



European Maritime Safety Agency

Workshop Report

Incident Report Working Group

Held in Lisbon on
29 February 2012

Background

I. Introduction

The "Incident Report Working Group" (IRWG) was established at SSN 12 (21-22 October 2009) with the objective to propose to the SSN group "an agreed XML messaging framework that should fulfil both technical and operational requirements". The initial mandate of the IRWG was to complete the task by October 2010; during SSN 16 (18-19 October 2011) the mandate was extended till SSN 17 (May 2012).

The meeting was opened and chaired by Mr. Yann Le Moan, senior project officer Unit C2 (EMSA) and was attended by delegations from: **Bulgaria, Denmark, France, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Malta, Poland, Sweden, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.**

Mr Michele Avino represented the European Commission (DG MOVE).

The meeting agenda is attached as **Annex 1** and the list of participants is attached as **Annex 2**.

Note: the workshop documentation may be obtained from:

<http://www.emsa.europa.eu/documents/workshop-presentations-a-reports.html>

Workshop Programme

1. Opening / Introduction (EMSA)

Mr Yann Le Moan welcomed the participants and underlined that the main objective of the meeting was to review the technical proposal for the IRs improvements including the following:

- IR distribution via XML;
- New queries;
- New XML structure for IRs encompassing inconsistencies, type "others" and update/feedback.

The outcome of the discussion would be presented at SSN 17 (23-24 May 2012). The chairman informed the group that comments were received from the UK and Italy and mentioned that the topic of the implementation plan will be presented at SSN 17.

Regarding the Incident Report Guidelines, the group noted that the version agreed at SSN 16 will be published soon. Further comments on the Guidelines were received before the meeting from Italy and the Commission which should to be sent to the IRWG and then discussed at SSN 17.

Mr Michele Avino (DG MOVE) introduced himself and informed the group that he will replace Jean-Bernard Erhardt.

2. Approval of the agenda

The agenda was approved as proposed (Annex 1).

3. Incident Report distribution through XML concept (IRWG 3/II)

The chairman introduced the follow up actions from SSN 16 and mentioned that no further meetings are planned (the remaining work will be done by correspondence).

The concept of the technical proposal was presented and discussed together with the data flow. Several MSs raised questions with regard to the failure management in case of distributed IRs. EMSA proposed a consolidated acknowledgement to be sent to the data provider by the SSN Core via XML.

This message is expected to depict the state-of-play of the distribution showing if the recipient systems have properly received the IR. In case of reception problems, the SSN Core should trigger a warning email informing the relevant recipient Authorities about the missed distribution.

The WG decided that the recipient of the warning email should react by requesting the IR details from the data provider. The warning email is a mechanism applicable only if the recipient chooses the IR distribution via XML (and not via email).

Concerning the consolidated acknowledgement, the WG agreed that:

- The national XML system must send a receipt to SSN (MS2SSN_Receipt) to allow the SSN Core to provide the consolidated message;
- The consolidated message should incorporate a receipt for both the XML and email distribution.
- For the distribution via email, each recipient server should provide the receipt. This implies that many servers (associated to the different LCAs) could provide the receipt. This receipt reflects only the correct reception by the recipient's server (it would not be the "read receipt").
- The failure management process is foreseen only in case of XML distribution.

IE, MT & IT asked if there is any plan to phase out the web distribution and the email solution after 2015. EMSA clarified that currently there is not any HLSG decision to phase out the web distribution. COM recognised that the solution proposed fulfils the legal requirements.

The **UK** questioned if there is any need to store the IR details at national level once the notification incorporating all the details has been sent to the SSN Core. EMSA pointed out that with this new proposal, there is no need to store IR details available upon request at MS level.

The IRWG agreed on the concept of the XML notification and the integrated processes (distribution, acknowledgement, feedback), suggesting a specific clarification in the IR Guidelines on the procedures to be followed with respect the failed acknowledgements.

