaizabal
- 1 SAR/Tug Spanish *Don Inda* - SASEMAR fleet
- 2 Portuguese Tugs *Monte São Bras* and *Rebocador APDL*
- 1 Hydrographic Portuguese vessel *NRP D. Carlos*
- 1 Portuguese patrol vessel *NRP Cuanza*
- 1 Portuguese air surveillance aircrafts *C295*

- **Task for the EMSA vessel**

The *Monte Arucas* was tasked with oil recovery with the sweeping arm system.

- **Performance of the EMSA vessel**

During the exercise, *Monte Arucas* fulfilled the role assigned by the organizing Member State and also met the expectations of the Agency. EMSA contracted vessel performed well and crew showed high motivation.
The manoeuvring of the *Monte Arucas*, with her sweeping arms behind the J boom configuration, was successfully conducted and appreciated during the debriefing after the exercise.

- **General conclusion from the exercise**

EMSA's co-operation with the Portuguese and the Spanish authorities on the organising and executing an international operational pollution response exercise at sea proved to be very efficient and beneficial for the strengthening the regional pollution response mechanism.

Fig 4. *Monte Arucas* and *Don India* during the ANEMONA 2015 exercise

ROCHES DOUVRES POLMAR 2015

- **Place and date**

The Exercise was conducted in the vicinity of Port Saint Malo (France) on 27-28 May 2015.

- **Organiser**

The exercise was organised by the Préfecture maritime de l'Atlantique (PREMAR Atlantic) and Préfecture maritime de la Manche et de la Mer du Nord.

- **Background for the exercise**

The POLMAR exercises are arranged by France on the annual basis.

- **Participants**

France, EMSA.

- **Objective of the exercise**

The objective of this exercise was to ensure the adequate pollution response at sea in case of a serious pollution incident. In particular:

- To mobilise quickly various counter-pollution assets;
- To train fishermen in counter-pollution;
- To coordinate many counter-pollution assets at sea;
- To test the contingency plan;
- To insure communication between sea and land authorities;

- **Scenario of the exercise**

The scenario included a simulation of the following incident:
"A collision occurred between *MT Chantaco* and *MV LS EVA* on 27 May 2015 at 06:04 UTC. At 06:21 UTC MT *Chantaco* sank (depth 60 to 67 meters) with 18994 m^3 of flammable, transportable liquid (UN 3256) and 100 m^3 of diesel oil. The location of incident was 49° 12' N / 002° 52' W, 21 Nm off French coast."

- **Participating vessels**

- *BSAD Alcyon* and tug *Armorique*
- *BE Jaguar* and *Panthère*
- *Forth Fisher* (EMSA)
- Fishing boats *Clément Thomas Elena* and *Emeraude*
- Fishing boats *Azur and Alexandra*
- *DF46 Avel Sterenn*
- *VCSM Trieux (GM)*
- *SNS 072 (SNSM)*

- **Task for the EMSA vessel**

The *Forth Fisher* was tasked with oil spill search with slick detection system and oilrecovery with the sweeping arm system.

- **Performance of the EMSA vessel**

The *Forth Fisher* fulfilled the role assigned by the exercise command and also met the expectations of the Agency.

- **General conclusion from the exercise**

This was the first time when two French maritime prefectures organized simultaneously an oil pollution response exercise. It was a complex exercise aiming to test a complete decision-making process. The mobilization of EMSA support was among the actions included in this process. The participation of EMSA as observer in this complex exercise was considered very useful by the organizers who were “helped to fully understand EMSA resources to support the national response and their mobilization process”.

Fig.5. *Forth Fisher* recovering the oil simulant

TRITON 2015

- **Place and date**

The exercise was held at Elefsis Gulf on 3 June 2015.

- **Organiser**

The exercise was organised by the Hellenic Coast Guard.

- **Background for the exercise**

This joint at-sea pollution response exercise arranged by the Hellenic Coast Guard with participation of EMSA contracted vessels was performed for a fourth time (previous three were held in 2008, 2010, and 2012).

