

SafeSeaNet Group meeting no. 21
Agenda item IV
8 May 2014

SSN 21/4/8 (v.1.00)
Lisbon, 8 April 2014

SAFESEANET TECHNICAL ASPECTS

Linking SSN and CECIS

Submitted by EMSA

<i>Summary</i>	This document presents a concept for the possible link between SSN and CECIS ¹ and its technical requirements.
<i>Action to be taken</i>	As per paragraph 4
<i>Related documents</i>	SSN HLSG 10: agenda item 6.1.3 "SSN-CECIS link"

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The HLSG 10 (Brussels, 16 January 2014) agreed on the principle of creating a link between SSN and CECIS. The HLSG requested EMSA and the Commission to work out a detailed proposal and report back at the next SSN HLSG. The relevant paper (agenda item 6.1.3) is included in Annex 1.

In accordance with the agreement of HLSG10, only SSN will be used for reporting POLWARN and POLINF messages, whereas CECIS will remain the system to request for international assistance (POLFAC). To avoid the double reporting, POLWARN and POLINF should be provided from SSN to CECIS.

The HLSG delegated EMSA and the Commission to further work on a detailed proposal and report back at the next SSN HLSG.

2. FURTHER ANALYSIS OF THE PROPOSALS

The following phasing approach is envisaged:

2.1. Short term solution (e-mails)

¹ The Common Emergency and Information System operated by DG ECHO

This solution foresees the distribution via e mails of selected POLWARN/POLINF to Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) and marine pollution authorities (national CECIS users).

CECIS users (national users and ERCC) can receive the SSN POLWARN/POLINF notifications via emails through the existing IR distribution tool. Following the email reception, they will have to access the SSN Textual Interface (entering their login and password) to get the detailed information.

This option will require the SSN NCA administrators to configure their CECIS national users in the SSN management console. Detailed information on the user configuration will be provided at a later stage.

EMSA will create a specific SSN user for ERCC which will be included in the "European Union" recipient list. The distribution of emails for POLWARN/POLINF to ERCC will be possible by using:

- the national SSN system (XML protocol) and quoting the Country code "EU" in the attribute "RecipientCountry";
- the central SSN system (Textual Interface) and selecting the box "EU" in the distribution list.

2.2. Medium term solution (XML messages)

CECIS will need to develop an XML interface based on the existing SSN Incident Report framework (XML RG 3.00) to implement an automatic exchange with SSN. Two technical options are foreseen:

2.2.1 Option A: SSN forwards information to CECIS ("push" mechanism)

According to Option A, SSN will automatically "push" all the POLWARN/POLINF to CECIS when notified to SSN. The central SSN will be amended to forward POLWARN/POLINF to CECIS for all Incident Reports (distributed and non-distributed). In case an update of the original message is provided to SSN, this update will be automatically "pushed" to CECIS.

The data of SSN POLWARN/POLINF will be processed by CECIS and made available to its users. CECIS users may also, in parallel, receive POLWARN/POLINF emails through the IR distribution tool as explained in 2.1 above.

CECIS will have to implement the "SSN2MS_IncidentDetail_Tx.xml" message to be able to receive such information.

2.2.2 Option B: CECIS requests information from SSN ("pull" mechanism)

According to the Option B, CECIS users will access the POLWARN/POLINF via a dedicated request/response mechanism based on the query "GetSpecificIR²". CECIS will receive POLWARN/POLINF from SSN only when a specific request is triggered by a CECIS user. The original POLWARN/POLINF and its updates will not be automatically distributed to CECIS by SSN (as it would happen through the automatic "push" mechanism described in option A).

² The query "GetSpecificIR" can be run by quoting the "IncidentID", which is the unique identifier of the IR. This information is included in the IR emails distributed by SSN.

The CECIS users will be informed about the existence of a POLWARN/POLINF creation/update in SSN, by email via the existing IR distribution tool. Then they will retrieve through CECIS the specific "IncidentID" by running the query "GetSpecificIR".

CECIS will have to implement the "MS2SSN_IncidentReport_Req.xml" and the subsequent response "SSN2MS_IncidentReport_Res.xml".

Whatever option will be implemented, the POLFAC functionalities in the SSN textual interface will be replaced by a hyperlink pointing to the CECIS web application.

The "SSN Incident Report Guidelines" should be updated to clarify that the POLFAC shall be notified only through CECIS. Regarding the XML interface, no change will take place to avoid any technical impact to Member States.

3. CURRENT STATUS

Following an assessment subsequent to the decision of the HLSG 10, EMSA has informed the Commission that the system can send to ERCC the POLWARN and POLINF messages received from SSN using existing functionality of SSN (as described in par. 2.1).

EMSA also sent the technical specifications of the Incident Report interface which DG ECHO needs to develop to accept the message in XML (system to system communication) in order CECIS to receive the SSN POLWARN and POLINF received notifications (as described in par. 2.2).

The implementation of the proposals as per 2.1 and 2.2 above needs to be further discussed and agreed with the Commission within the mandate given by the SSN HLSG 10. The SSN HLSG will be informed on the progress and submitted with the completed proposal for approval at HLSG 11.

