



**INFORMATION AND
COMMUNICATION PLAN
2006**

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Information and Communication Plan

1. Objective

The objective of this plan is to describe the main objectives for information and communication activities in 2006. In general, these activities should provide stakeholders with the best possible information on the activities of EMSA, having fully taken into account the tasks and objectives of the Agency and the information and communication requirements in its founding regulation (EC) No 1406/2002. The objective of the EMSA external communications activities is shown in Article 4(2) of the Regulation, which states that *'the Agency may communicate on its own initiative in the fields within its mission. It shall ensure, in particular, that the public and any interested party are rapidly given objective, reliable and easily understandable information with regard to its work.'*



Further to the communications objectives stated in the Regulation, it is critical that EMSA's stakeholders understand its goals, and perceive the Agency as a well qualified technical body which meets them effectively and efficiently.

2. Agency Background

EMSA was set up to contribute to making EU waters safer and less polluted. It can be seen that there is a significant job to do when looking at the many major and lesser accidents involving all the main ship types in EU waters in recent years. These include the Prestige, Erika and Braer (oil tankers), Ievoli Sun (chemical tanker), Estonia and Herald of Free Enterprise (large passenger/vehicle ferries), Tricolor (freighter), and more recently the Bugaled Breizh (large fishing trawler) and the Rocknes (bulk carrier). Apart from these, the huge pollution problems caused by the sinking of the oil tanker Erika were the main driver for the set up of the Agency.



The Prestige sinks and pollutes the Spanish and French coasts

The set up process involved the allocation of a number of operational tasks and objectives aimed at making a major contribution to the prevention of, and also the reaction to, maritime accidents. These include: monitoring tasks associated with the construction, maintenance and operation of ships, and also with the training of seafarers; the provision of technical and scientific advice to the European Commission and Member States in a number of key areas; the set up of maritime systems and databases and; the creation of an operational capability in oil pollution response.

3. Stakeholders

EMSA has a substantial number of different types of stakeholders, all of who have differing interests in the work of the Agency. The main stakeholders can be seen in Annex 1.

Of these, the most directly influential organisations are the European Commission Directorate General (DG) for Energy and Transport, DG Environment* and the European Parliament (Transport, Budget and Budget Control Committees) as they generate the relevant policies and define the resources available to the Agency to execute its tasks. EMSA has therefore established close interpersonal relationships with these key players.

Following close behind are the Member State government maritime administrations and organisations, and it is vital that the Agency has the best possible interpersonal relationships with these organisations, in order to achieve the desired developments and improvements in line with EU policy.

Relationships with the International Maritime Organisation, and other international organisations such as the Paris Memorandum of Understanding and the International Association of Classification Societies are also of significant importance, as these are the most influential bodies that work in similar fields to EMSA.

The press are also a key EMSA stakeholder and, with EMSA going fully operational, the strategy for press releases and interviews will become of increasing importance.

* For administrative and financial issues, the contacts within the Commission are working in DGs Budget and Admin



Inspectors on board a tanker

Member State implementation authorities are also of major significance. In addition to irregular interpersonal contacts, EMSA communication/networking tools (website, publications, events and eventually extranet) are vital in maintaining up to date awareness of the activities of the Agency.

With respect to the wider stakeholder community (not only the maritime sector, but also the transport, environment, energy, safety, security sectors, both in industry and other areas, etc.), the website and publications, as well as press releases, are the main means of communication. The distribution network is of particular importance here.



Refineries are an important link in the oil supply chain

Finally, the public, and in particular those traveling on ships, living on the coast or who visit the coast, have a keen interest in maritime safety, security and pollution matters, as their lives, livelihood and/or leisure interests may be at stake. EMSA has been tasked with communicating directly with the public, whenever appropriate, on its activities. However, such communication is expected to be limited, as EMSA is primarily a technical support organisation, while the European Commission, Parliament and Council are the primary policy, regulatory and control bodies. Therefore, they will be the main EU level bodies in direct contact with the public.

4. Tools and Implementation

For implementation purposes, EMSA's stakeholders can be conveniently divided into two main groups: the general stakeholder community and the public and; the principal specialist stakeholders. The implementation of the plan will be carried out on the basis of specific aims for each of these groups, as well as more general aims, as follows.

