European Maritime Safety Agency

Network of Stand-by Oil Spill Response Vessels: Drills and Exercises

Annual Report 2013

Unit C.1 Pollution Response Services **January 2014**

CONTENT

Photo credits: Grup Servicii Petroliere (GSP) – RIGEX exercise, October 2013, Black Sea; Brezzamare – Ciane spa.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

General

1. In order to provide additional support to the Member States' pollution response mechanisms in a cost efficient way, the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) has built up, in European waters, a Network of contracted Stand-by Oil Spill Response Vessels. The vessels are ready to respond to oil spills at sea caused by ships as well as by offshore installations following the request of a coastal State[1] or the European Commission. By the end of 2013, the Network comprised 18 fully equipped vessels ready for immediate mobilisation

2. As of 1 March 2013, with the entry into force of Regulation (EU) No 100/2013, EMSA has a new mandate to respond to marine pollution caused by oil and gas installations. As one of the actions to implement this new task, in October 2013 EMSA vessels participated for the first time in an operational exercise scenario to test response to oil pollution occurring during offshore operations in the western Black Sea.

3. To achieve the level of performance for pollution response required by the Agency, vessels and their crews participate regularly in training, drills and operational exercises. The Vessel Availability Contract defines two types of drills: 1) Acceptance Drill, and 2) Quarterly Oil Pollution Response Drill; and two types of exercises: 1) Operational Exercises, and 2) Notification Exercises. Carrying out drills and exercises is an obligation for the contractor.

4. The number of drills and exercises carried out annually has increased significantly over the years in line with the development of the Network. The figures for 2013 are summarised in the table below.

Acceptance Drills: Newly Contracted Vessels	Acceptance Drills: Re-contracted Vessels	Acceptance Drills: Improvement Projects/New equipment	Quarterly Drills	Operational Exercises		Notification Exercises	
				N° Exercises	N° Vessels	N° Exercises	N° Vessels
2	2	2	63	9	10	10	11

Table 1. Summary of Drills and Exercises carried out in 2013

5. In 2013, EMSA staff attended drills and exercises in line with the "Drill Attendance Guidelines"[2] introduced in 2009.

[1] EU Member States, EU Candidate States, Norway and Iceland as well as those third countries sharing a regional sea basin with the European Union (Regulation (EU) 100/2013).

[2] Guidelines on the Attendance of Drills and Exercises on Board EMSA Contracted Vessels, 2009.

Outcome of Drills and Exercises in 2013

1. Evaluation of the acceptance drills, quarterly drills and exercises by the Agency's staff in line with pre-established "guidelines"[3] is an effective method to ensure that the level of response preparedness of the Network is adequately maintained.

2. The evaluation of drills and exercises either based on observations by EMSA staff present on board or on the contractors' reports provided a number of lessons learned with regard to the technical condition of the vessels and equipment as well as the level of training of crews.

3. The overall outcome of the drills and exercises carried out during 2013 demonstrated that the service is operated efficiently and in accordance with EMSA requirements. The performance of the vessels, oil spill response equipment, crews and response coordinators is the main criterion for the evaluation of contract implementation.

4. A number of equipment sets in service since 2006-2007 show signs of ageing and/or deterioration. For such equipment, the possibility of technical failure is significantly higher. There is a need to develop a policy for equipment replacement.

5. More benefit could be achieved from the operational exercises if Member States would apply a more in-depth exercise evaluation and provide the Agency with comprehensive feedback on the performance of the EMSA vessels. Attendance of EMSA observers to post-exercise debriefings to discuss and evaluate results of the exercise is recommended. DG ECHO is currently developing the Mechanism Exercise Framework document that, once adopted by the Civil Protection Community, could be a supporting tool for planning and assessment of marine pollution response exercises.

6. There was an improvement in the outcome of notification exercises in 2013. Only one of the 10 exercises was not completed with the Incident Response Contract (IRC) signature (in 2012 there were three uncompleted exercises). In 2014 the Agency should continue to encourage Member States to conduct full notification exercises for the mobilisation of EMSA's vessels, including the signature of the IRC.

7. Notification exercises demonstrated that use of the Common Emergency Communication and Information System (CECIS) simplifies and facilitates mobilisation of assistance to a Member State affected by a pollution incident. EMSA should strongly encourage the use of this system during notification exercises and real incidents. However, Member States should also be aware that it is a legal obligation to provide a notification about any incident that may affect other countries via SafeSeaNet. It is recommended that both systems (SafeSeaNet and CECIS) should be used during future notification exercises. To enhance Member States' expertise with regard to the use of SafeSeaNet and CECIS tools, the Agency organised a table-top exercise during the 3rd Vessel User Group[4] meeting, 23 October 2013.

[3] Guidelines on Conducting Drills and Exercises for the EMSA Contracted Vessels, 2010.

[4] The Vessel Network User Group was established in 2011 within the framework of EMSA's activities in the field of pollution preparedness and response. The objective of this User Group is to exchange information, views and opinions

***Brezzamare* exercising pollution response at sea**

INTRODUCTION

In order to fulfil its obligation to provide additional support to the Member States' pollution response mechanisms in a cost efficient way, since 2005 the European Maritime Safety Agency (hereinafter EMSA) has built up a Network of Stand-by Oil Spill Response Vessels operating in European waters. The vessels of the Network are ready to respond to oil spills at sea at the request of the coastal States[5] or the Commission.

For this purpose, the Agency has developed a two contract system: 1) a "Vessel Availability Contract" is concluded between the Agency and the ship operator, it ensures the availability of the vessels at any time. The ship operator is obliged to respond positively to a request for assistance transmitted by EMSA. In addition, it addresses technical modifications made to the vessels with respect to pumping, heating and any oil recovery equipment as well as organising drills and participating in exercises; 2) an "Incident Response Contract" is concluded between the ship operator and the affected State. This pre-established model contract covers the actual oil recovery operations and includes the associated hire rates.

among the users of the Network and to facilitate the discussion of technical and operational issues of common interest.

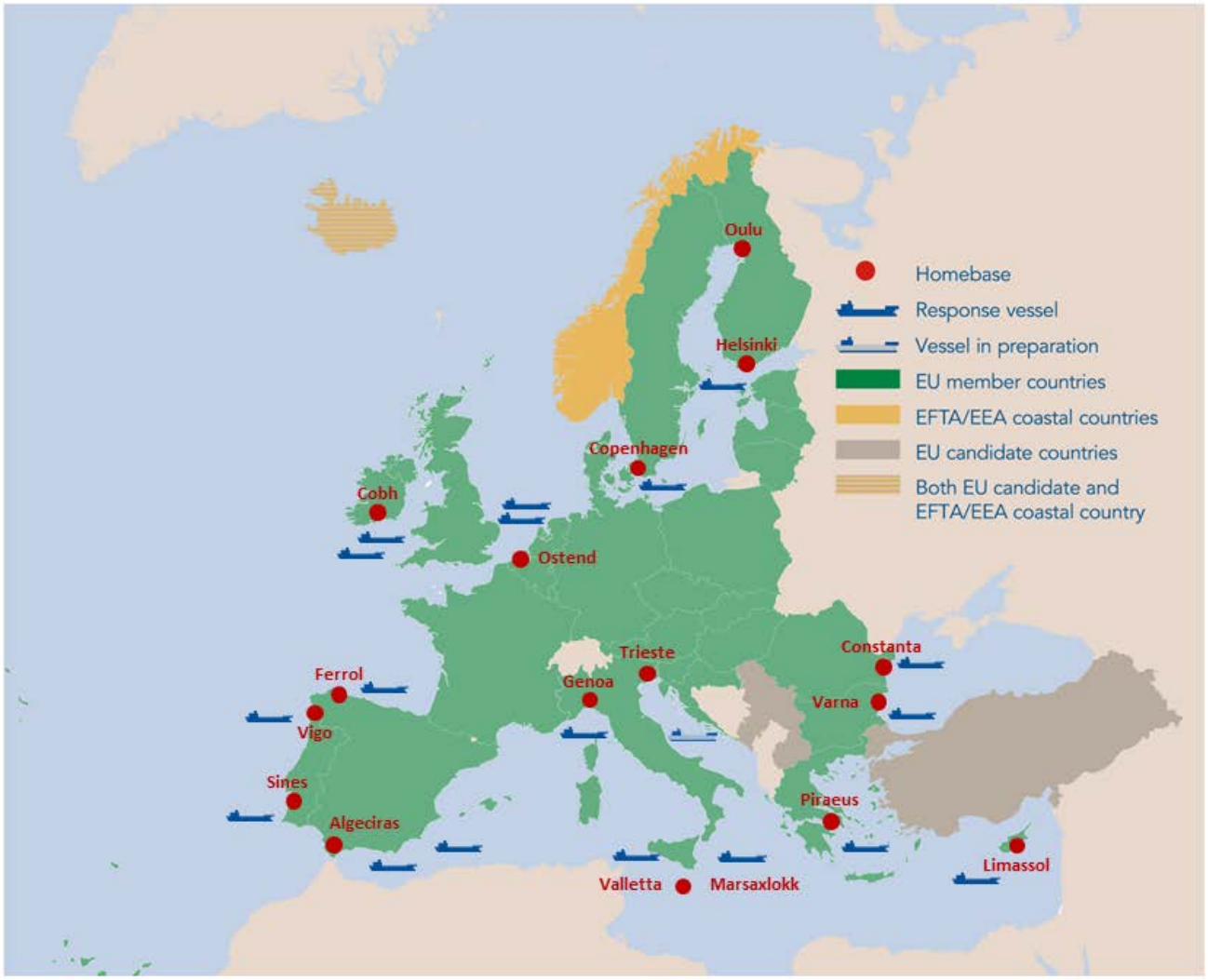
[5] EU Member States, EU Candidate States, Norway and Iceland as well as those third countries sharing a regional sea basin with the European Union (Regulation (EU) 100/2013).

