Minutes of the meeting

6th meeting of the Pilot Project for the Facilitation of Ship to Shore Reporting

Held via Video conference

29 June 2021

Date: 16 July 2021

1. Background

The meeting was opened and chaired by Mr Lazaros Aichmalotidis, Head of Unit for Simplification, and was held via Video Conference (VC) due to the public health situation. Mr. Alexander Hoffmann from Unit D2 "Maritime Safety" represented the European Commission (DG MOVE).

16 participants from **Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, France, Latvia, the Netherlands, Norway** and **Sweden** attended the meeting.

All meeting documentation and presentations are available at: http://emsa.europa.eu/ssn-main/documents/workshop-presentations-a-reports/item/4441-6th-meeting-of-the-pilot-project-for-the-facilitation-of-ship-to-shore-reporting.html

The meeting agenda is attached in Annex 1.

2. Objective of the meeting

The objective of the meeting was to:

- Get Member States' feedback on the operational tests of the Integrated Report Distribution (IRD) system's phase 2;
- Present the newly developed IRD phase 3 and the progress report on the VDE Capability project;
- Propose the future developments of IRD (phase 4); and
- Present the updated project's roadmap.

3. Meeting outcome

3.1 Introduction

The chairman welcomed the participants and recalled that this pilot project is being executed under the Interoperability Project (EU-financed project). He highlighted that although the project started in 2019 quite a lot of results have been already produced thanks to very interactive way of working between EMSA and project participants. The chairman and the Commission informed the participants that the project gained lots of visibility and interest and EMSA aims to find ways to continue the project after the end of the Interoperability Project.

3.2 Approval of the agenda and follow-up actions from previous meeting

The group agreed with the agenda provided in Annex 1.

EMSA summarised the status of the follow-up actions from the previous meeting and informed the participants about the on-going actions related to the testing of IRD.

EMSA informed the participants that following an invitation of the IALA, EMSA contributed to the work of Ship Reporting Correspondence Group (SRCG) on the guideline on ship reporting from a shore-based perspective. The document was approved by IALA Council 73. **EMSA** has also participated in the work of the IMO EGDH group which discussed and approved the ship reporting system dataset (IMO Resolution A.851(20)). The resulting IMO reference dataset is consistent with the outcomes of the pilot project.

The participants **noted** the information presented.

3.3 Member State feedback on operational testing of IRD phase 2

EMSA reminded that the IRD phase 2 was deployed in Production on 09 December 2020. The guidance document for the operational tests of the IRD service was presented at the last meeting and approved by the participants. **EMSA** invited MSs to perform operational tests and provide their feedback and possible ideas for improvements. **Denmark**, **Estonia** and **Finland** accepted to share their feedback on the IRD phase 2.

Denmark informed that tests had been performed out of Great Belt area. The authorities were impressed by the amount of data available in the system and they were happy to see that the information they provide to SSN is being re-used. Denmark reported that authorities sometimes felt overwhelmed by the amount of information. The focus in the Danish system is very much in monitoring dynamic information (e.g. draft) and they are looking forward to start using IRD phase 3. Denmark also mentioned that to fully benefit from the available information, a

system to system communication with the nation system would be needed. Denmark also mentioned that the system will be presented to the Danish customs which may be interested in testing it.

Belgium asked if a coastal station could set up a direct system to system communication or whether it must always go through a national system. **EMSA** replied that the direct connection between coastal stations and IRD can be established at the request of the NCA.

Estonia informed that the IRD system was tested by the VTS Centre Tallinn Traffic. The GOFREP area was used for testing and information was made available to VTS via the web user interface and e-mails. Estonia reported that due to the size of area too many e-mails were generated, and it was impossible to consult them all. For the future, the system to system communication would have to be established to fully benefit from the information provided. Estonia reported that the IRD does not replace voice communication with the ship which is always needed and that they detected during the test that the Russian T-AIS information is made available to them although the Russian Federation is not part of SSN. **EMSA** responded that the IRD is still in a pilot project phase and all reporting obligations and procedures for the ships remain unchanged. Regarding the Russian T-AIS information EMSA replied that this is in line with the relevant HELCOM agreement.

