

## PRESS RELEASE

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### Baltic countries benefit from EMSA's regional RPAS service for enhanced maritime surveillance

**EMSA's regional RPAS service for enhanced maritime surveillance in the Baltic Sea began this week under the coordination of the Estonian Police and Border Guard, following initial steps taken in 2020.**



Using remotely piloted aircraft to gain a better picture of what is happening at sea will be particularly useful in this region where busy shipping lanes and high cargo traffic make maritime safety and security a challenge. The RPAS service will be hosted by the Estonian Police and Border Guard in the first instance, followed by the Finnish Border Guard later in the year.

Independently of where the flights take off, operational cooperation is possible among all the participating member states which, in addition to Estonia and Finland, also include Latvia and Sweden. The information collected on board the remotely piloted aircraft is shared simultaneously with these neighbouring countries, thereby helping them to create a common maritime picture and respond in close coordination with each other. The service is a great example of how one resource can be used by several countries for multiple purposes to enhance maritime safety and security with maximum efficiency.

The aircraft being used is a CAMCOPTER® S100 model and it is under contract to EMSA from Schiebel Aircraft GmbH. It has several features making it suitable for this service, including the ability to take off and land from an area smaller than 5m x 5m, flight endurance of over six hours and a range of greater than 100km. Information is gathered on board from optical and infrared cameras as well as from an AIS receiver and an automated maritime surface search sensor for detecting targets at sea.

#### **ABOUT RPAS**

Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS) services are offered free to all EU member states by EMSA. They have been developed to assist in maritime surveillance operations and ship emission monitoring, and can operate in all seas surrounding the European Union. RPAS services can provide support to traditional coast guard functions, including search and rescue and pollution prevention and response. The services are offered to member states individually and as part of EMSA's regional RPAS strategy, which allows multiple coast guard functions in several EU member states to be supported by one or more RPAS services. Further expansion of RPAS regionally is planned in 2021 and 2022.

## **ABOUT EMSA**

The European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) is a decentralised agency of the EU, based in Lisbon, Portugal. EMSA serves the EU's maritime interests for a safe, secure, green and competitive maritime sector, delivering value for member states through [support for pollution prevention and response](#), [maritime surveillance](#), [safety and security](#), [digitalisation and the provision of integrated maritime services](#), and [technical assistance](#).

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