As of 1 March 2013, with the entry into force of Regulation (EU) No 100/2013, EMSA has a new mandate to respond to marine pollution caused by oil and gas installations.

2013 was the eighth year of implementation of the Vessel Availability Contracts (VAC) for the Network of Stand-by Oil Spill Response Vessels. Contracted vessels were placed in nearly all significant marine pollution risk areas in European waters.

1.1 Vessels and Areas Covered

At the end of 2013, the Network covered all European waters and comprised 18 fully equipped vessels ready for immediate mobilisation. The distribution of the Network is presented in the map below.



Map 1. Distribution of Network of EMSA contracted vessels at the end of 2013

Detailed information on the contracted vessels and the areas covered at the end of 2013 can be found in the table below.

Contractor / Contract N° / Area	Ship / s
Arctia Icebreaking VAC 09/NEG/01/2009 Lot 1 **Northern Baltic Sea**	*Kontio*
OW Tankers VAC NEG/01/2011 Lot 1 **Southern Baltic Sea**	*OW Copenhagen*
DC Industrial VAC 08/NEG/03/2008 Lot 2 **North Sea**	*DC Vlaanderen 3000, Interballast 3*
James Fisher VAC 07-NEG/01/2007 Lot 1 **Atlantic Coast**	*Forth Fisher, Mersey Fisher, Galway Fisher* *(2 vessels can be mobilised simultaneously)*
Ibaizabal VAC NEG/01/2012 Lot 3 **Bay of Biscay**	*Monte Arucas*
Remolcanosa VAC 08-NEG/07/2008 **Bay of Biscay**	*Ria de Vigo*
Mureloil VAC NEG/1/2012 Lot 1 **Southern Atlantic Coast**	*Bahia Tres*
Mureloil EMSA-07-NEG/01/2007 Lot 2.2 **Western Mediterranean Sea**	*Bahia Uno*
Naviera Altube EMSA NEG/1/2011 Lot 4 **Western Mediterranean Sea**	*Monte Anaga*
Ciane EMSA/NEG/34/2012 **Western Mediterranean Sea**	*Brezzamare*
Tankship EMSA NEG/1/2011 Lot 2 **Central Mediterranean Sea**	*Balluta Bay*
SL Ship Management EMSA NEG/1/2012 Lot 2 **Central Mediterranean Sea**	*Santa Maria*
Castalia EMSA/NEG/1/2013 Lot 4 **Adriatic Sea**	*Marisa N* *(Under the Preparatory Phase)*
EPE VAC 07-NEG/01/2007 Lot 3 **Aegean Sea**	*Aktea OSRV* *(Aegis I is a back-up vessel)*
Petronav EMSA NEG/1/2010 Lot 1 **Eastern Mediterranean Sea**	*Alexandria*
Bon Marine EMSA NEG/1/2011 Lot 5 **Black Sea**	*Enterprise*
GSP VAC 08-NEG/03/2008 Lot 1 **Black Sea**	*GSP Orion*

Table 2. Summary of the contracted vessels and areas covered at the end of 2013.

During 2013, three other contracts reached the expiration of the contractual period:

- Lamor, VAC EMSA NEG/08/2006 Lot 1 Atlantic Coast, vessel *Bahia Tres*;
- Falzon, VAC EMSA 06-OP/2006 Lot 3 Mediterranean East, vessel *Santa Maria*;
- Aegean Bunkers at Sea, VAC 09-NEG/01/2009 Lot 2 Atlantic/Channel, vessel *Sara*.

Nevertheless, the vessels performed a number of drills before the end of the contract, which are included in the report.

Further information can be found on the EMSA website:
http://emsa.europa.eu/operations/network-of-stand-by-oil-spill-response-vessels.html.

1.2 Purpose and Types of Drills and Exercises

The vessels contracted by the Agency are all equipped with state of the art oil slick detection, containment and recovery equipment. They are technically capable of achieving high recovery rates and have a sizeable on board storage capacity.

Once the technical requirements of each contract are satisfied, the most important factors determining success of the system are the skills of the vessel's crew for the operation of the equipment and the capability of the oil spill response coordinator on board to lead the response action. Regular training, drills and exercises are essential to achieve and maintain the appropriate level of performance.

Every VAC defines the types and number of drills and exercises to be carried out by each associated vessel. Detailed instructions on conducting drills, including their methods of evaluation, are provided in the "Guidelines on Conducting Drills and Exercises for the EMSA Contracted Vessels". These Guidelines constitute a component of all contracts.

The VAC defines two types of drills:
1) Acceptance Drills;
2) Quarterly Oil Pollution Response Drills;
and two types of exercises:
1) Notification Exercises;
2) At-Sea Operational Exercises.

1.3 Number of Drills and Exercises Carried out in 2013

The table below shows the number and types of events carried out.

Acceptance Drills: Newly Contracted Vessels	Acceptance Drills: Re-contracted Vessels	Acceptance Drills: Improvement Projects / New equipment	Quarterly Drills	Operational Exercises		Notification Exercises	
				N° Exercises	N° Vessels	N° Exercises	N° Vessels
2	2	2	63	9	10	10	11

Table 1. Summary of Drills and Exercises carried out in 2013

1. DRILLS PERFORMED IN 2013

The number of drills has increased significantly over the years as the Network has developed and expanded. A summary of performed by EMSA contracted vessels during the period 2006-2013 is shown in the chart below.

Chart 1. Number of Drills 2006-2013

2.1 Acceptance Drills

In 2013, six acceptance drills were conducted. Detailed information regarding the subject of the Acceptance Tests and their result is summarised below.

Contract	Contractor	*Vessel*	Home port	Subject	Acceptance Test Date	Result
Amendment N° 2 to Contract EMSA NEG/1/2011 (Lot 4 Western Mediterranean Sea)	Naviera Altube S.L.	*Monte Anaga*	Algeciras, Spain	Improvement of the pollution response capacity of the *Monte Anaga.* Test of the high capacity skimmer Normar 250 TI installed on board.	16/05/2013	Acceptance Note effective from 05/07/2013. Acceptance delayed due to the late delivery of equipment.
Amendment N° 2 to Contract EMSA NEG/1/2010 (Lot 1 Eastern Mediterranean Sea)	Petronav Ship Management Ltd.	*Alexandria*	Limassol, Cyprus	Improvement of the pollution response capacity of the Monte Anaga. Test of the high capacity skimmer Normar 250 TI installed on board.	30/05/2013	Acceptance Note effective from 13/07/2013. Acceptance delayed due to the late delivery of equipment.

Contract	Contractor	*Vessel*	Home port	Subject	Acceptance Test Date	Result
EMSA NEG/1/2012 (Lot 3 Biscay Bay)	Compania de Remolcadores Ibaizabal S.A.	*Monte Arucas*	Ferrol, Spain	Provision of the new capacity in the Bay of Biscay. Newly contracted vessel. Acceptance Test for the pre-fitting and equipment on board the vessel.	03-04/07/2013	Acceptance Note effective from 05/07/2013
EMSA NEG/1/2012 (Lot 1 Southern Atlantic coast)	Mureloil S.A.	*Bahia Tres*	Sines, Portugal	Provision of the replacement capacity in the Southern Atlantic coast. Re-contracted vessel. Acceptance Test for re-entry into service.	18/07/2013	Acceptance Note effective from 18/07/2013
EMSA NEG/1/2012 (Lot 2 Central Mediterranean Sea)	SL Ship Management Company Ltd. (Falzon)	*Santa Maria*	Malta	Provision of the replacement capacity in the Central Mediterranean Sea Re-contracted vessel. Acceptance Test for re-entry into service.	19-20/06/2013	Acceptance Note effective from 26/06/2013.
EMSA NEG/34/2012 (Western Mediterranean Sea)	Ciane Spa (Novella)	*Brezzamare*	Genoa, Italy	Provision of the replacement capacity in the Western Mediterranean Sea. Newly contracted vessel. Acceptance Test for the pre-fitting and equipment on board the vessel.	6-7/11/2013 26/11/2013	Repetition of the test was requested by EMSA. Acceptance Note effective from 27/11/2013

Table 3. Acceptance drills carried out in 2013

2.1.1 Outcome of the 2013 Acceptance Drills

In general the acceptance drills were completed satisfactorily, although there were some requests for additional activities by the contractor in order to achieve the required standards. One contractor was requested to repeat the acceptance drill due to technical deficiencies observed during the first drill. In two cases, the acceptance by the Agency was delayed due to the late submission of the Completion Report by contractors.