4.1 General Stakeholder Community and the Public

4.1.1 Aims

The community of wider EMSA stakeholders includes all individuals working in the maritime and associated sectors (eg transport, safety, environment, security). The aims here are:

- * to communicate, whenever important information becomes available, directly via the specialist media and specialised sections of the general media.
- * to provide key information in a user friendly form via the generation and active and passive distribution of brochures and leaflets at different levels.

With respect to the public, the aim is: to communicate, when appropriate, via the general press/media; to provide passive information in a comprehensive way, via the website and; to give consideration to direct communication, if appropriate, via such methods as ship/port based poster awareness campaigns.

4.1.2 Activities/Tools

EMSA's publications which are aimed at the wider stakeholder community and the public are the general Agency brochure, sector brochures and leaflets describing the individual operational activities. The first of many of these will be published in 2006.



**Executive Director Willem De Ruiter (centre)
speaking at EMSA press conference**

Also targeting the same groups are the Agency's media related activities. These involve the set up of media interviews, the generation and distribution of press releases and, when appropriate, the supply of information for articles in specific media publications and targeted visits.

These stakeholder groups are also the ones which, from time to time, will require access to documents generated by, or in the possession of, the Agency. For this purpose, a website-based system has been set up so that interested parties can easily identify, and access, documents of interest.

The general enquiries system has also been set up, via a single email based point of entry, so that stakeholders can send specific requests for information to EMSA.

4.1.3 Specific Output in 2006

The general EMSA brochure will be published in the first quarter of 2006. It will describe the main activities of the Agency and is primarily intended to provide information to the public and the general stakeholder community.

The *Oil Pollution Response* brochure will be published in the second quarter of 2006 and is primarily intended to provide a summary of EMSA's oil pollution response activities for the general stakeholder community. This will include information on the chartering and operation of response vessels in the EU's different sea sectors and also on pollution surveillance. It will be targeted at the general stakeholder community.



The Ile-de-Bréhat is the EMSA oil pollution response vessel for the Atlantic arc region

The *Cleaner European Seas* brochure will be published in the second quarter of 2006 and is intended to inform the general stakeholder community and the public of EMSA's role in helping to ensure the protection of the EU marine environment. This will include information on: the environmental aspects of ship construction, maintenance and inspection as well as the training of third country seafarers; the monitoring of ships and hazardous cargoes; initiatives against deliberate dumping of waste in the sea; accident investigation and; pollution surveillance and response.

The *Implementation of EU Maritime Legislation* brochure will be published in the second quarter of 2006. It will provide information on what EMSA is doing to ensure compliance with EU maritime laws. This will include describing the role of assessing classification societies, who approve ship construction and maintenance on behalf of flag states, and of ensuring that Member States' port state control activities are compliant. It will also provide information on the assessment of seafarer training in third countries in compliance with the STCW convention and the assessment of Member State implementation of the ISPS Code in accordance with EU legislation. It will also look at the EMSA role in ensuring Member State compliance with the port reception facilities directive and in supporting accession countries in their implementation activities. It will be targeted at the public and the general stakeholder community.

There will also be *nine leaflets* on EMSA's main operational activities published between the second quarter and the end of 2006. These will address the main areas of the work programme and are targeted at the public and the general stakeholder community.

Finally, the *network of contact points* will be improved and extended throughout 2006. The stakeholder database will be expanded to include more individuals and organisations in different countries. The press database will be expanded to include specialists from a larger number of countries.

4.2 Principal Specialist Stakeholders

4.2.1 Aims

The aim is to ensure that the EU institutions, Member State and international organisations, industry and other stakeholders are integrated effectively into the EMSA network, so that the greatest possible benefit can be obtained from their interaction. This will be done; by holding events which enable productive exchange of information and dissemination of best practice; by presenting the activities of the Agency at external workshops, conferences and meetings and; by developing a network of contacts in relevant organisations.



Stakeholders at EMSA event

4.2.2 Activities/Tools

EMSA will operate workshops and seminars for Member State experts in 2006 in order to exchange, collate and synthesise ideas and information and to disseminate best practice. The forward plan envisages at least 18 such events throughout the year.

There will also be a substantial and growing number of presentations made by EMSA experts at external meetings and larger events in order to ensure that key messages are passed and that questions of interest are answered.



Commissioner Barrot (left) and EMSA Executive Director Willem de Ruiter (centre right) at EU Agencies presentation

In addition to the Agency's more general publications, specific publications of interest to specialists will be generated. These include technical reports, inventories of Member State capabilities and resources, high level reports on key issues and guidelines documents for use by specialists.