- **Participants**

Hellenic Coast Guard and EMSA.

- **Objective of the exercise**

The purpose of the exercise was to verify the level of cooperation and functionality of the existing national contingency planning arrangements and the level of participation of all entities involved in the implementation of the plan, as follows:

- Coastal oil refinery and oil handling facilities;
- Greek shipping companies rendering towage, salvage, pollution response services;
- Port Administration of Piraeus;
- Coastal First – Degree Local Government Organizations;
- Other parties representing the public sector (General Chemical State Laboratory in Piraeus/Elefsis, Hellenic Institute for Marine Research).
- EMSA

TRITON 2015 also addressed testing/checking the validity of the basic functions of the existing pollution contingency arrangements on a regional basis (mobilization, communications, decision making, coordination, surveillance of clean-up operations) as well as international assistance through EMSA resources in the area.

- **Scenario of the exercise**

The scenario of the exercise simulated the following incident: "During morning hours of 03rd June 2015, an oil tanker loaded with fuel oil, approaching the facilities of the oil industry "Hellenic Petroleum S.A." at the Elefsis Gulf with the assistance of pilot and tug boats, collides during mooring maneuvers, with the PIER No II 9th Island West of "Hellenic Petroleum S.A." facilities. As a result of the collision, severe damages have occurred at the starboard side of the vessel, which subsequently lead to crack of about 0.5 x 1.5 meters, respectively at the starboard Fuel oil wing tank, and to a consequent oil spill of about 700 m^3 of fuel oil at the broader sea area of Elefsis Gulf. During the tracking of the oil spills the following observations were made:
An oil spill with an estimated surface of about 1000 m^2 is found inside the sea area of the installations. Another oil spill with an estimated surface of about 250.000 m^2 is found in distance of 0,5 n.m. from the coasts with E –S.E. direction heading to the coasts of Salamis island. A third part of the oil spill was washed off along the coastline east of the "Hellenic Petroleum S.A." facility at a length of about 0.5 km".

- **Participating vessels**

EMSA:

- *Aktea OSRV* – deploying sweeping arms
- *Aegis I* – deploying 250 meters of boom

Hellenic Coastguard:

- *PLS 040* – patrol vessel with observers including EMSA representative
- *PLS 413* and *PLS 420* – antipollution vessels
- *PLS 108* and *PLS 335* – patrol boats
- *Dauphin* – Helicopter

Environmental Protection Engineering S.A.:

- *Aktea 4* – antipollution vessel
- *Aella* – antipollution vessel
- *Mooring boat II* – the boat that assisted *Aegis I* in the deployment of the boom

- **Task for the EMSA vessels**

EMSA vessels were assigned to simulate mechanical oil recovery using the sweeping arms (*Aktea OSRV*) and the boom in "J" configuration (Aegis I). *Aegis I* deployed 250 meters of boom in a "J" configuration with the assistance of the supporting vessel *"Mooring boat II"*.

- **Performance of the EMSA vessels**

The collection of oil was simulated for approximately one hour, with the vessels sailing against wind and current towards the Hellenic Petroleum facility. Despite adverse wind and current, the performance of both vessels was

very good showing excellent crew skills and coordination. Due to strong wind conditions, the on-scene commander changed the planned configuration of the vessels just minutes before the exercise started. All parties involved showed good flexibility and proved the ability to quickly adapt their actions according to the real situation in the field.

- **General conclusion from the exercise**

EMSA's participation fulfilled the objectives in terms of both efficiency and coordination. Vessels crews showed a high level of professionalism. Both the notification and field exercises were a good opportunity to practise the operational capabilities of the EMSA contracted vessels in the Aegean Sea and to strengthen the cooperation with the Greek national response units and the Hellenic Coast Guard. All instructions given by the Hellenic Coast Guard were followed by the EMSA contracted vessels in a timely and efficient manner.