2.2 Quarterly Drills

According to the contract, the Contractor is obliged to train his crew and to maintain the oil pollution response equipment in order to be ready to carry out oil pollution response services efficiently.

To demonstrate the fulfilment of these obligations, the Contractor is obliged to carry out drills, usually on a quarterly basis. The acceptance of the Contractor's Quarterly Drill Report by the Agency is a condition for the payment of the Availability Fee by the Agency.

The drills can be assessed by EMSA observers. The Agency developed the "Guidelines on Conducting Drills and Exercises for the EMSA Contracted Vessels" describing vessel, crew and equipment performance standards. These guidelines compose integral part of the Vessel Availability Contract (VAC). The quarterly drill can be accepted only if all required standards have been achieved.

In 2013, EMSA contracted vessels performed 63 quarterly drills. The summary of the quarterly drills carried out in 2013 is presented in the table below.

N°	Contract	Contractor	Vessel/s	Drill	Date	Results
1	EMSA N°-09-NEG/1/2009 (Lot 1- Northern Baltic Sea)	Arctia Icebreaking	*Kontio*	1Q	22/03/2013	4 drills required annually. All drills were conducted, and were accepted by EMSA.
				2Q	22/05/2013	
				3Q	27/08/2013	
				4Q	31/10/2013	
2	EMSA NEG/1/2011 (Lot 1- Southern Baltic Sea)	OW Tankers	*OW Copenhagen*	1Q	14/03/2013	4 drills are required annually. All drills were conducted, and were accepted by EMSA.
				2Q	11/06/2013	
				3Q	19/09/2013	
				4Q	17/10/2013	
3	EMSA N°-09-NEG/1/2009 (Lot 2- Atlantic and Chanel)	Aegean Bunkers	*Sara*	1Q	13/03/2013	1 drill required in 2013. Drill conducted, and accepted by EMSA.
				2Q	-	Contract expired.
				3Q	-	
				4Q	-	
4	EMSA N°-08-NEG/3/2008 (Lot 2- North Sea)	DC Industrial	*DC Vlandeeren 3000*	1Q	05/03/2013	4 drills are required annually. All drills were conducted, and were accepted by EMSA.
			Interballast 3	2Q	14/05/2013	
			DC Vlandeeren 3000	3Q	12/08/2013	
			Interballast 3	4Q	22/10/2013	
5	EMSA N°-07-NEG/1/2007 (Lot 1- Atlantic Coast)	James Fischer Everard	*Mersey Fisher*	1Q1	01/03/2013	2 drills per vessel annually are required (6 in total). All drills were conducted, and were accepted by EMSA.
			Galway Fisher	2Q1	24/04/2013	
			Forth Fisher	2Q2	07/06/2013	
			Mersey Fisher	3Q1	05/07/2013	
			Galway Fisher	3Q2	24/09/2013	
			Forth Fisher	4Q1	22/10/2013	
6	EMSA NEG/1/2012 (Lot 3- Biscay Bay)	Compania de Remolcadores Ibaizabal S.A.	*Monte Arucas*	1Q	-	Preparatory Phase of the new contract. 2 drills required in 2013. All drills were conducted, and were accepted by EMSA.
				2Q	-	
				3Q	27/09/2013	
				4Q	04/11/2013	

N°	Contract	Contractor	Vessel/s	Drill	Date	Results
7	EMSA N°-08-NEG/7/2008 (Lot 1- Biscay Bay)	Remolcanosa	*Ria de Vigo*	1Q	27/02/2013	4 drills are required annually. All drills were conducted, and were accepted by EMSA.
				2Q	30/05/2013	
				3Q	18/09/2013	
				4Q	20/11/2013	
8	EMSA N°-08-NEG/8/2006 (Lot 1- Atlantic Coast)	Lamor	*Bahia Tres*	1Q	20/02/2013	2 drills required in 2013. All drills were conducted, and were accepted by EMSA.
				2Q	20/04/2013	
				3Q	-	Contract expired.
				4Q	-	
9	EMSA EMSA N°-07-NEG/1/2007 (Lot 2.2- Western Mediterranean Sea)	Mureloil	*Bahia Uno*	1Q	13/02/2013	4 drills are required annually. All drills were conducted, and were accepted by EMSA.
				2Q	14/05/2013	
				3Q	05/09/2013	
				4Q	24/10/2013	
10	EMSA NEG/1/2012 (Lot 1- Southern Atlantic coast)	Mureloil	*Bahia Tres*	1Q	-	Preparatory Phase of the new contract.
				2Q	-	
				3Q	24/09/2013	2 drills required in 2013. All drills were conducted, and were accepted by EMSA.
				4Q	31/10/2013	
11	EMSA NEG/1/2011 (Lot 4- Western Mediterranean Sea)	Naviera Altube	*Monte Anaga*	1Q	21/03/2013	4 drills are required annually. All drills were conducted, and were accepted by EMSA.
				2Q	16/05/2013	
				3Q	28/08/2013	
				4Q	13/11/2013	
12	EMSA/NEG/34/2012 (Lot 1- Western Mediterranean Sea)	Ciane-Novella	*Brezzamare*	1Q	-	n/a
				2Q	-	n/a
				3Q	-	Preparatory Phase of the new contract.
				4Q	27/11/2013	1 drill required in 2013. Drill conducted, and accepted by EMSA.
13	EMSA NEG/1/2011 (Lot 2- Central Mediterranean Sea)	Tankship	*Balluta Bay*	1Q	18/02/2013	4 drills are required annually. All drills were conducted, and were accepted by EMSA.
				2Q	04/06/2013	
				3Q	17/09/2013	
				4Q	22/11/2013	
14	EMSA 06/OP/01/2006 (Lot 3 Mediterranean East)	Falzon	*Santa Maria*	1Q	23/02/2013	1 drill required in 2013. Drill conducted, and accepted by EMSA.
				2Q	-	Contract expired.
				3Q	-	
				4Q	-	

N°	Contract	Contractor	Vessel/s	Drill	Date	Results
15	EMSA NEG/1/2012 (Lot 2- Central Mediterranean Sea)	SL Ship Management	*Santa Maria*	1Q		Vessel under the old contract.
				2Q	-	Preparatory Phase of the new contract.
				3Q	12/09/2013	2 drills required in 2013. All drills were conducted, and were accepted by EMSA.
				4Q	28/11/2013	
16	EMSA NEG/1/2010 (Lot 1- Eastern Mediterranean Sea)	Petronav	*Alexandria*	1Q	31/03/2013	4 drills are required annually. All drills were conducted, and were accepted by EMSA.
				2Q	30/05/2013	
				3Q	11/09/2013	
				4Q	30/10/2013	
17	EMSA NEG/1/2007 (Lot 3- Aegean Sea)	EPE	*Aktea OSRV*	1Q	30/03/2013	6 drills are required annually. 4 - *Aktea OSRV*, 2- *Aegis I*. All drills were conducted, and were accepted by EMSA.
			Aktea OSRV	2Q	15/05/2013	
			Aegis 1	3Q	25/06/2013	
			Aktea OSRV	3Q1	28/08/2013	
			Aktea	4Q	26/11/2013	
			Aegis 1 OSRV	4Q1	31/10/2013	
18	EMSA NEG/1/2011 (Lot 5- Black Sea)	BM Gust	*Enterprise*	1Q	08/03/2013	4 drills are required annually. All drills were conducted, and were accepted by EMSA.
				2Q	05/06/2013	
				3Q	12/09/2013	
				4Q	08/11/2013	
19	EMSA N°-08-NEG/3/2008 (Lot 1- Black Sea)	GSP	*GSP Orion*	1Q	25/02/2013	4 drills are required annually. All drills were conducted and were accepted by EMSA.
				2Q	02/04/2013	
				3Q	28/06/2013	
				4Q	29/11/2013	
TOTAL			**22 vessels**	**63 QD**		

Table 4. Summary of the quarterly drills carried out in 2013

2.2.1 Quarterly Drill Evaluation

Evaluation of the quarterly drills performed in 2013 is based on the reports submitted by EMSA observers and/or submitted by the contractors.