Finland informed that the IRD was tested by the Finish VTS (Fintraffic) and by the Finnish Border Guards. Tests executed by the VTS were focused on tanker traffic in the Gulf of Finland and the Finish Border Guards were interested in getting reports for specific ships (list of ships provided and ships of specific flags). Finland reported some issues with the quality of ship details and lack of information about voyage since most of the ships were coming from non-EU ports. Finland confirmed that the most useful data is the one coming from Incident Reports and MRS reports as other data is already available through other sources. Finland highlighted that the e-mails and web user interface were useful during the tests, but in operational use, information should be available through system-to-system interfaces and integrated with the operational systems.

Belgium, **France**, **Norway** and **Poland** had also actively tested IRD and their feedback had already been shared at the previous meeting.

Several issues and ideas for future improvements were provided during the meeting. Some of them are already foreseen in IRD phase 4 and others will be investigated by EMSA for future releases (**Action Point 1**).

Member States authorities willing to participate in the operational tests should follow the procedure described in chapter 6 of the guidance document (**Action Point 2**). Webinar training sessions will be organised by EMSA for the authorities involved in the tests if necessary.

3.3 IRD phase 3 – presentation of the new system release

EMSA informed the participants that the development of IRD phase 3 took place between November 2020 and June 2021. The new version was installed in EMSA Test environment on 8 June 2021 and is currently tested by EMSA; it will be deployed to the Production environment by the end of July 2021. The following features were added in the IRD phase 3 and presented to participants in a live demonstration:

a. Graphical User Interface (GUI) for ship data providers allowing them to submit and consult VTS/MRS reports and to consult authorities' responses via Internet;

b. extension of the existing ISR message with data from VTS/MRS reports;

c. updates to the existing GUI for authorities to show VTS/MRS reports received from ships and to add the possibility to provide responses to these reports.

The feedback from the participants on the new release was positive.

Denmark found the new IRD release very promising and asked if it would be possible to get access to EMSA Pre-Prod environment in order to start with the tests and present it the Danish authorities. EMSA will contact Denmark to grant access to the Pre-Prod environment (**Action Point 3**).

France asked if it was possible to modify the MRS reports after VHF contact with the vessel. **EMSA** replied that the ship will have the possibility to update their MRS reports but update of reports by authorities is not possible. EMSA indicated that authorities may provide feedback to the ship through the Authority Response feature.

Norway asked if the VDES on-board application will require access to the Internet. **EMSA** replied that the VDES on-board application will be installed on the computer and no access to Internet will be required. All the communication with shore will be done via VDES. Nevertheless, the ships will have the possibility to use either Internet (via the IRD GUI) or VDES (via the on-board application).

EMSA invited the MSs to test the IRD phase 3 once deployed to the Production environment and provide feedback and possible ideas for improvements. EMSA indicated that the operational tests with authorities and ships are expected to start in September. In view of the operational tests, Member States are invited to identify the ships which would participate in the tests (**Action Point 4**).

3.4 IRD phase 3 – VDES on-board application – progress report

EMSA reminded that the project will test VDE-SAT connections in addition to Internet communication. Testing of the VDE-SAT will be executed in close cooperation with the European Space Agency (ESA) and Space Norway (SPN) with whom EMSA reached an agreement to participate in a VDE-SAT Application and Services Platform (VASP[1]) demonstration project using a Norwegian satellite as a testbed. EMSA is responsible for the development of a specific ship on-board application (OBA) to allow sending VTS/MRS reports to shore and consulting responses from authorities.

The contract for the development of the OBA was signed in May 2021. The development is ongoing and is expected to be completed by July 2021.

The OBA will offer two main functionalities:

- Graphical user interface (GUI) for ship data providers, to consult, submit and update VTS/MRS reports and consult authorities' responses;
- Backend services to orchestrate message exchanges with the VDE-SAT terminal installed on board the ship.

The operational testing is foreseen to be carried out around the BAREP reporting area with 8 vessels flying the Norwegian flag. Tests with a first group of ships are expected in August.

EMSA gave an update on the latest IMO Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 103) decisions related to VDES. The Committee agreed to include a post-biennial agenda output on "Development of amendments to SOLAS chapters IV and V and performance standards and guidelines to introduce VHF Data Exchange System (VDES)" and tasked the NCSR Sub-Committee to develop the related SOLAS amendments to include VDES as a carriage requirement. With a view to expedite the development of the relevant SOLAS VDES amendments, MSC 103 also agreed to task the NCSR Sub-Committee to complete its work in two sessions and exempted the process of introducing SOLAS amendments from having to follow a four-year amendment cycle. These decisions are of high importance and shall accelerate all developments related to VDES technology from an IMO regulatory and industry point of view.

