

MAR-ICE service expanded to provide additional support for chemical emergencies at sea

The European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) together with the European Chemical Industry Council (Cefic) and the Centre of Documentation, Research and Experimentation on Accidental Water Pollution (Cedre), recently amended their three-party Cooperation Agreement, expanding the MAR-ICE service to provide an additional level of support when dealing with chemical emergencies at sea.

Shared objectives

The three organisations have been co-operating since 2008, when they first established the network of chemical experts called "MAR-ICE network," which aims to strengthen information transfer on chemical substances involved in maritime pollution emergencies in EU waters. The purpose of this network is to provide, upon request and through a single contact point, the member states of the European Union and the coastal states of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) with product-specific information on chemicals involved in marine pollution incidents, by contacting experts in chemical companies who are familiar with the substance(s) involved.

A new on-site expert support

With this recent MAR-ICE service expansion, if so requested, a knowledgeable expert from the chemical industry holding relevant know-how may be made available to provide advice and assistance *on-site* at the operational centre of the requesting country dealing with the response operations (MAR-ICE 'level-2'), strengthening the information and advice already provided remotely by the network (MAR-ICE 'level-1'). The new *on-site* expert support can be particularly useful during complex or long-lasting incidents involving chemical or hazardous substances.

This is in line with the type of on-site expertise provided by the chemical industry for land-based chemical transport incidents and aims to increase the level of expert emergency support made available to EU countries dealing with maritime chemical emergencies. Having rapid and direct access to a chemical expert who can provide and clarify relevant information on chemical substances is of paramount importance and through the MAR-ICE service, this is made available 24/7 across the EU.

The relevant documentation describing the service provided and the operational procedures for activating the MAR-ICE network have been distributed by EMSA to the relevant national administrations. More information can also be found on the EMSA website.



information@emsa.europa.eu

Press contacts:
Agnese Diverres
agnese.diverres@cedre.fr
+33 (0)2 98 33 10 10

Cedre ATA GLANCE

Based in BREST for **40 years**

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€4.5 million budget

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20+ multipartner projects in 10 years

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Emergency hotline (24/7)
+33 (0) 2 98 33 10 10

Cedre snapshot

Field of work: advice and expertise in the management of accidental water pollution.

Activities: response support, contingency planning, training, testing, research, documentation.

Geographical coverage: France and worldwide

Workforce: 50 including nearly 30 engineers, researchers and technicians

Annual budget: €4.5 million

Date of creation: 25 January 1979

Location: 715 rue Alain Colas, Port du Moulin Blanc, Brest, France