The overall outcome of the quarterly drills carried out during 2013 demonstrated that the service operates efficiently and in accordance with EMSA expectations. Overall, the Network achieved a highly acceptable level of preparedness for oil pollution response. In all quarterly drills crew and equipment performance was always within the standards required by the "Guidelines on Conducting Drills and Exercises for the EMSA Contracted Vessels."

The mobilisation of the vessels, which means in practical terms equipping them for the drill, was assessed as satisfactory. Sufficient logistics to prepare vessels for the drills were in place. The time taken to deploy the major components of the oil recovery equipment was satisfactory and the knowledge of on board arrangements was good.

2.2.2 Quarterly Drill Report

The contractor is obliged to submit a quarterly drill report to EMSA. The acceptance of the contractor's report and associated invoice by EMSA is the condition for the payment of the vessel availability fee. The report should be provided on a template developed by the Agency.

All reports in 2013 were accepted by the Agency. On the basis of these reports, the contractors were paid the vessel availability fee.

2.2.3 Equipment Management

Checking the technical status and completeness of the oil pollution response equipment on board the vessels is an important element of each drill attended by EMSA observers.

The "Pollution Asset Management System (PAMS)" was set up in 2010 in order to strengthen the management of the oil pollution response equipment assets. The equipment inventory of each stockpile is verified annually based on an equipment list and equipment labels which display an appropriate code identifying each part of the equipment.

In 2014, based on a new "Equipment Policy" to be adopted, the framework for the management of EMSA oil spill response equipment, from purchase and acceptance to decommissioning and replacement, will be further developed. New management tools to strengthen control and ensure safe and reliable equipment operation during its lifetime will be implemented.

2.2.4 Technical Issues Record

On the basis of observations from drills and exercises, the Agency keeps a record of technical issues related to the oil pollution response equipment on board EMSA's contracted vessels.

This record allows the Agency to obtain a broader overview of the performance of different types and brands of equipment. Identification of the most frequent technical problems leads to prevention of failures during actual pollution response, and also helps the acceptance process for equipment arrangements in the framework of the vessel tenders and improvement projects.

2. EXERCISES PERFORMED IN 2013

At-sea operational exercises greatly assist the integration of EMSA's resources within the response mechanisms of Member States, improving the necessary coordination and cooperation of the EMSA vessels with the coastal State response units. In the course of 2013, 10 different EMSA Stand-by Oil Spill Response Vessels participated in 9 at-sea operational exercises, organised in cooperation with EU Member States and/or Regional Agreements. These events took place in the Baltic Sea, North Sea, Bay of Biscay, Atlantic Coast, Mediterranean and Black Seas.

As of 1 March 2013, with the entry into force Regulation (EU) No 100/2013, EMSA has a new mandate to respond to marine pollution caused by oil and gas installations. For the first time, EMSA vessels participated in the operational exercise dedicated to response to pollution occurring during offshore operations in the western Black Sea.

In connection with the operational exercises, 10 notification exercises, aiming to evaluate the agreed emergency and notification procedures between EMSA, Member States, EMSA contractors and the EU cooperation civil protection mechanism were attended by the Agency.

3.1 Operational Exercises

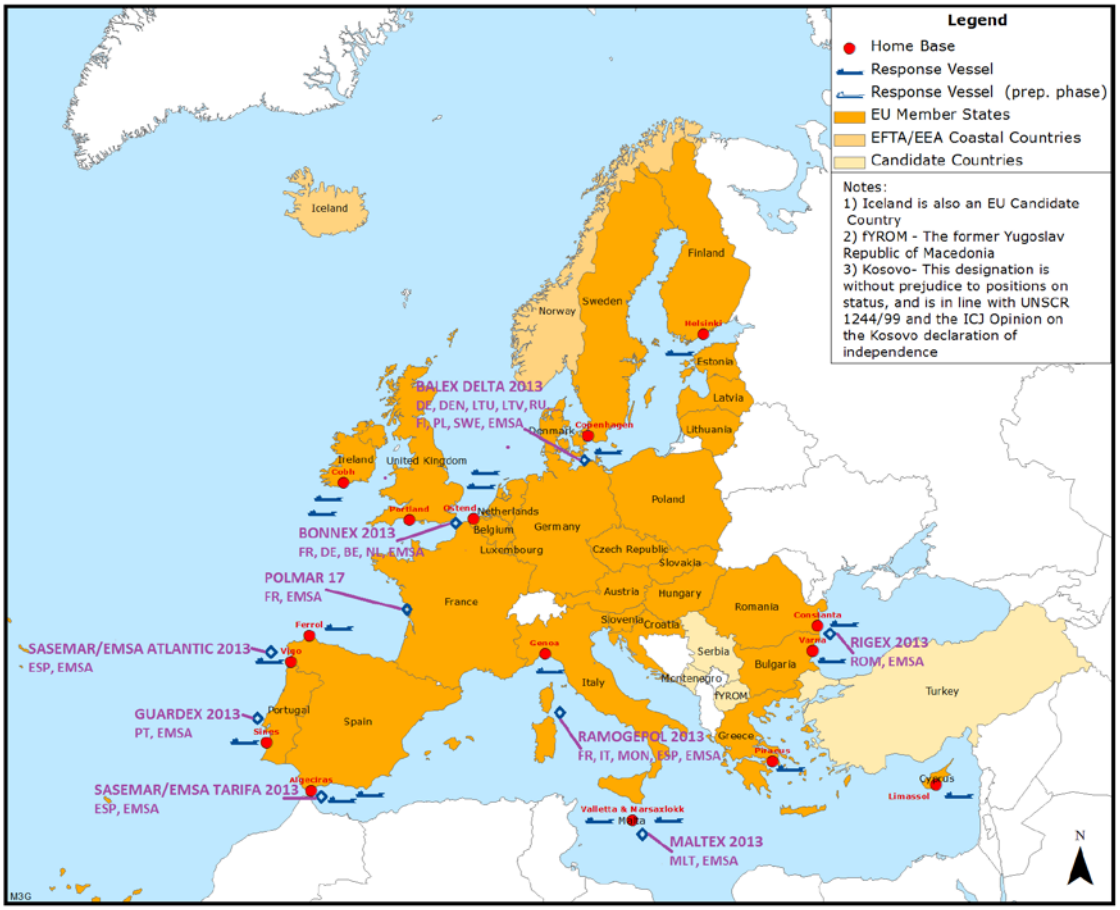
During 2013, 10 EMSA contracted vessels participated in 9 national and regional at-sea exercises. The summary of operational exercises performed by EMSA contracted vessels during the 2013 is shown in the table below.

N°	EXERCISE NAME	DATE, LOCATION	PARTICIPATING PARTIES	EMSA VESSELS
1	**BONNEX 2013**	16/05/2013 Dunkerque, France	France, Germany, Belgium, The Netherlands, EMSA	*Interballast III*
2	**BALEX DELTA 2013**	13/06/2013 Warnemünde, Germany	Germany, Denmark, Latvia, Lithuania, Finland, Poland, Sweden, EMSA, Russia	*OW Copenhagen*
3	**SASEMAR-EMSA ATLANTIC 2013**	26/07/2013 Vigo, Spain	Spain, EMSA	*Ria de Vigo*
4	**MALTEX 2013**	18/09/2013 Valleta, Malta	Malta, EMSA	*Balluta Bay*
5	**GUARDEX 2013**	25/09/2013 Cascais, Portugal	Portugal, EMSA	*Bahia Tres*
6	**SASEMAR-EMSA TARIFA 2013**	26/09/2013 Algeciras, Spain	Spain, EMSA	*Bahia Uno*
7	**RAMOGEPOL 2013**	10/10/2013 Corsica, France	France, Italy, Monaco, Spain, EMSA	*Monte Anaga*
8	**RIGEX 2013**	17/10/2013 Costanta, Romania	Romania, EMSA	*Enterprise, GSP Orion*
9	**POLMAR 2013 BAY OF BISCAY**	26/11/2013 La Rochelle, France	France, EMSA	*Monte Arucas*
TOTAL		**9 EXERCISES**	**16 MS**	**10 VESSELS**

Table 5. Operational Execises carried out in 2013

The number of operational exercises per year differs from the number of participating EMSA vessels as more than one EMSA vessel can participate in an exercise.
For the purpose of statistics, when the same vessel participates in more than one exercise during the year it is counted as a separate vessel for each exercise.

The geographical spread of operational exercises in Europe with EMSA vessel participation is shown in the following map:



Map 2. Operational Exercises 2013 and Participating Parties

A detailed overview of the operational exercises carried out in 2013 is presented in Annex 1.

In 2013, Agency staff attended all operational exercises that involved the participation of EMSA contracted vessels, except in two cases. In general, the results of these exercises showed that EMSA vessels were well integrated into the pollution response mechanisms of Member States and Regional Agreements.

Reports of EMSA observers indicate that all vessels participating in the operational exercises successfully completed the tasks assigned by the pollution response command of the country hosting the exercise.