3.6 IRD phase 4 and Project roadmap

EMSA informed that the end-date of the pilot project was extended to January 2022. At the last meeting the project participants agreed that EMSA would further work on the IRD to address issues and feedback received during the testing. EMSA worked on the technical specifications for an IRD phase 4 and launched a contract for its development at the beginning of June. The form of the contract ("time and means") will provide more flexibility in the definition of requirements and in setting priorities allowing EMSA to address issues reported by testers in a more efficient way.

[1] More information about VASP project can be found at: https://business.esa.int/projects/vasp

The following features should be addressed in IRD phase 4:

a. IRD will be connected to new sources of information. The Integrated Ship Report (ISR) will connect to the Port Call Detection service and to the new Central Ship Database (CSD) that is currently being developed.
b. New ABM algorithms will be available when configuring the distribution service (Entering Area and Line Crossing).
c. The ISR message will be extended to include an indication of the trigger (e.g. ABM and Hazmat received).
d. Selection of individual data attributes within the ISR data blocks will be possible.
e. Repeated ABM alerts will not generate duplicated ISRs.
f. Other reported issues will be addressed (e.g. show name of the distribution service on each page, keep the last filter used for searching, possibility to choose attributes to be exported, possibility to choose e-mail format between HTML and plain text, new attributes in the subject of the e-mail).
g. Connection with Norway's SESAME 2/ BALT SAFE project and use of the "Request and Respond Service" for getting reporting obligations will be investigated.

EMSA explained that the development would start in July and there would be two releases:

- A first release to be made available in November.
- A second release to be made available at the end of the pilot project in January 2022.

EMSA presented the updated schedule of the pilot project:

Expected schedule	Tasks
July 2021 – September 2021	Functional tests of IRD phase 3
July 2021 – December 2021	Development of IRD phase 4
September 2021	7th meeting to prepare the operational tests of IRD phase 3.
December 2021	8th meeting to conclude the pilot project and collect feedback for the final report.

Table 1: Project Roadmap.

The participants **agreed** with the updated project schedule.

4. Summary of the follow up actions

The chairman thanked all participants for their active participation, noted the interest in the proposed solutions and indicated that the meeting was again very productive and constructive.

The follow up actions are presented in Annex 2.

The next meeting is planned for September 2021 with the objective of preparing the operational tests of IRD phase 3 **(Action Point 5)**. In the meantime, the group will work by correspondence.

EMSA will draft the minutes of the meeting and will provide the participants with copies of the meeting presentations **(Action Point 6)**.

Annex 1 – Meeting Agenda

Time	Agenda Item	Speakers
09:00 – 09:15	Opening / Introduction 6.1 Agenda 6.2 Follow-up actions	EMSA
09:15 – 10:15	Member State feedback on operational testing of the Integrated Report Distribution (IRD) phase 2	Member States
10:15 – 11:15	6.3 IRD phase 3 – presentation of new version and exchange of view on its use	EMSA Member States
11:15 – 11:30	6.4 IRD phase 3 – VDES on-board application – progress report	EMSA
11:30 – 11:45	6.5 IRD phase 4 – progress report	EMSA
11:45 – 12:00	Discussion and summary of the follow up actions	EMSA

Annex 2 – Follow up actions

Action Point	Topic and Action	Responsible
1	Investigate issues and ideas for future improvements provided during the meeting.	EMSA
2	Participate in the operational tests as specified in the procedure described in chapter 6 of the guidance document.	Member States
3	Grant access to the Pre-Prod environment for Denmark.	EMSA
4	Test the IRD phase 3 once deployed to the Production environment and provide feedback and possible ideas for improvements. Identify the ships which would participate in the tests.	Member States
5	Plan next meeting in September 2021 with the objective of preparing the operational tests of IRD phase 3.	EMSA
6	Draft the minutes of the meeting and provide attendees with copies of the meeting presentations.	EMSA

European Maritime Safety Agency
Praça Europa 4
1249-206 Lisbon, Portugal
Tel +351 21 1209 200
Fax +351 21 1209 210
emsa.europa.eu