4. ACTIONS REQUIRED

Member States are invited to take note of the above information.

EMSA will keep the SSN Group informed of any further development.

Annex 1: HLSG10 – Agenda item 6.1.3

ANNEX 1

10th SafeSeaNet High Level Steering Group
Brussels, 16 January 2014

Meeting document:

Access to SafeSeaNet and pilot projects using SSN data – status/feedback report

SSN – CECIS link

(Agenda item 6.1.3)

1. Background

EMSA received the attached letter, dated 30/08/2013, (Appendix A) from the chair of the Bonn Agreement working group on Operational, Technical and Scientific Questions concerning Counter-Pollution Activities (OTSOPA).

The letter is also addressed to the SSN HLSG, raising the issue of having one reporting system to avoid multiple reporting by Member States (MS) to SafeSeaNet (SSN) and the Common Emergency Communication and Information System (CECIS) managed by DG ECHO, for matters related to marine pollution. The letter was sent following discussions on EU reporting requirements (CECIS/SSN) for pollution incidents during OTSOPA 2013 (22-24 May 2013).

This document provides an overview of SSN and CECIS frameworks and, taking into account the letter from OTSOPA, proposes a way forward.

2. SSN and CECIS frameworks related to marine pollution

2.1 SSN

In accordance with Article 22 of the Directive 2002/59/EC as amended, MS and EMSA should develop their national and central applications respectively to process the information referred to in this Directive. The objective of the Directive is, among others, the better prevention and detection of pollution by ships. Annex III of the Directive clarifies that SSN shall be used for the exchange of maritime information including that related to marine environment protection. Article 16 of the same Directive requires MS to send to SSN reports on maritime incident (including the pollution report) with the objective to inform the MS authorities located along the planned route of the vessel.

Pollution reports sent to SSN follow the POLREP framework to match the corresponding system used within regional sea conventions. The POLREP system in regional agreements consists of the following messages:

- **POLWARN (POLlution WARning):** Provides information on warning of pollution or threat of pollution.
- **POLINF (POLlution INFormation):** Allows detailed supplementary information to be added.

- POLFAC (POLlution FACilities): Addresses matters related to assistance.

POLWARN and POLINF satisfy compliance with the requirements of the Directive. Moreover, the messaging framework implemented in SSN includes also POLFAC to cover the whole POLREP system. The POLREP messages are distributed through SSN to the relevant designated authorities in the other MS located on the planned route of the vessel via e-mail or XML (machine to machine interface). MS may carry out any appropriate inspection in their ports either on their own initiative or at the request of another MS and provide feedback on the original POLREP sent on the results of the actions taken. Detailed information on SSN Incident Reports (including POLREP) is available at:

<http://www.emsa.europa.eu/documents/technical-documentation/224-ssn-documentation/1137-ssn-incident-report-guidelines-v191.html>

2.2 CECIS

The Union Mechanism managed by the European Commission (DG ECHO) facilitates the mobilisation and coordination of Member States' assistance in the event of disasters. The structure of the Mechanism includes a Common Emergency Communication and Information System (CECIS), a web based application, linking the Commission, contact points in the MS and EMSA.

According to Article 14 of the Decision 1313/2013/EU the Member State in which a disaster causing trans-boundary effects has occurred shall notify potentially affected Member States and, where the effects are potentially significant, the Commission. This reporting obligation **shall not apply where the obligation of notification has already been addressed under other Union legislation**. However, the same article obliges MS to notify the Commission when a possible request for assistance can be expected, to enable the Commission to inform the other Member States and to activate its competent services. Article 15 further details **requesting and offering assistance**. All requests for assistance shall be made through CECIS.

When national authorities of an affected country wish to request assistance, they open a new emergency in CECIS. This includes providing basic information in the "Emergency Synopsis" in the form of a downloadable document or by filling the "Situation" field (POLWARN information) and using the "Request Overview" section, where the kind of required assistance must be specified (POLFAC information). The same "Request Overview" is used by other MS and EMSA to respond to requests for assistance by making offers.

The authorities of an affected country may decide who should be notified and by which means of communication (e-mail, fax or both).

3. Synergies of a possible SSN-CECIS link for POLREP exchange

As a follow up to the letter of OTSOPA, a meeting between DG ECHO and EMSA experts took place in Lisbon on 22 October 2013. The meeting concluded that there is need to try and avoid multiple reporting by MS to SSN and CECIS for POLREP. DG ECHO also noted that a solution has to be found for the third countries which participate in CECIS³, to provide for the needs within Regional Agreements and to mainstream the overall system of notifications.

The main conclusions of that meeting are summarised below:

³ Currently CECIS users include 31 Participating States (EU 28, NO, IS and LI). The new version of CECIS dedicated to maritime incidents will be open to all contracting parties to regional agreements, including third countries. It will become operational in 2014.

a. Objectives and scope of SSN and CECIS for maritime incidents

SSN is the EU system where the EU MS shall report POLWARN and POLINF information.