All of the exercises were considered a success. However, for some exercises there was a lack of written feedback from the host country regarding the assessment of the performance of EMSA's vessels. It should nevertheless be noted that in the context of the Vessel User Group, several exercises were presented by the organisers.

3.2 Notification Exercises

Notification exercises are usually conducted in conjunction with an operational exercise and may be initiated either by EMSA or by a Member State. In addition, 'standalone' notification exercises are occasionally carried out. The aim of these exercises is to test and implement agreed procedures and lines of communication for reporting incidents and for requesting and providing assistance. Notification exercises usually involve EMSA, the contractor, one or more Member State(s) and the the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) operated by DG ECHO. The main criterion for the evaluation of the notification exercise is the time needed for the Incident Response Contract (IRC) to be signed by both the EMSA contractor and the Member State requesting assistance.

The number of notification exercises carried annually in the years 2006-2013 is shown in the chart below.

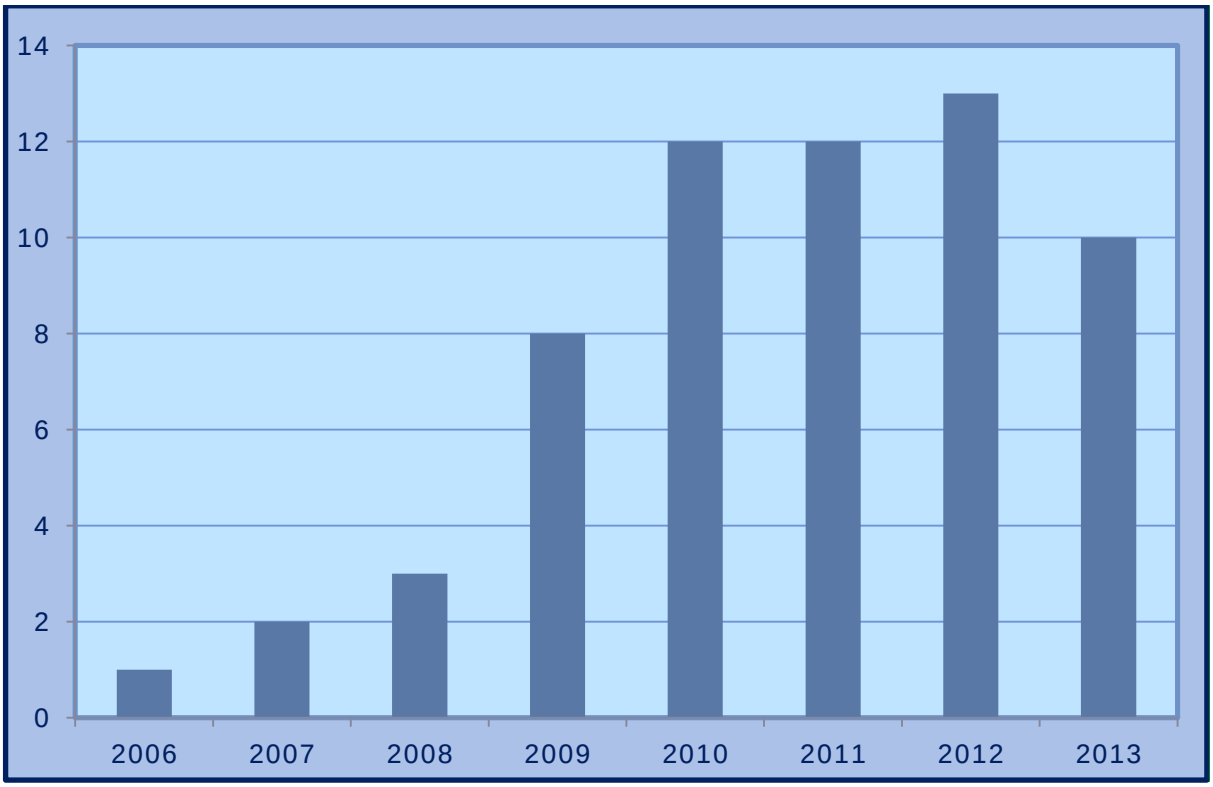


Chart 2. Number of Notification Exercises 2006 – 2013

In 2013 the Agency participated in 10 Notification Exercises involving 10 different EMSA contractors and 11 vessels, aiming to evaluate the agreed emergency and notification procedures between EMSA, Member States, EMSA contractors and the ERCC. A description of these exercises can be found in a table below.

N°	EXERCISE NAME/DATE	PARTICIPATING PARTIES: MS/CONTRACTOR/ VESSEL MOBILISED	RESULT	COMMENTS
1	BONNEX BRAVO COMM. EX. 2013 30/04/2013	Belgium, EMSA/ DC Industrial/ *DC Vlaanderen 3000, Interballast III*	MS checked only the vessel availability and did not complete the mobilisation procedure. The IRC was not signed. The exercise was terminated before acceptance of EMSA's assistance offer.	MS lost the opportunity to check and train its capabilities to mobilise EMSA assistance. The result of the exercise was not satisfactory.
2	BONNEX 2013 15 - 16/05/2013	France, EMSA/ DC Industrial/ *Interballast 3*	The IRC form was filled in properly and signed by EMSA's Contractor and sent to the requesting MS within 2 hours after notification. A copy of the IRC signed by the requesting state was received by EMSA 11 hours after acceptance of the EMSA assistance offer.	The aim of the exercise – signature of the IRC between MS and the contractor was achieved. However, the completion of the procedure by the MS took too long.
3	BALEX DELTA 2013 12/06/2013	Germany, EMSA/ OW Tankers/*OW Copenhagen*	The IRC form was filled in properly and signed by EMSA's Contractor and by the Member State in about 3 hours.	Very good time for the completion of the vessel mobilisation procedure. Positive result of the exercise.
4	SASEMAR-EMSA ATLANTIC 2013 25/07/2013	Spain, EMSA/ Remolcanosa / *Ria de Vigo*	The IRC form was filled in properly and signed by EMSA's Contractor and by the Member State in about 3.5 hours.	Very good result of the exercise. Efficient and quickly completed procedure for the vessel mobilisation.
5	MARITIME EMERGENCY OIL TANKER WW 27/08/2013	Finland, EMSA/ Arctia Icebreaking/ *Kontio*	The IRC form was filled in properly and signed by EMSA's Contractor and by the Member State in about 1.3 hours.	Very good result of the exercise. Efficient and quickly completed procedure for the vessel mobilisation.
6	MALTEX 2013 17/09/2013	Malta, EMSA/Tankship Management/ *Balluta Bay*	The IRC form was filled in properly and signed by EMSA's Contractor and by the Member State in about 2 hours.	Very good result of the exercise. Efficient and quickly completed procedure for the vessel mobilisation.
7	GUARDEX 2013 25/09/2013	Portugal, EMSA/ Mureloil/ *Bahia Tres*	The IRC form was filled in properly and signed by EMSA's Contractor and by the Member State in about 1.25 hours.	The exercise was conducted very efficiently. The duration of the exercise was found well below the average of the duration of the previous notification exercises.

N°	EXERCISE NAME/DATE	PARTICIPATING PARTIES: MS/CONTRACTOR/ VESSEL MOBILISED	RESULT	COMMENTS
8	SASEMAR-EMSA TARIFA 2013 24/09/2013	Spain, EMSA/ Mureloil/ *Bahia Uno*	The IRC form was filled in properly and signed by EMSA's Contractor and by the Member State in about 2 hours.	Very good result of the exercise. Efficient and quickly completed procedure for the vessel mobilisation.
9	RAMOGEPOL 2013 09-10/10/2013	France, EMSA/Naviera Altube/ *Monte Anaga*	The exercise was concluded by the French authorities with the signature of the IRC form by the EMSA Contractor (Naviera Altube) but without the signature by France (Maritime Prefecture - authority responsible for the request). The IRC form was filled in properly, signed and sent to France by EMSA's Contractor in only 20 minutes after the request of the Agency.	The aim of the exercise – signature of the IRC between MS and the contractor was not achieved. The result of the exercise was not satisfactory.
10	RIGEX 2013 16 -17/10/2013	Romania, EMSA/ Grup Servicii Petroliere, Bon Marine/ *GSP Orion, Enterprise*	The IRC forms were filled in properly, signed and sent to MS by the Agency Contractors (GSP and Bon Marine) on 16 October. The IRC forms were signed by Romania on 17 October morning.	The aim of the exercise – signature of the IRC between MS and the contractor was achieved. However, the completion of the procedure by the MS took too long.

Table 6. Notification Execises carried out in 2013

During the Notification Exercise, the timing begins at the moment the formal assistance request, sent via CECIS[6] is received by EMSA. Taking into account variables such as the time of day, the day of the week, the contractor's location, time difference between Portugal and other Member States, etc., 6 hours is seen as an acceptable target deadline for all parties to sign. During the exercise period, the Agency provides any assistance necessary to the Member State to help them in the process of completing and signing the IRC.