Fig.6. *Aegis I* towing the boom in J formation

Fig.7. *Aktea OSRV* collecting oil with sweeping arm system

NEMESIS 2015

- **Place and date**

The exercise was held off Limassol (Cyprus) in the wider maritime area of offshore installations within Cyprus EEZ at a distance of approximately 12 nm from the coast, on 1 July 2015.

- **Organiser**

Cypriot Ministry of Defense along with JRCC Larnaca and other public services, including the Cypriot Department of Merchant Shipping.

- **Background for the exercise**

NEMESIS 2015 Exercise was a large scale multinational Search and Rescue (SAR) exercise, including pollution response component.

- **Participants**

Cyprus, Greece, Israel, USA, EMSA.

- **Objective of the exercise**

The main objective of the exercise was to exercise personnel, assets, readiness and capabilities for effective response in SAR and oil spill response missions at regional level in the Eastern Mediterranean. In particular, training exercises focused on MEDEVAC and SAR operations, confronting of maritime pollution, asymmetric threats and associated security issues that might arise either on cargo or passenger ships and/or platforms, within the EEZ of Cyprus and the Eastern Mediterranean in general.

- **Scenario of the exercise**

The scenario of “NEMESIS 2015” has been planned to deal with a serious act of terrorism on board an offshore oil production installation, resulting in fire and explosion, personnel casualties and uncontrolled release of large quantities of oil at sea.

- **Participating vessels**

The exercise involved nine warships (five Israeli, two Greek, two CY Navy Command), the SAIPEM Energy Company Scarabeo-4 oil platform, one support vessel to the platform, two antipollution vessels, EMSA contracted vessel *Alexandria*, two Port and Marine Police ships, four helicopters (two belonging to the CPAU and two to the 460 SAR Sqn) as well as two airplanes (one belonging to Hellenic Air Force and one to the Forestry Department).

- **Task for the EMSA vessel**

The *Alexandria* was tasked with oil recovery with sweeping arm system in the assigned sea area.

- **Performance of the EMSA equipment**

During the exercise, *Alexandria* fulfilled the role assigned by the organizing Member and also met the expectations of the Agency. EMSA contracted vessel performed well and crew showed high motivation.

- **General conclusion from the exercise**

Participation of EMSA contracted Vessel in the NEMESIS 2015 multinational Search and Rescue (SAR) and pollution response exercise brought a very useful experience for the EMSA vessel and showed that the EMSA Network vessels integrate well with the large scale operations at sea.

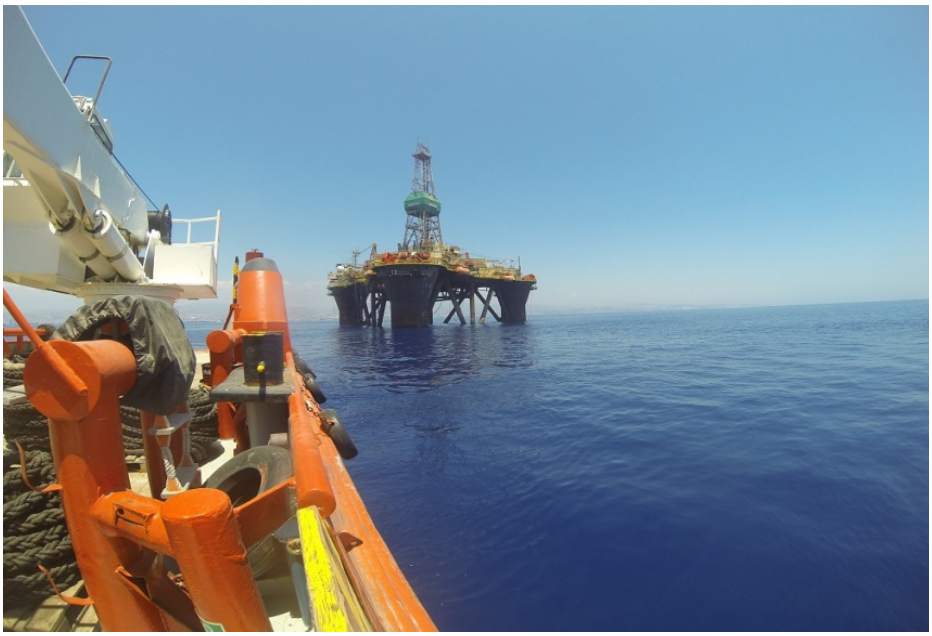


Fig.8. Scarabeo-4 oil platform

POLEX 2015

- **Place and date**

The Exercise “POLEX 2015”, hosted by Belgium, was carried out on 2 September 2015 in waters of the Belgian EEZ.

