

PRESS RELEASE

23 September 2020

Sniffer drone deployed in the strait of Pas-de-Calais to monitor ship emissions

With the aim of tightening control over ship emissions in French waters, the Ministry of the Sea is deploying on a trial basis a sniffer drone in the strait of Pas-de-Calais, the world's busiest area for ship movements. This drone is made available to France by the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA).



Credits Nordic Unmanned

Operations have started on 23 of September for a period of three months with flights taking off from the Regional Surveillance and Rescue Operational Centre (CROSS) Gris-Nez which will serve as logistical base and will coordinate the follow-up of the flights.

The unmanned aircraft (RPAS) will fly above the traffic separation scheme of Pas-de-Calais. This area is part of the North Sea Sulphur Emission Control Area (SECA) where tighter pollution



monitoring rules apply. Ships navigating in this area must not use fuel with a sulphur concentration higher than 0,1% whereas in other areas the limitation is set at 0,5%.

The information collected from the drone (sulphur concentration, images, flight trajectory and gas measurements) will be transmitted live and recorded in EMSA's RPAS data centre.

The RPAS Data Centre is linked to THETIS-EU, a European database used by authorities around Europe responsible for ship inspections. If the emissions measurement taken by the drone reveals a breach in the concentration limit, a subsequent ship inspection may be triggered at the next port of call. EU member states are informed of these breaches to facilitate the coordination of the ship inspections among them.

See the [RPAS section on our website](#) for more info / Contact us at: information@emsa.europa.eu