It should be noted that of the 10 notification exercises carried out in 2013, 9 exercises included the full procedure of EMSA vessel mobilisation by way of the signature of the IRC, and in total 10 IRCs were signed. This was considered a good result, and certainly an improvement on the results of 2012. The implementation of the "EMSA Network of Stand-by Oil Spill Response Vessels: User Guide" has proved beneficial. The Member State hosting this exercise lost an excellent opportunity to test their internal channels and procedures for the mobilisation of EMSA's vessels.

The CECIS system operated by DG ECHO became the common tool for conducting the notification exercises in the field of response to marine pollution. In 2013, all notification

[6] The Common Emergency Communication and Information System (CECIS) is a web-based alert and notification application created to facilitate emergency communication. It provides a platform to send and receive alerts and details of assistance requested and offered.

exercises were conducted with the use of CECIS. EMSA should strongly encourage the use of this system during notification exercises and real incidents. However, Member States should also be aware that it is their legal obligation to provide a notification via SafeSeaNet about any incident that may affect other countries.

4. CONCLUSIONS

1. The overall outcome of the drills and exercises carried out during 2012 demonstrated that the service operates efficiently and in accordance with EMSA requirements. Overall, the Network achieved a high level of preparedness for oil pollution response. Of the 63 quarterly drills performed, all were assessed positively.

2. The evaluation of drills and exercises, either based on observations by EMSA staff present on board or on the contractor reports, provided a number of lessons learned with regard to the technical condition of the equipment and skill of the crew. A number of recommendations to be implemented in 2014 have been identified.

3. Some equipment after many years of service shows signs of ageing. For such equipment the possibility of damage or technical failure is significantly raising. There is a necessity to develop and implement in 2014 a policy for the equipment replacement.

4. More benefit could be achieved from the operational exercises if Member States were to apply a more in-depth exercise evaluation and provide EMSA with comprehensive feedback on the EMSA vessels' performance. Based on the exercise evaluation, the Agency would be able to take measures to improve the response capabilities of the Vessel Network and to strengthen its integration with the response mechanisms of the Member States. The Agency, when responding to any invitation to participate in an operational exercise, should emphasise the need for a thorough exercise evaluation and subsequent feedback to the Agency.

5. Member States should be aware that it is their legal obligation to provide a notification via SafeSeaNet about any incident that may affect other countries. It is recommended to introduce the use of SafeSeaNet and CECIS in all future notification exercises conducted in relation to the EMSA's Network of Vessels.

Network of Stand-by Oil Spill Response Vessels: Drills and Exercises
Annual Report 2013

ANNEX 1: Overview of the Operational Exercises 2013

CONTENT

BONNEX 2013

- **Place and date**

Dunkerque, France, 16 May 2013.

- **Organiser**

The exercise was organised by the French Préfecture maritime de la Manche et de la Mer du Nord.

- **Background for the exercise**

The exercise was performed within the framework of the Bonn Agreement (Contracting Parties are Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, UK and EU).

- **Participants**

France, Germany, Netherlands and Belgium, EMSA.

- **Objective of the exercise**

The overall aim of this exercise was to train the participants to manage a major event at sea in close cooperation with European Union and Bonn Agreement partners.
The objectives of the exercise were to test the alarm procedures, the response time and capability of the Bonn Agreement Contracting Parties and EMSA participating units to deal with oil pollution at sea.
The objectives for this exercise related to the participation of the EMSA contracted vessel *Interballast III* were:

- Testing the established mobilisation procedures between ERCC, France, EMSA and DC Industrial to request the assistance by EMSA contracted vessels;
- Actual “oil recovery” exercise at sea, deploying response equipment.

- **Scenario of the exercise**

On 15 May, two vessels collide in the vicinity of the Dover Straights Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS), North East of Dunkirk, France: *M/T Pop-Corn* (on its way to Northern Europe with a cargo of Medium Fuel Oil [MFO]) and a general cargo vessel *Incognito* about to cross the TSS to rally Dover from Dunkirk.
M/V Incognito hits *M/T Pop-Corn* on her starboard. The integrity of her hull and fuel oil transport tanks are compromised. Following the collision, the tanker is still adrift. After investigation, it appears that *M/T Pop-Corn* is taking in water and that her cargo could potentially spill.

- **Participating vessels**

More than 15 vessels took part in the exercise: 12 French ships, three vessels (from Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands), as well as some fishing boats and tugboats from Dunkerque harbour. It should be pointed out that a significant number of aircraft were involved for the surveillance of the area: two fixed wing airplanes and a helicopter from France, two airplanes from Belgium, one Dutch airplane and one from Oil Spill Response Limited.
FRANCE: *Alcyon, Flamant, Elan, Abeille Languedoc, Le Petit Pêcheur, Sansesi,* and a number of tug-boats and fishing vessels based in the Harbour of Dunkerque.
GERMANY: *Eversand*
NETHERLANDS: *Frans Naererbout*
BELGIUM: *Zeetijger*
EMSA: *Interballast III*

- **Task for the EMSA vessel**

There were three main tasks for the EMSA vessel:

1. Completion of the Notification Exercise including signing of Incident Response Contract (IRC) between France and the EMSA contractor DC Industrial;
2. At-sea oil recovery operations: *Interballast III* deployed her sweeping arms undertaking oil recovery operations;
3. Simulation of Ship-to-Ship Transfer by the *Interballast III* and the German pollution response vessel *Eversand*.

- **Performance of the EMSA vessel**

Interballast III fulfilled the role assigned by the Member State organising this exercise (France) and also met the expectations of the Agency. The EMSA contracted vessel performed well and crew showed high levels of motivation.

The instructions given by the State On-Scene Coordinator (SOSC) to the Master of the *Interballast III* were very limited but clear; SOSC gave the vessel the freedom to operate in the defined area of responsibility as it wished.

Vessels exercising during the BONNEX 2013 Exercise

- **General conclusion from the exercise**

The BONNEX 2013 Exercise was well organised. The significant number of aircraft involved in the air surveillance of the area should be noted.

The main benefit of the exercise for the Agency was strengthening the integration of EMSA vessels at the operational level with Member State ships and the command structure.

Due to the large exercise area, the units had some difficulties in following the work of other teams and the progress of the whole operation.

The appearance of the popcorn, used for simulating oil, was visible from a long distance compared to some other oil simulating materials e.g. rise husks or turf.

BALEX DELTA 2013

- **Place and date**

Warnemünde, Germany, 13 June 2013.

- **Organiser**

The exercise was organised by the German Central Command for Maritime Emergencies (Havariekommando).

- **Background for the exercise**

The exercise was carried out within the framework of the Helsinki Convention (contracting parties are Denmark, Estonia, EU, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Sweden and Russia).

- **Participants**

Units from Denmark, Latvia, Lithuania, Finland, Germany, Poland, Russia, Sweden and EMSA took part in the exercise.

- **Objective of the exercise**

The aim and objective of the exercise was to test the alarm procedures, the response time and capability of the HELCOM Contracting Parties and participating units to deal with oil pollution at sea.

- **Scenario of the exercise**

On the 12 June 2013 at 09:00 local time a collision between the outbound vessel *MV Spiekeroog* and the inbound trawler *MV Seewolf* occurred in vicinity of the port of Warnemünde at position: 54° 15,0`N 012° 00,0`E. *MV Spiekeroog* reported to VTS Warnemünde Traffic a leakage of its starboard storage tank No. 3 with a capacity of 2,500 m³ IFO 180, and continuous outflow with an estimated rate of 10 m³ per hour.
In addition, *MV Spiekeroog* reported that it has dropped anchor at the mentioned position. Crew on board *MV Spiekeroog* were unharmed, no injuries reported. *MV Spiekeroog* intends to seal the leak itself. *MV Seewolf* reports major damage at its bow, no injured persons and may continue her voyage to the port of Rostock.

- **Participating vessels**

FINLAND: *Louhi*
GERMANY: *Arkona, Bottsand, Strelasund, Vilm, Baltic, Fairplay 25, Groemitz, Sturmmoewe, Fairplay II, Fairplay V*
POLAND: *Kapitan Poinc*, *Czeslaw I*
SWEDEN: *KBV 001 Poseidon*
LATVIA: *A-90 VARONIS, Valpas*
LITHUANIA: *Sakiai*
RUSSIA: *Spasatiel Karev*
DENMARK: *MHV 806, MHV 810, MHV 901, Gunnar Thorson*
EMSA: *OW Copenhagen*

- **Task for the EMSA vessel**

OW Copenhagen was tasked to deploy the oil boom in J formation with assistance from the vessel *Sturmmöwe* and to recover oil with the skimmer.