The Early Warning Alert Mechanism (EWAM) monitors international newswires and other key sources 365 days per year in order to ensure that, should a maritime disaster occur, EU level decision makers in EMSA and the European Commission can obtain timely notification and information. In addition to this, a system will be set up in 2006 which will ensure rapid notification of major actual or potential oil spills to the Agency, so that its contracted oil pollution response vessels can be put on immediate stand-by ready to respond to requests for assistance from Member States.

Daily media tracking will also be carried out within EMSA throughout 2006 in order that Agency and European Commission staff are given the latest summarised information on accidents, serious incidents and items of policy interest.

4.2.3 Specific Output in 2006

An important planned initiative is the development of an Extranet capability. This will enable experts working directly with EMSA to have a secure means of exchanging messages and other information, and of amending and/or updating documents on line in an organised way. It will be developed at the same time as the planned new content management system, which is an IT

based tool which will allow for improved information management within the Agency. At the same time, the EMSA website and also the Intranet, which allows Agency staff to obtain key information of internal relevance, will be improved in line with the increased capabilities of the new content management system.

4.3 Supporting Activities/Tools for all Stakeholders

4.3.1 Aims

EMSA will also produce a number of information and communication tools which are targeted at most or all of its stakeholders.

4.3.2 Activities/Tools/Resources

The most important tool in this category is the website, which is the primary source of information on its activities for all stakeholders, and has already become a widely accessed site. It is fundamental that it contains all appropriate information and that it enables stakeholders to get exactly where they want to go quickly. Having changed the look of the website at the beginning of 2005, within the present technical structure, as part of the corporate image definition exercise, it is planned that further improvements will be made in 2006. These will be facilitated by the development of a new content management system which is expected to provide greater flexibility and efficiency in structuring, accessing and presenting the Agency's information.



The homepage on the EMSA website

The EMSA Newsletter is the main way of passing the latest news on the Agency to the majority of stakeholders, and this is distributed widely every month, as well as being put on the website. The further development of operational activities in 2006 will lead to more information being provided to stakeholders.

The Agency produces two key documents as part of the annual budgeting cycle. These are the annual report, which summarise the work done in the previous year, and the work programme, which gives the outlook for the year ahead. After adoption by the Administrative Board, these documents are submitted to the European Parliament, Council and Commission, and to the Member States. Subsequently, they are published on the EMSA website and also made available to stakeholders in hard copy. The Work Programme 2006 and the Annual Report 2005 will be published at the beginning of 2006.

The EMSA stakeholder database will eventually centralise all the contact and other information on EMSA stakeholders, and this will be used for many different purposes by operational, communications and administrative staff. The definition and development will begin in 2006.

4.3.3 Specific Output in 2006

With respect to the website, the existence of a new content management system will enable greater flexibility to re-structure the pages and to access and present the content. Further to this, the text and graphic content, as well as the links to other sites, will be continuously developed and updated and, when user access statistics become available, these will be provided to appropriate recipients.



EMSA meeting

The Work Programme 2006 was published in early 2006, and describes the operational outlook for the year.

The Annual Report 2005 is to be published in the second quarter of 2006 and this will summarise the Agency's results for 2005.

Note: A Communication Plan is a living document which allows for changes within a financial year, depending on changing priorities and requirements. The plan will be revised on an annual basis to include the best estimate of communications activities and tools required for the following year.

Main EMSA Stakeholders

1. International/Member State Administrations

European Institutions

- *European Commission (DG TREN and others)*
- *European Parliament*

International/Non-EU Administrations

- *International Maritime Organisation*
- *Paris Memorandum of Understanding*
- *International Association of Classification Societies*

Member State Policy/Legislative Authorities

Member State Implementation Authorities

- *Maritime Safety Agencies or Equivalent*
- *Coastguards or Equivalent*
- *VTMIS/Ship Tracking Organisations*
- *Emergency Services*
- *Customs Authorities*
- *Coastal Stations*
- *Ports (Public Sector Operated)*

European Institutions

2. EU/National Level Representations/Lobby Groups

- *Maritime representative*
- *Regional public sector*
- *Environmental*

3. Maritime Industry

- *EU Level Industrial Representations*
- *Classification Societies*
- *Ship Constructors*
- *Ship Owners/Operators*
- *Ship Maintenance Industry*
- *Ship Insurers*
- *Ports (Operating as Businesses)*
- *Industrial Unions*

4. European Public