In line with the mandate of the IRWG, EMSA presented four new queries to be used for retrieving information:

- All IRs for a specific ship within a defined time frame.
- All IRs of a specific type(s) within a defined time frame
- All IR for a specific Port of Departure and/or Port of Destination within a define time frame
- A specific Incident Report

The IRWG pointed out the high operational value of the new queries but also their complex implementation at national level. EMSA replied that these 4 queries are relatively simple and that there is the possibility to have the time frame set by default (more simple for operational use).

The IRWG agreed on the set of queries to be implemented on a voluntary basis.

BL asked to assess the feasibility of a specific query for retrieving IR information by area, more tailored for SAR users.

4. Incident Report through XML –message description and business rules (IRWG 4/II - III)

The chairman analyzed both the structure and the business rules of the XML proposal taking into account the comments received from the UK.

The following clarifications and corrections were positively considered:

- a) The structure of the notification allows linking updates, feedback or different IRs related to the same event. It is possible because a specific element ("IncidentID") provides a unique identification for the specific event, keeping track of all the additional notifications related to the same incident (similar logic to the "ShipCallID" in the PortPlus message). Further explanations on the feedback were provided. The UK raised a concern about the number of IDs that were included within the new structure which seemed likely to confuse operators and add an unnecessary processing overhead to Central and National systems.
 - b) It was agreed to rename the "RequestForInspection" to "RequestForAction"
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- c) The element "UpdateStatusReason" should be used to indicate the purpose of the notification: it could open a new notification or provide update/feedback/deletion.
- d) The meaning and usability of the status "Close" was discussed. As this attributes could be confusing for the users/operators, EMSA proposes to remove the "Close" possibility from the "UpdateStatusReason" and allow the "ReportSequence" to quote "final" for the last message concerning a specific incident. The business rules will be modified accordingly.
- e) The **UK** proposed an automatic distribution tool sent to the flag state (if relevant). Once the vessels are identified, the system could automatically distribute the IRs to the flag state (if under the SSN framework) by choosing this option. This possibility is to be further assessed from a technical perspective but the principle is agreed.
- f) It was agreed that more than one feedback from different authorities or even MSs should be accepted by the system for each IR (0-99).
- g) The new notification allows providing only one type of IRs using a define "IncidentID". The **UK** proposed to allow notifying more IRs in one message. EMSA clarified that this proposal is complicate to implement because different IRs may have different distribution lists, updates and feedback. The proposed protocol does not anticipate this because it would seriously increase the complexity of the system.
- h) It was agreed to delete from the XML notification (and response) the attribute of the Authorities notified in the WasteIncidentReport. They are already in the distribution list.
- i) It was agreed that by default the points of contact of each MS would be the NCA 24/7.
- j) IR Guidelines should be amended in order to explain the management of the improved IRs (work to be initiated after the IR framework will be agreed).

5. Action plan for the new IR implementation (IRWG 4/IV)

According to the proposed time plan, the new framework should be implemented by the MSs on a voluntary basis until 2015. During this transitional phase a backward compatibility will be proposed. By 2015 the old XML framework for IRs would be phased out.

EMSA proposed to present:

- the new agreed XML structure and the associated time plan to the SSN Group (SSN 17, May), for approval. The amended XML Reference Guide should be draft by summer 2012.
- the new approach for providing the details within the notification (change from the current index server protocol) and the time plan proposed to the HLSG, for approval.

EMSA pointed out that this plan would be feasible only in the case a sufficient number of MSs is committed to implement.

The **UK, IT, MT** mentioned that it is premature to phase out the current XML interface by 2015. The **UK** was concerned about the likely level of support for a proposal of a major change to the messaging structure when SSN 16 had not been able to agree an implementation plan for much more minor corrections of the existing messages. The **UK** stated it viewed the correction of the existing messages as the priority to allow Member States to make operation use of the messages they had already invested considerable time and money in implementing. **EMSA** replied that it was not the objectives of SSN 16 to agree the new XML structure but only its principles. **IT** underlined that the implementation of the Directive 2010/65/EU will consume many resources and asked for a gradual deployment of the new IR framework. **FR** and **IR** expressed their willingness to start the deployment of the new IR during the transitional phase. **NL** pointed out the preference for the web distribution tool (instead of the XML).

