

SAFEMED III Seminar on delegation of tasks, monitoring and auditing Recognised Security Organisations

Lisbon, 01 and 02 October 2015

Summary report

The SAFEMED III Seminar on delegation of tasks, monitoring and auditing Recognised Security Organisations (RSOs) took place from the 1st to 2nd October 2015 at EMSA premises in Lisbon. It was attended by 12 participants from SAFEMED III countries (Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia), EMSA experts as well as representatives from Norway and Malta.

This seminar was organised following a specific request formulated by the SAFEMED III countries' representatives during the last Workshop addressing ISPS Code and institutional capacity, led by EMSA from the 7th to 8th October 2014 in Lisbon.

The seminar on delegation of tasks, monitoring and auditing RSOs aimed to enable participants developing practical approach to monitoring and auditing of RSOs. It provided a forum for an interactive dialogue between the participants and speakers and allowed sharing best practices and experience through the presentations delivered by SAFEMED III representatives (Algeria and Tunisia) and European countries (Norway and Malta) on the monitoring and auditing of RSOs by national administrations. Throughout their presentations the speakers notably introduced reasons for delegating of tasks, criteria established for delegation, procedures set up for monitoring of the RSOs as well as challenges met and the way put forward in order to handle them.

During the seminar the participants also expressed specific interest with regard to EMSA's role in the field of maritime security and the way inspections of the EU MS's administrations and RSOs are conducted by EMSA in order to ensure compliance with the relevant EU maritime security requirements. Some participants noted that a similar inspection by EMSA in the Mediterranean countries would achieve further harmonization, especially in the light of current sensitive situation in the region.

During the discussion that followed presentations it was emphasized that delegation of tasks to an RSO implies delegation of authority only, but not delegation of responsibility.

The speakers highlighted the need for the maritime administration to verify, before recognising, if the RSO has sufficient resources and knowledge to correctly perform the tasks to be delegated. It was mentioned that the delegation of maritime security tasks should be based on a written agreement between the maritime administration and the RSO. It was also highlighted how such agreement should be structured and the most important topics to be addressed. Participants were provided with examples of such written agreement signed by Malta and Norway. The partial delegation of tasks was indicated as one of the possible ways to ensure an effective monitoring on the activities the RSO carries out on behalf of the Flag State. Emphasis was given on the importance of a communication system between maritime administration and RSOs to ensure that the system works effectively. It should grant full and immediate access to verification audit reports and any relevant documentation enabling the maritime administration to keep control on the activities undertaken on its behalf.

Confidentiality is another issue that was addressed by the group. It was stressed that RSO personnel carrying out security inspections or handling sensitive security information should have appropriate level of security vetting in accordance with the administration requirements.

Audit procedures were also covered during the seminar. It was highlighted that auditing is an evidence gathering process purporting to seek for compliance and not for non-conformities. Different types of audits were presented to the participants. A case study related to practical issues during the performance of an RSO audit was conducted during the second day of the seminar. It aimed to develop practical skills of the participants by putting the theory discussed beforehand into practice.

The seminar was concluded by a final discussion. The overall outcome of the meeting was very positive and confirmed the need for practical trainings in the field of maritime security.