

WRITTEN QUESTION P-1345/04  
by Peter Pex (PPE-DE)  
to the Commission

Subject:           Activities of EMSA

On 21 April 2004, the European Parliament adopted the Sterckx report (A5-0257/2004) on improving safety at sea. Various Members of the European Parliament spoke about the activities and powers of a European coastguard and EMSA to prevent disasters such as that involving the Prestige.

I am aware that at present there is, both qualitatively and quantitatively, insufficient capacity along the EU's coastline to tackle adequately such disasters as that which befell the Prestige.

It has emerged that EMSA has prepared an action plan for this. However, its implementation is being frustrated for technical reasons of a budgetary nature. Yet in my view, after everything which the European Parliament and the Commission have said about improving safety at sea, it seems inconceivable that effective measures should be made impossible.

Does the Commission agree that the European authorities bear a major responsibility towards the people of Europe to protect them against the impact of a fresh catastrophe similar to the Prestige disaster?

Can the Commission give an assurance that, in the regrettable eventuality of any future environmental disasters involving oil pollution, sufficient capacity - both quantitative and qualitative - will exist within the foreseeable future to tackle them and that the recommendations made in the Sterckx report will be acted upon?