- **Organiser**

The exercise was organised by the Belgian Federal Public Service, Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment / Directorate–general Environment / Marine environment service.

- **Background for the exercise**

The exercise was carried out within the framework of Belgian/Dutch/EMSA cooperation in pollution response at sea.

- **Participants**

Belgium, the Netherlands, EMSA.

- **Objectives of the exercise**

The objectives of the exercise were:

- Testing procedure for mobilisation EMSA standby OSR vessels through CECIS.
- Deployment of mechanical recovery equipment at sea (joint BE-NL response operation with support of EMSA vessels).
- Simulation of oil recovery manoeuvres with guidance of aerial assets (training operational coordination and communication).
- Testing of remotely piloted aircraft systems for monitoring the operation and streaming live video to the operational centre ashore.

- **Scenario of the exercise**

The exercise scenario included an accidental oil spill in Belgian EEZ threatening Belgian windfarms and Dutch waters.

- **Participating vessels**
  - *Zeetijger* (Belgium) – Towing Boom and On Scene Commander (OSC);
  - *Arca* (Netherlands) – Sweeping arms and Current Buster;
  - *Frans Naerebout* (Netherlands) Offshore boom in U formation;
  - *CPV Castor* (Belgium) Belgian Navy – simulate pollution (Straw);
  - SPN Patrol boat – Police – Safety of Navigation and surveillance;
  - Work boat (Belgium) – Assistance for equipment deployment;
  - *Mersey Fisher* (EMSA vessel) – Sweeping arm system.

- **Task for the EMSA vessel**

The role assigned to the *Mersey Fisher* was to perform oil recovery using her 15m rigid sweeping arms under the command of the Belgian OSC.

- **Performance of the EMSA vessel**

During the exercise *Mersey Fisher*, her crew and associated oil recovery equipment all performed to the standard that is expected of them.
Close liaison via VHF radio was maintained with the OSC throughout the exercise and all manoeuvres were conducted as requested by the host country.

- **General conclusion from the exercise**

The Belgian/Dutch/EMSA oil pollution exercise for the first time was attended by the EMSA vessel *Mersey Fisher* stationed in Sunderland, UK. All previous exercises were attended by the EMSA contracted vessels stationed in Ostend. The exercise showed that the EMSA Network vessels integrate well with the regional response mechanism even if this is their first operation in the area.

Fig.9. *Mersey Fisher, Zeetijger* and *Frans Naerebout* During Polex 2015 Exercise

MALTEX 2015

- **Place and date**

MALTEX 2015 oil spill response exercise took place in Valetta, Malta on 2 September,

- **Organiser**

Maltese Ministry of Transport.

- **Background for the exercise**

The exercise was organised within the context of co-operation in the field of pollution response between Transport Malta (TM) and EMSA.

- **Participants**

Malta, EMSA.

- **Objective of the exercise**

The main objective of this exercise was to train Member State's command and communication system and pollution response operations, practical use of recovery equipment and cooperation of participating units. The objectives related to the participation of EMSA contracted vessels were:

- Testing the established mobilisation procedures between ERCC, MALTA, EMSA, SL Ship Management Company Ltd and Tankship to request the assistance by EMSA contracted vessel;
- Exercising at sea deployment of oil response equipment and testing of the newly installed dispersant spraying system on board the *Balluta Bay.*

- **Scenario of the exercise**

The scenario of the exercise included the simulation of the following incident: "A fully loaded product tanker "*MED CARRIER"* (42,000 DWT) collided with the container vessel "*OMEGA 3*" in the following positions 36° 16.5'N, 014° 58.5'E (32 Nm off Valletta Harbour).
The collision took place in heavy rain and restricted visibility. *MED CARRIER* has suffered severe damage and it was drifting towards the Maltese coastline at an estimated rate of 0.5 knots. Cargo tank No. 6 port ruptured and started leaking oil (unknown type).

