

11th BOARD MEETING IN BRUSSELS

The Administrative Board met in Brussels on 14th June. It adopted the draft annual report 2004 subject to editorial amendments and gave its green light to launching the tender procedure for stand-by contracts for oil recovery vessels. The Board also approved the financial statement 2004 (accounts) subject to receiving a "certification without reserve" from the Court of Auditors in the coming weeks. At last, it endorsed the strategy for the move to Lisbon (*see below*).

HIGH LEVEL PANEL REPORT ON DOUBLE HULLED TANKERS PUBLISHED

At the request of EMSA, a high level panel of experts (comprised of BIMCO, CESA, the European Commission, IACS, ICS, IMO, Intertanko, OCIMF and EMSA) was set up to determine the best ways of further improving the levels of safety provided by double hulled tankers. The panel met 6 times between April 2004 and April 2005, and its work resulted in a 42 page report which has just been published. The identified concerns are both real and significant, and it is considered that action is now needed from both regulators and industry to mitigate the risks that these issues pose to the safe and clean transportation of oil by ships at sea. The report contains 8 specific recommendations with the aim of achieving the desired changes, and it can be found at:

<http://www.emsa.eu.int/Docs/workshop/dh%20tanker%20panel%20final%20report%20complete%203.6.05.pdf>

EMSA IN LISBON IN EARLY 2006

There is now definitive news on the permanent location of the Agency in Lisbon. The steering committee, which comprises the Secretary of State for National Defence and Sea Affairs, the city of Lisbon, the port authority, the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction and EMSA, met recently to discuss the plans for the permanent headquarters, the project structure and the time schedule for delivery. At the meeting, it was agreed that the availability of the new city centre headquarters would be scheduled for November 2007, and that it will have the capacity to host about 200 persons. Before that, the Agency will operate from a temporary headquarters, which is located on the site of "Expo 98" towards the northern end of the city. The re-location of staff from Brussels to Lisbon is planned for the first half of 2006.

LONG TERM PERSPECTIVE: EMSA IN 2006

Willem de Ruyter, EMSA's Executive Director, recently discussed future priorities with the staff of the Agency. He said that, in 2006, EMSA's two main policy priorities will be: safety assessment and inspection (classification, STCW and the visits programme to Member States) and pollution response (a satellite service centre, the second phase of stand-by chartered vessel operations and hazardous/noxious substances and chemical spills). The preliminary draft budget for 2006 is anticipated to be €20,83 million for operating the Agency itself, plus a further €29 million for anti-pollution tasks. He said that the management structure has been stabilised for the foreseeable future, and that at the end of 2006, EMSA is likely to have up to 132 staff, plus 20 experts seconded from Member States.

TWO NEW MANAGERS RECRUITED

The EMSA unit which deals with finance and human resources has a new head, Tom van Hees, who was previously responsible for external personal at the European Cooperation Office in the European Commission. Previously, he dealt with HR and finance issues in international industry. In addition, the unit which deals with implementation of EU maritime legislation is now led by Panagiotis Petropoulos, who has had a long term career with the Greek Coastguard, ending as a senior commander. Following this, he worked for 4 years at the Greek Permanent Representation in Brussels as maritime attaché before becoming a member of cabinet with 2 Merchant Navy ministers.

TUTORING PROJECT ON PSC IN CYPRUS AND LATVIA

A tutoring project on Port State Control (PSC), organised by EMSA in cooperation with the Paris MOU, was held in Cyprus and Latvia in May. Two PSC experts from established Paris MOU Member States advised local inspectors on issues such as: which vessels should be selected for inspection; what to look at during a PSC inspection; how to judge a deficiency and; how to report on an inspection. A request for further specific training on PSC procedures was formulated by local inspectors. This tutoring project on PSC procedures concerns also Estonia, Lithuania and Malta.

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