

WRITTEN QUESTION E-6182/07

by Josu Ortuondo Larrea (ALDE) and Ignasi Guardans Cambó (ALDE)
to the Commission

Subject: Latest tenders for anti-pollution vessels chartered by the European Maritime Safety Agency

On 27 November 2007, the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) issued a third call for tenders to charter fully available anti-pollution vessels to deal with accidents caused by marine pollution in Community waters, as laid down in the Agency's mission statement. In this last call for tenders, seven new vessels were chartered to cover the north Atlantic, the central and eastern Mediterranean, and the Straits of Gibraltar.

So, yet again we are faced with the paradox that no anti-pollution vessel is to be stationed in one of the areas most affected by marine pollution in recent years, namely the Galician and Cantabrian coast, a high-risk area due to the fact that passing international sea-traffic is amongst the heaviest in the world and has seen numerous accidents, of which the Prestige disaster stands out in terms of the scale of its environmental, economic and social impact.

Does the Commission think that it has made the right decision with regard to chartering these vessels? Can it tell me whether, with regard to the Atlantic area, tenders were submitted from Galicia? Are future calls for tender going to take due account of the need to provide anti-pollution vessel coverage of the Atlantic area lying between the southern coast of France and Galicia, which it would be difficult for the Galp Marine vessel stationed in Lisbon to reach in good time in the event of an accident?