- **Performance of the EMSA vessel**

During the deployment, the boom was damaged. In the fabric of the boom was a cut of approximately 30 cm. The compressor could compensate the air loss and kept the boom afloat. Nevertheless, this damage led to a reduced freeboard of the boom. The *OW Copenhagen* was the first vessel to approach the popcorn slick and was able to collect all of the popcorn at once. Due to current and wind conditions the slick does not spread at all. The reduced freeboard of the boom led to the loss of the popcorn at the apex of the boom.
OW Copenhagen fulfilled the role assigned by the Member State organising this exercise (Germany) and also met the expectations of the Agency. The EMSA contracted vessel performed well and crew showed high levels of motivation.

- **General conclusion from the exercise**

The BALEX DELTA 2013 exercise was well organised. The scenario was realistic, taking into account the vessel traffic in the Gulf of Warnemünde, in particular traffic to the oil terminal Rostock.
The exercise was a positive experience for all the participants. The coordination between the different participating countries and response units was positively tested.
The communication (mainly in English) between SOSC/NSOC and the participating units ran smoothly.
Due to the rather large exercise area, strike teams had some difficulties in following the work of other teams and the progress of the whole operation.
The appearance of popcorn, used for simulating oil spill, was clearly visible from a long distance.

Vessels exercising pollution response during BALEX DELTA 2013 Exercise

SASEMAR-EMSA Atlantic 2013

- **Place and date**

Vigo, Spain, 27 July 2013.

- **Organiser**

Spanish Maritime Safety Agency (SASEMAR).

- **Background for the exercise**

This was a joint SASEMAR – EMSA exercise. A Notification Exercise took place on 25 July 2013.

- **Participants**

Spain, EMSA.

- **Objective of the exercise**

General Objectives:

- Evaluate the performance of the vessels, crews and response coordinators;
- Reinforce and encourage closer cooperation between SASEMAR-EMSA in Spill Response;
- Verify Oil Spill Response equipment functionality and preparedness.

Specific Objectives:

- Train the crew and personal on board;
- Reinforce coordination between the assisting boat and the EMSA vessel, in the boom deployment and the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC), OSC and operational activities;
- Reinforce and verify safety standards are maintained during the exercises;
- Launch special buoys and markers to be used as tools for prediction and monitoring of the pollution trajectory. Estimation of the simulated spilled oil drift;
- Launch the Notification exercise and testing of CECIS for reporting, requesting and providing assistance in cooperation between EMSA and Spain.

- **Scenario of the exercise**

A Vehicle Carrier of 163 m length is drifting dangerously to the Island of Cies. The Captain responds to MRCC-Vigo that they have engine problems. *María Pita* is mobilised to the area. Finally, the engine starts to work and no towing is necessary.
Simulation: (26 July 2013 08:00 L.T): The engine can´t be restored and finally the vessel runs aground against Islas Cies (approximately Playa de Roda). A HFO leakage occurs, but the vessel does not report the incident. The Chief Engineer attempts to minimise the leakage. Not long after, a spill is detected at 42º 13.37' N 8º 50.1' W by a sailing boat. It is estimated there is a spill of approximately 500 tonnes of HFO.

- **Participating vessels**

The following Spanish vessels were involved in the exercise: *B/S María Pita* and *E/S Salvamar Mirach* from the Spanish Maritime Safety Agency (Sasemar) and *Serra de Barbanza* from Xunta da Galicia. EMSA participated with the *Ria de Vigo*, contracted from Remolcanosa, based in Vigo, Spain.
The oil recovery actions had the support of aerial surveillance. One helicopter from Xunta da Galicia (*Pesca I*) was flying over the exercise area, simulating the detection and monitoring of the oil spill.

- **Task for the EMSA vessel**

Ria de Vigo deployed her oil boom and the Transrec Skimmer System to simulate oil recovery operations.

- **Performance of the EMSA vessel**

Ria de Vigo fulfilled the role assigned by the Member State organising this exercise (Spain) and also met the expectations of the Agency. The EMSA contracted vessel performed well and the crew showed high levels of motivation.

- **General conclusion from the exercise**

The SASEMAR-EMSA Atlantic 2013 Exercise was well organised and went according to expectations.

***Ria de Vigo* deploying the Transrec High Capacity Skimmer System during the SASEMAR-EMSA Atlantic 2013 Exercise**

MALTEX 2013

- **Place and date**

Valetta, Malta 18 September 2013.

- **Organiser**

Ministry of Transport Malta, Ports and Yachting Directorate.

- **Background for the exercise**

National exercise in conjunction with a notification exercise the day before.

- **Participants**

Malta, EMSA.

- **Objective of the exercise**

The main purpose of this exercise was to train the Member State's command and communications system and pollution response operations, practical use of recovery equipment and cooperation of participating units.

- **Scenario of the exercise**

The OSC gave the scenario via radio. An unquantified, but large, amount of HFO 380 was spilled at the initial exercise position.

- **Participating vessels**

MALTA: Tug *Spinola,* Tug *Felicia,* Pilot boat *Echo,* Tug *St. Roccu*, Patrol Boat *P32*

EMSA: *Balluta Bay*

- **Task for the EMSA vessel**

The tugs *Spinola* and *Felicia* performed an open U-formation with 100 m boom. *Balluta Bay* deployed the sweeping arms and followed the formation.

- **Performance of the EMSA vessel**

The performance of EMSA vessel was good and according to expectations.

- **General conclusion from the exercise**

Due to the unfortunate weather conditions (swell 2.5 m, wind 26 knots) it was not possible to perform the exercise at sea. The exercise area was moved into the shelter of Valletta harbour. Due to limited space and ship traffic it was only possible to deploy 100 m of boom. Navigation in the narrow space of the harbour was challenging for the boom formation and *Balluta Bay*. It was not possible to perform a 180° turn. Nevertheless, the exercise was a positive experience for all participants. Coordination between the different parties was tested positively.

Exercise Maltex 2013. Tugs *Spinola* and *Felicia* towing the boom in "U" formation

GUARDEX 2013

- **Place and date**

Cascais, Portugal, 25 September 2013.

- **Organiser**

Marinha Portuguesa, Portugal.

- **Background for the exercise**

The organiser intended to test the National Pollution Response Plan. During the exercise, the organiser launched the relevant procedures and mechanisms for international assistance within the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism. Accordingly, the Portuguese authorities requested assistance by EMSA contracted vessels through the ERRC (using CECIS).

- **Participants**

Portugal, EMSA and France (invited).

- **Objective of the exercise**

The pollution response exercise was integrated within a multidisciplinary scenario, including rescue operations, dealing with refugees (some with health issues) and oil pollution (at-sea and on-shore). The exercise scenario was quite ambitious. Many resources needed to be deployed and coordination between a large number of institutions organised.

- **Scenario of the exercise**

The tanker *CASCGUARD* collides with a rocky bottom and starts spilling IFO 180 near Cascais, Portugal. The amount of oil spilled is estimated to be 750 m^3. The total amount of oil on board the vessel in distress is approximately 1,500 m^3.

- **Participating vessels**

FRANCE: *BSAD Argonaute*

PORTUGAL: NRP *Viana do Castelo,* NRP *Jacinto Candido,* NRP *D. Carlos I,* NRP *Auriga,* NRP *Bacamarte,* Maritime Patrol Aircraft, P-3C SAR

EMSA: *Bahia Tres.*

- **Task for the EMSA vessel**

Pollution response, using the sweeping arm system.

- **Performance of the EMSA vessel**

The *Bahia Tres* performance during the exercise was up to the expected standards, particularly taking into account the adverse weather conditions.

- **General conclusion from the exercise**

The GUARDEX 2013 exercise was a fruitful experience for all the participants and a good opportunity to strengthen cooperation. Overall, the level of coordination was good.

Exercise Guardex 2013. *Bacamarte* following the *Bahia Tres*

EXERCISE SASEMAR-EMSA Tarifa 2013

- **Place and date**

Tarifa, Spain, 26 September 2013.

- **Organiser**

Spanish Maritime Safety Agency (SASEMAR).

- **Background for the exercise**

This was a joint SASEMAR – EMSA exercise. A Notification Exercise took place on 24 September 2013.

- **Participants**

Spain, EMSA.

- **Objective of the exercise**

The overall aim of this exercise was to test the performance of the participating units including crews, to reinforce cooperation between SASEMAR and EMSA during oil recovery operations and to verify the functionality and preparedness of the pollution response equipment.

- **Scenario of the exercise**

The vessel X of 144 m length was drifting dangerously to the South Tarifa Island. The Captain informed MRCC – Tarifa that the vessel had engine problems. The engine could not be restored and finally the vessel grounded. A HFO leakage started to occur. There was a final slick of approximately 500 tonnes of HFO.

