2013 discharge: European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA)

2014/2115(DEC) - 01/07/2014 - Court of Auditors: opinion, report

PURPOSE: presentation of the EU Court of Auditors' report on the annual accounts of the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) for the year 2013, together with the Agency's reply.

CONTENT: in accordance with the tasks conferred on the Court of Auditors by the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the Court presents to the European Parliament and to the Council, in the context of the discharge procedure, a Statement of Assurance as to the reliability of the annual accounts of each institution, body or agency of the EU, and the legality and regularity of the transactions underlying them, on the basis of an independent external audit.

This audit concerned, amongst others, the annual accounts of the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA).

Statement of assurance: pursuant to the provisions of Article 287 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), the Court has audited:

- the annual accounts of the Agency, which comprise the financial statements (3) and the reports on the implementation of the budget (4) for the financial year ended 31 December 2013;
- the legality and regularity of the transactions underlying those accounts.

Opinion on the reliability of the accounts: in the Court's opinion, the Agency's annual accounts present fairly, in all material respects, its financial position as at 31 December 2013 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended, in accordance with the provisions of its Financial Regulation and the accounting rules adopted by the Commission's accounting officer.

Opinion on the legality and regularity of the transactions underlying the accounts: in the Court's opinion, the transactions underlying the annual accounts for the year ended 31 December 2013 are legal and regular in all material respects.

The report also makes a series of observations on the budgetary and financial management of the Agency, accompanied by the latter's response. The main observations may be summarised as follows:

The Court's observations:

- **budgetary management**: in 2013, the level of committed appropriations carried over to 2014 however was high at 38% for administrative expenditure and 43% for operating expenditure. An important reason for the high level of planned carry-overs was the considerable workload faced by the agency as a result of the large number of IT projects that were either launched or ongoing during 2013.

The Agency's reply:

- **budgetary management**: the Agency agrees with the facts presented by the Court.

Lastly, the Court of Auditors' report contains **a summary of the Agency's activities in 2013**. This is focused on the following:

Budget: EUR 9.22 million.

Activities:

- implementation of JDP (Joint Deployment Plan) cod fishery in the North Sea, Skagerrak, Kattegat and the Eastern Channel and Western Waters (West of Scotland and the Irish Sea) and other fishery programmes (cod and salmon fisheries in the Baltic Sea, bluefin tuna fishery in the Mediterranean Sea and Eastern Atlantic, support to national control programmes in the Black Sea);
- capacity building as regards training;
- operation, maintenance, enhancement and development of ICT monitoring capabilities: Vessel Monitoring System (VMS), Electronic Reporting System (ERS), Electronic Inspection Report (EIR), Coordination of inspections (JADE), portal and operational conferencing (Fishnet);
- support activities to fight Illegal unreported and unregulated fisheries;
- provision of contractual services to charter an EFCA Fisheries Patrol Vessel;
- advanced training for Union inspectors.