



# More power for EU Maritime Safety Agency to combat offshore pollution and piracy

Committees: Committee on Transport and Tourism

**The European Agency for Maritime Safety (EMSA) would get new powers to step up cooperation against piracy, prevent maritime pollution, improve training for seafarers and help establish an EU maritime space without barriers under an informal deal struck on Thursday by Parliament's negotiating team, and the Council's Danish Presidency.**

Once formally approved the Council and the Parliament, this deal, which entails amending EMSA's founding Regulation (EC) 1406/2002, would enable EMSA to extend its preventive work and make broader use of its resources to help EU Member States to prevent and tackle maritime pollution, protect ships against piracy and create the future European maritime space without barriers, by reducing bureaucracy.

"EMSA will not replace or duplicate Member States' work, it will bring added value. It should play a much bigger role in supporting national authorities on safety inspections and in co-ordinating emergency and training requirements for seafarers", said leader of Parliament's negotiating team Knut Fleckenstein (S&D, DE), after the meeting.

## Offshore drilling and spilling

The compromise reached on Thursday mentions EMSA's possible future role in preventing pollution from offshore oil and gas installations once new EU rules on offshore platform safety - currently being debated in Parliament's Industry committee (COM(2011)0688) - have been approved.

These pollution prevention rules would provide the much-needed legal basis to examine further implementing steps involving EMSA, noted Mr Fleckenstein, who made it clear that Parliament favours entrusting EMSA with the related prevention and inspection tasks, rather than setting up a new agency.

Mr Fleckenstein will give Transport Committee MEPs a detailed report at their next meeting, on 23 -25 April and recommend that Parliament should approve the compromise agreement at the second reading.

## Background

EMSA was set up in 2003, with headquarters in Lisbon. The agency's annual budget arises to 54, 33 Mio. Euro (2010), 200 employees work for EMSA.

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