Lisbon, 11 May 2015

# Subject: OPEN CALL FOR TENDER

Dear Sir/Madam,

Maritime transport is of fundamental importance to Europe and the rest of the world. To put this in perspective, over 90% of European Union external trade goes by sea and more than 3.7 billion tonnes of freight a year are loaded and unloaded in EU ports. This means that shipping is the most important mode of transport in terms of volume. Furthermore, as a result of its geography, its history and the effects of globalisation, maritime transport will continue to be the most important transport mode in developing EU trade for the foreseeable future.

In this context, European citizens have the right to expect their maritime passenger and goods transport to be safe, secure and clean. So, in support of these goals, and particularly in the wake of the *Erika* and *Prestige* oil tanker accidents, the setup of EMSA (under Regulation (EC) Nº 1406/2002 of 27 June 2002) is one of the key EU level initiatives aimed at improving the situation.

The Agency's main objective is to provide technical and scientific assistance to the European Commission and Member States in the proper development and implementation of EU legislation on maritime safety, pollution by ships and security on board ships. To do this, one of EMSA's most important supporting tasks is to improve cooperation with, and between, Member States in all key areas. In addition, the Agency has operational tasks in oil pollution preparedness, detection and response.  As a body of the European Union, the Agency sits at the heart of the EU maritime safety network and collaborates with many industry stakeholders and public bodies, in close cooperation with the European Commission.

Yours sincerely,

Project Officer

ICT Operations Support