CECIS is the EU system for requesting and offering assistance – exchanging POLFAC. It also contains a database of MS and EMSA resources.

b. SSN forward information to CECIS

SSN should provide for a possibility to push the POLWARN and POLINF into CECIS using the existing SSN Incident Report distribution tool. This tool allows the pushing of the Incident Reports using XML or e-mail to a selected list of recipients which can include CECIS.

In order to receive the pushed information, CECIS will have to implement the relevant part of the messaging framework defined in the SSN reference guide. Until such a development will take place, CECIS can receive the SSN POLREP notifications via e-mails.

c. CECIS request information from SSN

A request mechanism should be developed in CECIS to allow its users to access the POLWARN and POLINF information in SSN. This information shall be used to populate "Emergency Synopsis" while making a request for international assistance.

CECIS should employ the same SSN messaging framework used by the SSN users of the Member States. This request will only be authorised for users with the appropriate access right.

d. POLFAC functionality

The current POLFAC functionality in SSN should be replaced by the link to CECIS (which is the entry point for requests for assistance). Regarding the XML interface, and to avoid technical impact on MS no change will take place; instead the SSN Incident Report Guidelines should be updated to clarify that the POLFAC should be notified through CECIS, accessing it either directly or through the SSN web interface.

e. Access for third countries (contracting parties to regional agreements)

SSN can distribute the POLWARN and POLINF information via e-mail to the authorised users of the third countries. The possibility for third countries to use SSN for notifying POLWARN and POLINF should be further investigated from a policy point of view (technically it is feasible). In the meantime CECIS can be used by the third countries to report all POLREP messages.

Actions proposed

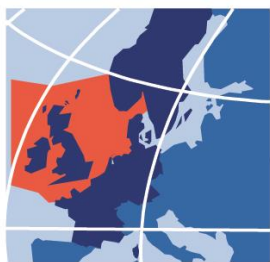
The Commission invites the HLSG to:

- a. take note of the information provided;
- b. agree on the principle of creating a link between SSN and CECIS to avoid multiple POLREP reporting;
- c. comment/agree on the proposed synergies between SSN and CECIS regarding POLREP;
- d. delegate EMSA and the Commission to further work on a detailed proposal and report back at the next SSN HLSG;
- e. agree to inform OTSOPA and other relevant regional agreements on the follow up actions.

Appendixes:

Appendix A - Letter from OTSOPA chair to the SSN HLSG

Appendix A – Letter from OTSOPA chair to the SSN HLSG



Bonn Agreement Accord de Bonn

To the EMSA SafeSeaNet High Level User Group

30 August 2013

Notification to EMSA SafeSeaNet

Notification and reporting of incidents is an important issue. In the last years the countries/member states have experienced that the system for notification and reporting has become more complicated.

Because of these experiences, the Bonn Agreement Working Group on Operational, Technical and Scientific Questions concerning Counter-Pollution Activities (OTSOPA) has discussed these challenges in several meetings. In the last meeting of the working group, it was decided that the Bonn Agreement should send a letter to the SafeSeaNet High Level User Group to raise some of the challenges with the existing notification and report system. This was also an issue raised in the 9th InterSecretariat meeting (28.02.2013) in Lisbon.

The Bonn Agreement was established in 1969 and over many years the POLREP notification system was established. This system has been used for many years during incidents and exercises. As you know POLREP is a set of messages: POLWARN; POLINF and POLFAC. In recent years the structures of the three parts have been updated and text related to polluted wildlife has been integrated.

After the approval of Directive 2002/59, it is an obligation for member states to send reports among other things on maritime incidents through the SafeSeaNet system. A challenge is that the Guidelines for this system refer to the POLREP system which was originally developed for notification.

In addition to this the CECIS system has been launched and implemented by the EU. CECIS is a system for requesting assistance. In addition CECIS can also be used for notification. The CECIS system has recently been updated.

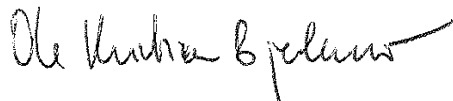
We have learned that it is difficult to use two systems especially for those Bonn Agreement Contracting Parties that are members of two or three different agreements. We have also learned that the CECIS could prove to be a useful platform for sharing Bonn Agreement POLREPS if the same system was used in all different Regional Agreements.

Based on the discussions in the OTSOPA meeting, the general view of the meeting is that it is for the EU to sort the problem of double reporting and it would prefer to use only one system. We know that there are no requirements to report accidents in CECIS and that the purpose of the application is to facilitate communication and exchange of disaster management related

information, such as requests for and offers of assistance. Incident reporting is only required in SSN which allows sending notifications to relevant countries as well as to multiple authorities within the same country.

Based on the information above, we invite the SSN High Level user group to consider the possibility of discussing one system for notification and reporting within Europe. It might be possible to link SSN and CECIS so that the member states only have one platform for submission of notifications and reports. If possible we are willing to attend one of the meetings of the SSN High Level user group to further explain our views.

Yours faithfully



Chair of OTSOPA