- estimated oil spill: 1,000 m^3
- tank capacity: 3442.4 m^3".

- **Participating vessels**

EMSA:

- *Balluta Bay* – deploying dispersant spraying system and afterwards the sweeping arms
- *Santa Maria* – deploying 250 meters of boom and skimmer

Transport Malta:

- Pilot Boat – *Echo 1* (OSC boat)
- Tugs – *Spinola* and *Lieni* – deploying 250 meters of boom and skimmer
- *AFM* – Patrol Boat *P24*
- Cassar Ship Repair – *Sea Jaguar*
- TM Enforcement – 1 rib *ER1*

- **Task for the EMSA vessel**

Santa Maria was tasked to deploy 250 meters of Ro-boom 2000 in a "J" formation with the help of an assisting tug boat provided by Malta. Afterwards the vessel deployed The Normar 200Ti high capacity skimmer.

Balluta Bay was requested, for the first time during the Maltex exercises, to disperse the oil using the newly installed dispersant spraying system. Spraying of dispersant was simulated by using fresh water from the tank container installed on-board. Afterwards, the vessel was requested to simulate the mechanical recovery of oil using her sweeping arms.

- **Performance of the EMSA vessel**

Although the weather conditions were not ideal, with waves measuring approximately 1 - 1.5 metres in height and increasing wind, the manoeuvres executed by EMSA vessels at speeds around 1 knot were successfully conducted. *Balluta Bay* and *Santa Maria* fulfilled the roles assigned by the Member State organising the exercise and also met the expectations of the Agency. The EMSA contracted vessels and their crews performed well.

- **General conclusion from the exercise**

The Agency was actively involved in all the past exercises organised by Transport Malta. Consequently, a good cooperation between EMSA's contracted vessels and Transport Malta was noticed during Maltex 2015.
Overall the exercise was a good opportunity for the participating units to improve the coordination during oil pollution response operations.
This type of exercise is normally organised annually and is beneficial for maintaining the already very well-established cooperation between Maltese authorities and EMSA.

Fig.10. *Santa Maria* (EMSA) – Desmi Ro-boom 2000 in "J" formation

KONTIO OPEN SHIP

- **Place and date**

Helsinki, 23 September 2015.

- **Organiser**

EMSA.

- **Background for the exercise**

The event was organised by EMSA upon request of organisers of the 7th European Coast Guard Functions Forum (ECGFF).

- **Participants**

Kontio (crew and equipment) and participants of the 7th European Coast Guard Functions Forum (ECGFF).

- **Objective of the exercise**

Presentation of the EMSA Network of Oil Pollution Response Vessels and response capabilities of the *Kontio.*

- **Task for the EMSA vessel**

The crew of *Kontio* was tasked with demonstration of the equipment deployment and providing information regarding the EMSA Vessel Network.

- **Performance of the EMSA vessel**

The *Kontio* crew, some staff members of Arctia Icebreaking as well as EMSA liaison officer on-board were available all the time to provide information regarding the vessel and equipment technical details. A short demonstration of the equipment, in particular deploying the sea side sweeping arm was also done. *Kontio* info sheets and EMSA Network of Oil Spill Response Vessels brochures were distributed among all participants.

- **General conclusion from the exercise**

Around 60 participants divided in three groups had the opportunity to visit the EMSA vessel, observe the oil pollution response equipment and the Oil Spill Detection System on the bridge as well as to receive relevant information.

Fig.11. Visitors on board *Kontio* observing the sweeping arm deployment

Network of Standby Oil Spill Response Vessels

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