The chairman reminded the mandate of the WG which is to propose the new XML structure for approval at SSN 17 together with a time plan for its deployment and confirmed that there was no plan to phase out the web interface for IRs. The SSN web interface will be modified to reflect the changes that will be agreed for the XML. The deadline for phasing out the current XML structure will have to be agreed by the SSN and HLSG.

The chairman thanked the group for the very fruitful meeting that proposes important change in SSN and the IR framework in particular.

Workshop Conclusions / Follow-up Actions

The group **agreed** on the XML structure of the IR notification and the "push" message (minor amendments are still pending). EMSA will investigate the technical feasibility of some aspects (as listed in the following table).

EMSA will draft by mid-March a final technical proposal which will be provided with the IRWG 4 report. Member States' comments should be provided by 13 April the latest (in order to introduce the final document for SSN 17).

The table below summarise the agreed action points:

Action point	Item	Task leader	Associated partners	Deadline
1	Revise the XML structure for notification and "push" message	EMSA		Mid-March
2	Draft a paper aiming to illustrate the technical proposal to the SSN17.	EMSA	IRWG	Mid-April (with comment from IRWG)
3	Further work on technical issues:	EMSA		Mid-April
-3A	To define through XML the proposed queries and assess the possibility for retrieving IR information by area ¹ (e.g. for SAR users).			
-3B	"UpdateStatusReason" allowing to provide a new notification			
-3C	automatic distribution tool to the relevant flag states (if identified ships)			
-3D	backward compatibility during transitional phase			

Annexes

Annex 1 - Workshop agenda

Annex 2 – List of participants

¹ After a post meeting discussion with Bulgaria, the search by area is proposed to be removed due to a low anticipated added value.


















Annex 1

DRAFT AGENDA
SSN INCIDENT REPORT WORKING GROUP
4th Meeting
Lisbon, 29 February 2012 (09:00 – 17:30)

Time	Topic	Speaker	Ref. Document
09:00 – 09:30	Registration and coffee		
09:30 – 09:45	Welcome, meeting objectives and approval of the agenda	EMSA/COM	--
09:45 – 10:00	Review of the follow-up actions from IRWG 3 and the comments received at SN 16	EMSA	IRWG 3 – Report (v1.0) SSN Workshop 16 – Report (v1.0)
10:00 – 11:00	Incident Report distribution through XML concept	EMSA / Participants	IRWG 4.1 – XML distribution concept
11:00 – 11:15	Coffee break		
11:15– 12:30	Incident Report distribution through XML concept (cont.)	EMSA / Participants	IRWG 4.1 – XML distribution concept
12:30-14:00	Lunch break		
14:00 – 15:00	Incident Report through XML –message description	EMSA / Participants	IRWG 4.2 – IR XML message description
15:00 – 15:30	Incident Report through XML –Business rules table and definition	EMSA / Participants	IRWG 4.3 – IR XML business rules table and definition
15:30 – 15:45	Coffee break		
15:45 – 16:45	Incident Report through XML –Business rules table and definition (cont)	EMSA / Participants	IRWG 4.3 – IR XML business rules table and definition
16:45 – 17:15	Action plan for the new IR implementation	EMSA / Participants	IRWG 4.4 – Action plan
17:15 – 17:45	Conclusions and summary End of meeting	EMSA / Participants	--

Annex 2 List of participants

SafeSeaNet Working Group "Incident Reports", 4th Meeting, 29th February 2012

Country	Name	First Name	Organisation	E-mail	Attendance on 29.02.12
Belgium	Maekeberg	Yves	Agency for Maritime & coastal services, shipping assistance division	yves.maekeberg@now.vlaanderen.be	
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EMSA participants:

Yann Le Moan, Enrico Gironella, Saverio Macchia German Sarasua, and Nikos Panagiotarakis.