2017 discharge: European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA)

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PURPOSE: presentation of the EU Court of Auditors' report on the annual accounts of the European Maritime Safety Agency for the year 2017, together with the Agency's reply.

CONTENT: the Court of Auditors carried out the audit on the annual accounts of the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA).

In brief, the Agency's tasks are to ensure a high level of maritime safety and to prevent pollution by ships, provide the Commission and the Member States with technical assistance, and monitor the implementation of Union legislation, as well as to evaluate its effectiveness.

Statement of assurance and reliability of the accounts

The Court considered that:

- the Agency's annual accounts present fairly, in all material respects, its financial position as at 31 December 2017 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;

- the transactions underlying the annual accounts for the year ended 31 December 2017 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

Internal controls

The Agency did not systematically check prices and uplifts charged with the suppliers' quotes and invoices issued to a framework contractor for a framework contract concerning the acquisition of software licences and the provision of maintenance and support.

Financial management

Agencies should introduce a single solution for the electronic exchange and storage of information with third parties participating in public procurement procedures (e-procurement). As the same requirement exists for all EU Institutions, the Commission is developing a comprehensive IT solution covering all phases of public procurement procedures. The Commission launched tools for electronic invoicing (e-invoicing), for the electronic publication of documents related to contract notices (e-tendering) and for the electronic submission of tenders (e-submission). By the end of 2017 the Agency had introduced e-invoicing and e-submission for certain procedures, but not e-tendering.

The Agency's reply

Financial management

In 2017, EMSA carried out comprehensive preparation in order to adjust all relevant internal procedures to use e-procurement. EMSA can confirm that — as from the beginning of 2018 — the Agency introduced the e-procurement modules. The deadline for EU bodies to use the e-procurement is October 2018.

Lastly, the Court of Auditors' report contains a summary of the Agency's key figures in 2017:

Budget

EUR 79 million.

Staff

250 including officials, temporary and contract staff and seconded national experts.