

Maritime safety: monitoring, control and information for traffic, package Erika II (repeal. Directive 93/75/EEC)

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The Commission presents a report assessing the implementation and the impact of the measures taken according to Directive 2002/59/EC establishing a Community vessel traffic monitoring and information system. It describes the actions taken by Member States to transpose the Directive into national legislation by 5 February 2004, and to build up shore-based installations by the end of 2007 so that data exchange between the national systems was operational at the latest one year after that, by the end of 2008.

Besides the actions taken by Member States, the Directive has been implemented at EU level by setting up an information system called SafeSeaNet. The system has been developed by the Commission in close cooperation with Member States and the European Maritime

Safety Agency (EMSA) which was established by Regulation (EC) No 1406/2002.

The report notes that key issues in the implementation of the Directive are the transposition and enforcement of the ships' notification obligations, the administrative and technical infrastructure for receiving these notifications and for monitoring vessel traffic by technical means (like Automatic Identification System (AIS)), the setting up and operation of SafeSeaNet and the ability of the authorities to intervene in the events of accidents and incidents.

Outcome of the implementing actions: the implementation of the Directive and the development of the Community vessel traffic monitoring system began in 2002. It has required a lot of legislative and technical work and substantial financial resources at Member States and EU level. The Directive is transposed into national legislation and SafeSeaNet is fully established and operational. Member States reports on the full implementation of the Directive and the EMSA inspection reports available support a general impression of the Directive being substantially implemented. Minor legal, technical and operational shortcomings and findings pointed out in the reports will be addressed by the Commission in due course.

The SafeSeaNet system gives participating countries rapid access to all important information on the movements of ships in European waters, on dangerous or polluting cargoes on board, such as oil or chemical products and on ships posing potential risk to the safety of shipping

and the environment. All 22 coastal Member States as well as Norway and Iceland are connected through their national systems to the central SafeSeaNet system. According to the EMSA data quality report there are still some technical problems in the electronic data exchange and other means, such as telephone facsimile still being used for sending some types of reports. Out of the 22 coastal Member States, 10 were transmitting all five required report types (port call, hazmat, ship position (AIS), Mandatory Ship Reporting (MRS) notifications and incident reports) electronically to SafeSeaNet in the period January/June 2010. Most of the 12 Member States that did not report fully, were failing to transmit incident reports.

The performance of SafeSeaNet is addressed both in the SafeSeaNet High Level Steering Group and in the relevant EMSA expert group which aim to solve the few remaining shortcomings. The full electronic data exchange had to be in place by 30 November 2010, in line with the transposition date of Directive

2009/17/EC, amending Directive 2002/59/EC and the Commission is currently evaluating the situation with the assistance of EMSA.

Impact on maritime safety, efficiency of maritime transport and pollution prevention: the real time information on ships and hazardous cargoes in European waters through SafeSeaNet has improved capabilities for decision making, and cooperation between Member States as well as rescue and response abilities by Member States' relevant authorities. In several Member States the tasks related to the implementation of the Directive are dealt with by more than one authority. In general the competent authorities are maritime administrations, ports, coastguard and environment authorities. Member States report that the implementation of the Directive has increased cooperation and information exchange between these national authorities.

The obligations to notify other Members States and to build shore based installations for receiving AIS information has led to improved cooperation of authorities at regional level, e.g. in the framework of regional AIS servers. According to the EMSA Maritime Accident Review 2009, the number of accidents in EU waters has significantly decreased. The number of vessels involved in accidents in EU waters was 626 in 2009 compared to 726 in 2007. The number of seafarers who lost their lives also decreased from 82 in 2007 to 52 in 2009. No major oil spill has occurred in the last 7 years.

Future developments: the implementation of the third Maritime Safety Package will further improve the monitoring of vessel traffic in European waters and the data exchange and cooperation between maritime authorities. The package incorporates international requirements on the use of long-range identification and tracking of ships (LRIT), as well as the European LRIT Data Centre in the EU legislation and introduces the use of AIS on the fishing vessels. At the same time technical developments are opening up new possibilities to further develop the monitoring systems. The data exchange pursuant to the third Maritime Safety Package, especially Directive 2009/17/EC and Directive 2009/16/EC on port State control will have a significant impact on SafeSeaNet.

Further evolution of SafeSeaNet will make the data exchange more effective and offer possibilities for even more comprehensive monitoring activities and cooperation between authorities. A concrete example of this evolution is the "Blue Belt" concept and the associated pilot project which aims at facilitating intra-EU shipping minimising administrative formalities. A core element in this concept is the use of the existing maritime transport monitoring capabilities, notably SafeSeaNet.

In the framework of the EU Maritime Transport Policy the e-Maritime initiative aims at using advanced information and communication systems to support working and doing business in the maritime sector. It will focus on promoting interoperability of systems used by maritime authorities, ports and industry. The e-Maritime initiative will build on existing systems; the most central of these is SafeSeaNet.

The integrated maritime surveillance initiative in the framework of the Integrated Maritime Policy aims at creating a common information sharing environment by interlinking user communities, including the military. In this cross-sectoral initiative, SafeSeaNet will have a key role by providing data from the maritime transport sector.