

NEW HEAD OF OIL POLLUTION RESPONSE

With an academic background in chemical engineering and water resource management, Bernd Bluhm first spent 8 years in the German Navy as a commander. Following that, EMSA's new head of oil pollution response participated in the creation of his country's special task force for combating oil spills, which was set up after the sinking of the tanker Amoco Cadiz in 1978. Since 1981, he has held several different positions in the oil response field, located in Cuxhaven, at the Ministry in Hannover and overseas. He has also worked as a Seconded National Expert in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Thailand and Brazil, and has participated in missions within the framework of the European Commission Directorate General for the Environment .

STAFF COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

The set-up of a staff committee (SC) will contribute to the smooth running of the Agency by providing a channel for expression of opinion by the staff. Consequently, a general assembly of EMSA staff took place on 2 September in order to adopt the conditions for the election of the committee. The SC will comprise 6 members, who will represent the different types of staff in the Agency, and the election is planned for 12 October. The primary objective of the SC is to represent the interests of the staff vis-à-vis the Agency and to maintain continuous contact between EMSA and its staff.

SAFESEANET REACHES VERSION 1.8

EMSA's SafeSeaNet team has created a pre-production site which allows Member States to use the latest version of the vessel monitoring system, as well as to train people in its use. EMSA took over Version 1.4 from the European Commission in October 2004, and has upgraded the system in several stages until Version 1.8. 16 Member States have now fully registered on the system and studies aimed at launching Version 2 (SSN V2) will begin in September.

SECOND PHASE OF TUTORING PROJECT ON PORT STATE CONTROL IN ESTONIA

The second phase of a tutoring project on Port State Control (PSC) will be organised in Estonia between 19-24 September, following visits to Cyprus and Latvia. The main part of the project will take one week and will involve a tutoring team visiting the PSC headquarters and local offices, as appropriate, in the Beneficiary States. The team will consist of a representative from EMSA plus two PSC

experts from established Paris Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) members and one representative from the Paris MOU Secretariat. The experts will observe the Estonian PSC inspectors during their inspections on board ships. They will also advise and tutor local staff on any question with regard to the application of Council Directive 95/21/EC, which covers on-the-spot training, under real conditions, for staff applying EU and Paris MoU procedures. Future visits to Lithuania and Malta are planned.

EMCIP: A NEW STEP IN MARINE CASUALTY INVESTIGATION

EMSA and four Member States are now ready to enter the test phase for the new central data base which forms an integral part of the European Marine Casualty Information Platform (EMCIP). They will begin registering, exchanging and analysing information on marine casualties using a common taxonomy, created by EMSA in consultation with Member States, and following procedures developed with the assistance of EMSA's appointed contractor. At the second Workshop on Marine Casualty Investigation, which will take place in Brussels on 15-16 November, EMSA will meet with the European Commission, EU Member States and the IMO to agree on the main possibilities for cooperation, prior to EMCIP becoming fully operational in 2006.

HOW TO DETECT "SUSPECTED" VESSELS: A PROJECT FOR THE BALTIC SEA

More Baltic Member States agreed, at a meeting on 6 September, to follow the successful experience of Finland and Norway, by cooperating in the issuing of immediate warnings whenever a single hull tanker is detected carrying heavy grade oil along their coasts. The warning should be issued on the basis of a list of tankers updated by EMSA. The list of "target vessels" is not a banning list, but a list of vessels that should be closely monitored and further examined to verify that they comply with the provisions of the relevant legislation (MARPOL convention and Regulation (EC) No 1726/2003/EC, which establishes an accelerated phasing-out scheme for single hull tankers). The project will be further considered at the next Helcom meeting, with the objective of broadening participation and taking account of the latest AIS developments in the region.

If you wish to subscribe to this electronic newsletter, please contact EMSA External Communications: Louis Baumard (louis.baumard@emsa.eu.int) or Andrew Stimpson (andrew.stimpson@emsa.eu.int)