

12th Mediterranean AIS Experts Working Group
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Future role of MAREΣ
Submitted by EMSA and Italy

<i>Executive summary</i>	The document presents the achievements of MAREΣ and some ideas about its future perspectives.
<i>Action to be taken</i>	As per paragraph 4
<i>Related documents</i>	11 th Mediterranean AIS Expert Working Group Workshop report

1. Introduction

The 9th MAREΣ Experts Working Group (EWG) workshop (Rome, 2 December 2010) acknowledged that a package of improvements relating to the functionalities of the Mediterranean AIS Regional Server had been implemented by Italy (e.g. updating the MAREΣ database, improving the web application, implementing the data quality monitoring tools, etc.) and agreed that the work of the group should continue. Some participants also proposed that the mandate of the group should be enlarged (e.g. to cover environmental issues).

The purpose of this document is to present the achievements of MAREΣ and some ideas about its future perspectives.

2. Achievements

2.1. Regional network

The set-up of an AIS Experts Working Group (AIS EWG) for the traffic monitoring issues in Mediterranean area was agreed at the Workshop on Vessels Traffic Monitoring and its Mediterranean dimension in Brussels on 21/22 November 2005. The terms of reference of the working group were agreed at the 2nd Workshop (8 May 2006).

The functionalities of the Mediterranean AIS Regional Server had been implemented and managed by Italy. The Mediterranean AIS Regional Server was steady improving, and currently interconnects the AIS networks of 13 participating countries.

2.2. IFCD and the relevance to the MAREΣ AIS server

Amendments to the IFCD were approved by Member States, including reference to the role of the Regional Servers. In accordance with the IFCD, the AIS Regional Server is a server that a group of MSs agree to maintain in accordance with the security and reliability requirements of the SSN system and to use to relay AIS information from their national systems to the central SSN. As long as the MSs concerned request to use it as an alternative to the direct connection to the central SSN system, the AIS Regional Server will be considered to be a component of the central SSN.

2.3. SAFEMED III project

SAFEMED III project is a response to the interest of the European Union to develop Euro-Mediterranean co-operation in the field of maritime safety and security, prevention of pollution from ships and marine environmental issues by providing technical advice and support to the non-EU Mediterranean countries identified in the 1995 Barcelona Agreement. One of the SAFEMED III activities refers to the development of a Regional Server that will facilitate the exchange of AIS data between the SAFEMED beneficiaries. Following the proposal of the Commission, Italy agreed to offer the MAREΣ platform for the purpose of SAFEMED.

2.4. The Adriatic-Ionian initiative

On December 2012, the European Council requested the Commission to present a new strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian region before the end of 2014. The Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR) covers 8 Countries: 4 EU Member States (Croatia, Greece, Italy and Slovenia) and 4 non-EU Countries (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia). The EUSAIR general objective is to promote economic and social prosperity and growth in region by improving its attractiveness, competitiveness and connectivity.

2.5. Technical issues

The current MAREΣ release was implemented in 2008 according to the agreed operational and technical requirements. During the years of operation, the following developments were introduced:

a) MAREΣ duplication

Italy announced the implementation of a disaster recovery server that operational since October 2012. The new regional system architecture used a second light server with a dedicate Internet Service Provider.

b) Technical developments

In 2013-2014, the MAREΣ platform was modernised to V2.0 in order to comply with the recent IALA technical recommendations and guidelines.

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An improved proxy release was distributed to all participating Countries, supporting the new regional system architecture upgraded with the disaster recovery. The new proxy handles two different IP addresses (main and back-up).

c) Support to participating States

France requested three separate AIS information streams with different down sampling, for the purpose of national projects (MARYLIN, SPATIONAV and ENVISIA). Spain also requested to receive its own AIS information with a down sampling of one minute. Both requests were fulfilled using the MAREΣ together with a new Italian national integrated system (PELAGUS), able to manage a large amount of information. On the basis of the above mentioned trial, Italy proposed to EWG to utilize the new PELAGUS software application for the implementation of the new regional system MAREΣ 2.0.

3. Future perspectives

3.1. Geographical expansion

Possibilities exist for the geographical expansion of the MAREΣ role and for promoting the regional cooperation. In particular, within the framework of the SAFEMED project, MAREΣ could play a significant role in supporting the Neighbouring Countries in the area. The establishment of pan-Mediterranean regional exchange system would be a major improvement.

3.2. Additional services

MAREΣ could be used to support other types of users at regional level such as users involved in fisheries monitoring and illegal immigration. Moreover, setting-up of the Adriatic-Ionian regional server (ARS) would aim to reinforce the cooperation in executing regional maritime functionalities as those supported by the EUSAIR.

3.3. Governance

At the moment the EWG works independently from any governance body, and the MAREΣ activities mainly stick to technical issues. The role of the MAREΣ EWG is based on the terms of reference agreed by the 2nd Workshop (Brussels, 8th May 2006). The EWG 9th (Rome, 2nd December 2010) acknowledged that the main objectives of the group have been achieved. The MAREΣ participants have to discuss on how to define a clear roadmap and get a fresh mandate.

4. Action Required

Participants are invited to note the information presented above, and to provide their comments.