ADMIN BOARD MEMBERS PUT HEADS TOGETHER TO SET 2020–24 PRIORITIES
EMSA’s administrative board on 20–21 March was a break from the norm. Board members, assisted by EMSA staff, took the opportunity to exchange views on the upcoming five-year strategy in an interactive brainstorming workshop. In the morning session, discussions were structured around EMSA’s main areas of work (maritime safety, security, environmental protection and single market facilitation) and, in the afternoon, around the three roles EMSA typically performs for its stakeholders, namely as service provider to the member states and European Commission; as a reliable partner for bodies in the EU and beyond; and, as a knowledge broker and innovator. The ideas are now being compiled and will form the basis of the new strategy, which is expected to be ready in the autumn. During the second day of the admin board, business as usual resumed and members were presented with the consolidated annual activity report as told by agency staff in the 2018 highlights video.

EMSA ASSISTS FRENCH AUTHORITIES FOLLOWING GRANDE AMERICA ACCIDENT
EMSA has been providing emergency assistance at the request of the French authorities after the Grande America vehicle carrier sank on 12 March in the Bay of Biscay. EMSA was alerted of the incident via the EU vessel traffic monitoring and information system SafeSeaNet, and the CleanSeaNet satellite service was activated shortly afterwards by the French authorities. Through CleanSeaNet, EMSA was able to provide around 150 synthetic aperture radar images, thereby helping to monitor the area of the incident and track the evolution of the detected spill for both the French and Spanish authorities. In the clean-up operations, two of EMSA’s standby oil spill response vessels were deployed and recovered substantial quantities of the oil spilled, assisted by the monitoring capabilities of the remotely piloted aircraft system quad-copters on board.

BUILDING UP NATIONAL CAPACITY ACROSS FLAG, PORT AND COASTAL STATES
EMSA held a workshop on capacity building activities in Lisbon on 26–27 March. The workshop aimed at finetuning the concept of DONA, the enhancement of technical support offered under the Structural Reform Support Exercise for a series of EU legislation as well as on the options for the European Commission provided information on the Refit eCertificates and future activities planned by EMSA. In addition, the European Commission provided information on the Refit Exercise for a series of EU legislation as well as on the options for technical support offered under the Structural Reform Support Service. In general, the concept of DONA, the enhancement of THETIS and the IMSAS training were warmly welcomed and endorsed by member states.

TAKING A PROACTIVE APPROACH TO CYBERSECURITY AWARENESS
On 6 March EMSA held a practical table top exercise on maritime cybersecurity geared towards member state authorities working in the field of maritime security. The purpose of the exercise was to raise cybersecurity awareness through a series of real life scenarios, and was attended by 50 participants from member states, the European Commission, EFCA, ENISA and BIMCO. The first part consisted of a number of presentations which would prepare the participants to address the real life scenarios given in the second part of the exercise. A number of useful considerations were made and conclusions drawn, leading participants to request similar workshops in the future on this increasingly critical topic. The cybersecurity exercise was held back-to-back with the 54th meeting of the Stakeholders Advisory Group on Maritime Security and the 75th MARSEC committee meeting, both hosted by the EMSA at Malmo.

DISTANCE LEARNING MODULES ON CYBERSECURITY NOW OPEN TO ALL
Positive feedback on the distance learning course on maritime cybersecurity awareness launched by EMSA on its MACKS platform in July 2018 has led to the decision to make the course available to the public. The modules were published on the EMSA website in March 2019 and look at both the international and European legal frameworks in place as well as the challenges to be overcome.

EFCA AND EMSA SIGN NEW AGREEMENT EXTENDING COOPERATION TO NEW AREAS
The service level agreement between an EMSA and EFCA, which traditionally included only maritime data sharing for fisheries monitoring and control has been revised, extending cooperation between the two agencies into new areas. The agreement now includes the possibility for EMSA to support EFCA activities with Remotely Piloted Aircraft System-based services as well as with suitable vessels from its network of standby oil spill response vessels. EMSA recently received a request to equip an EFCA chartered vessel temporarily with pollution response equipment – the latest revision to the cooperation agreement covers this service. As a result, another vessel will soon be ready for pollution response operations and can be added to the resources available to member states in case of a spill at sea. Closer cooperation between both agencies is foreseen in the respective founding regulations in the area of coast guard-related support to member state authorities.

RECENTLY PUBLISHED ‘OUTLOOK 2019’ GIVES VISUAL AND CONCISE VIEW OF AGENCY’S UPCOMING ACTIVITIES
EMSA’s Outlook 2019 contains the concrete action and steps the Agency plans to take in 2019 to deliver on its multi-annual strategic objectives. It represents a condensed version of the Single Programming Document. The publication is organised by activity with planned developments outlined in a short narrative. The outcome is reported in the corresponding Consolidated Annual Activity Report which shows the results achieved against the objectives set.

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VACANCIES: Administrative Officer for the Common Information Sharing Environment CISE (Deadline: 2/5/2019). For more information, please visit EMSA website.