- **Participating vessels**

Two SASEMAR's vessels were involved in the exercise: the emergency response and anti-pollution tug boat *Luz de Mar* (50 m) and the search and rescue vessel *Alkaid* (21 m). EMSA participated with the *Bahia Uno*, contracted from Mureloil, based in Algeciras, Spain.

- **Task for the EMSA vessel**

Bahia Uno deployed the oil boom with skimmer and both sweeping arms to simulate "oil recovery" operations.

- **Performance of the EMSA vessel**

Bahia Uno fulfilled the role assigned by the Member State organising this exercise (Spain) and also met the expectations of the Agency. The EMSA contracted vessel performed well and the crew showed high levels of motivation.

- **General conclusion from the exercise**

The exercise was well organised and met the objectives.

***Luz de Mar* following the *Bahia Uno* during the SASEMAR-EMSA Tarifa 2013 Exercise**

RAMOGEPOL 2013

- **Place and date**

Ajaccio, France, 10 October 2013.

- **Organiser**

France, Préfecture Maritime de la Méditerranée.

- **Background for the exercise**

This pollution response exercise was hosted and organised by the French authorities, within the framework of the RAMOGE agreement (France, Italy and Monaco). Spain was also invited to participate within the framework of the Lyon Plan (France and Spain).

- **Participants**

France, Italy, Spain and EMSA.

- **Objective of the exercise**

The main goals of the exercise were to:

- Train staff at French and Italian maritime headquarters
- Verify and improve national procedures
- Train involved the air and nautical units
- Improve the coordination between state and non-state organizations
- Promote international cooperation (RAMOGE, REMPEC, EMSA).

- **Scenario of the exercise**

A collision occurs west of the Strait of Bonifacio. One of the ships *FS Clara* is adrift with main engine and steering gear failure. No damages are sustained by the second vessel. Tug operation of *FS Clara* by *Abeille Flandre* tug is stopped due to the leakage of IFO 180 from *FS Clara*.

- **Participating units**

Air assets:
FRANCE: F406 POLMAR Localisation and monitoring of fuel slicks
ITALY: ATR42 Localisation and monitoring of fuel slicks
SPAIN: CASA C-235 Localisation and monitoring of fuel slicks
OSRL: Hercules C130 POLMAR Simulation of Dispersants Spraying

Maritime assets:
SPAIN: SV *Clara Campoamor*
ITALY: *SV Castalia, CP 905,* Patrol Boat *Sirio, Cassiopea, Class 200*
FRANCE: SV *Jason, DF 12;* MT *Cap Pinède,* RNBB motor boat, *Louis Gaby, The Score*, HarbourTug *Persevero*, *Gravone* and *DF 12* or (*DF14*)
EMSA: MT *Monte Anaga*

- **Task for the EMSA vessel**

Monte Anaga deployed the oil boom with skimmer and both sweeping arms to simulate “oil recovery” operations.

- **Performance of the EMSA vessel**

The *Monte Anaga* performance during the exercise was up to the expected standards, particularly taking into account the adverse weather conditions. The equipment was positively tested in a very demanding environment.

- **General conclusion from the exercise**

The sweeping arms sustained minor damages that were unavoidable in these conditions. The contractor took appropriate measures to repair the damage and to prevent/minimise similar damage in the future.
Representatives from France, Italy, Monaco and Spain recognised the importance of EMSA presence in the exercise. The level of understanding of the Agency’s tasks showed a clear improvement from previous editions of this exercise (i.e. RAMOGEPOL 2011]).

***Monte Anaga* during RAMOGEPOL 2013 Exercise**

RIGEX 2013

- **Place and date**

Central Production Platform, 50 nautical miles (nm) off Constanta, Romania, 17 October 2013.

- **Organiser**

Romanian Naval Authority (RNA) and Grup Servicii Petroliere (GSP).

- **Background for the exercise**

The regional exercise was held in conjunction with a notification exercise conducted the day before (16 October 2013).

- **Participants**

Romania, EMSA.

- **Objective of the exercise**

The main purpose of this exercise was to train the Member State command and communication system and pollution response operations, practical use of recovery equipment, and cooperation of participating units, for the response to an oil spill from an offshore installation.

- **Scenario of the exercise**

The scenario involved a spill of 700-800 tonnes of oil from an offshore production platform located 50 nm away from shore.

- **Participating vessels**

ROMANIA: *GSP King*, *GSP Alcor*, *SAR Opal*;
EMSA: *GSP Orion, Enterprise.*

- **Task for the EMSA vessels**

The *Enterprise* was tasked to tow 500 m of oil booms together with *GSP King* in an open U-formation. The *GSP Orion* was tasked to recover the oil with the sweeping arms following the boom formation.

- **Performance of the EMSA vessels**

The weather conditions were difficult. The winds of 24-30 knots and the 2.0 - 2.5 m waves made the deployment of oil spill equipment unsafe. The forecast for the following hours showed a deterioration of the weather conditions, therefore, to avoid injuries and/or damage to the equipment, the Romanian Naval Authority (RNA), in agreement with all involved parties, took the decision to stop the exercise.

- **General conclusion from the exercise**

The RIGEX 2013 was a positive experience for all the participating units to improve the coordination and communication during the first offshore platform oil spill exercise attended by EMSA. The exercise was a good opportunity to test the communication (using of VHFs, emails and mobile phones) and coordination between RNA, Central Production Platform, MRCC, EMSA vessels and different units involved.

***GSP Orion* conducting pollution response exercise in the vicinity of the Central Production Platform**

POLMAR 17

- **Place and date**

La Rochelle, France, 26 November 2013.

- **Organiser**

France - Préfecture Maritime de l'Atlantique.

- **Participants**

France, EMSA.

- **Objective of the exercise**

The objective of the exercise was to test the national/local emergency response procedures, train personnel and exercise cooperation between response units, including EMSA assets.

- **Scenario of the exercise**

A pollution slick was detected off the coast of the Pertuis of Antioch. The Maritime Prefecture decides to send to the zone the *Alcyon BSAD*, chartered fishing vessels, a harbour tug and shellfish vessels to intervene alongside the *Alcyon*. EMSA services were requested and *Monte Arucas* was mobilised to the area. The pollution response action was under the coordination of the Centre of Practical Expertise in Pollution Response (CEPPOL), and the On Scene Coordinator (OSC).

- **Participating vessels**

Air assets:
FRANCE:
F406 POLMAR
Helicopter DAUPHIN SP

Maritime assets:
FRANCE:
BSAD *Alcyon*
Fishing vessels
Harbour tug
EMSA:
MT *Monte Arucas*

- **Task for the EMSA vessel**

Monte Arucas was tasked by the OSC to locate the oil slick (at given position) and to recover oil using the sweeping arm system.

- **Performance of the EMSA vessel**

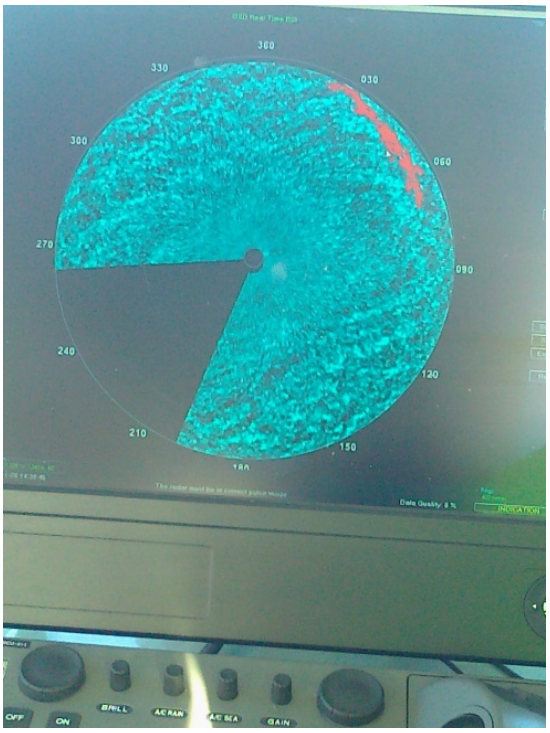
Monte Arucas performed well. The vessel found the oil slick using the on board Miros slick detection system. Oil was successfully recovered by means of the sweeping arm system.
Monte Arucas fulfilled the role assigned by the exercise command and also met the expectations of the Agency.

- **General conclusion from the exercise**

The POLMAR 17 Exercise was a positive experience for all the participants. The coordination between the different units was positively tested.
The communications between the participating French units were in French and in English to/from *Monte Arucas*.

The exercise strengthened the integration of EMSA vessels at the operational level with the French ships and the command structure.
The rice husks, used to simulate oil, were noted to be more appropriate and suitable than popcorn used for the same purpose. Due to its colour and visibility, the spill simulation was visible on the MIROS (slick detection system on board *Monte Arucas*).

***Monte Arucas* recovering oil simulant during POLMAR 17 Exercise**



Oil simulant visible (red mark) on the screen of the slick detection system on board *Monte Arucas*