

PRESS RELEASE

14 March 2019

EMSA contingency plan for emergencies activated in response to the Grande America accident

Following the fire on board the Grande America which subsequently sank on 12 March in the Bay of Biscay, EMSA has been providing emergency assistance at the request of the French authorities.

It was reported that the vessel, Grande America, a vehicle carrier with container capacity (IMO 9130937, 56 642 GT, built 1997, Italian flagged) had been carrying 15 000 tons of cargo (860 tons of which were dangerous goods) and approximately 2 478 tons of bunkers (comprising 197 tm gas oil / 2 211 tm fuel oil / 70 tm lube oil). EMSA received a report alerting it of the incident via the EU vessel traffic monitoring and information system [SafeSeaNet](#).

EMSA's [CleanSeaNet](#) satellite service was activated by the French authorities to support in the detection of oil spills, lost containers and wreckage. Both SAR (synthetic aperture radar) and optical acquisitions have been provided. In addition to the detection of containers, the images identified an oil spill. CleanSeaNet satellite services will continue to monitor the area of the incident over the coming days to track the evolution of the spill and localisation of containers.

Two of EMSA's standby oil spill response vessels are in preparation for deployment and are scheduled to be on site tomorrow afternoon (15 March).

The [VN Partisan](#) has on board the standard equipment arrangement for mechanical recovery of oil. The arrangement comprises sweeping arms, an offshore boom, and high capacity skimmer system. It is supported by radar-based oil slick detection and a [remotely piloted aircraft system](#) (quadcopter) operated by a trained pilot. The heated storage capacity of the vessel for recovered oil is 1 000 m³.

The [Ria de Vigo](#) also has on board the standard equipment arrangement for mechanical recovery of oil. The arrangement comprises sweeping arms, an offshore boom, and high capacity skimmer system. It is supported by radar-based oil slick detection and a [remotely piloted aircraft system](#) (quadcopter) operated by a trained pilot. The heated storage capacity for recovered oil is 1 500 m³.

For more information and further queries, please contact: information@emsa.europa.eu

Optical image showing the objects detected in the area

