



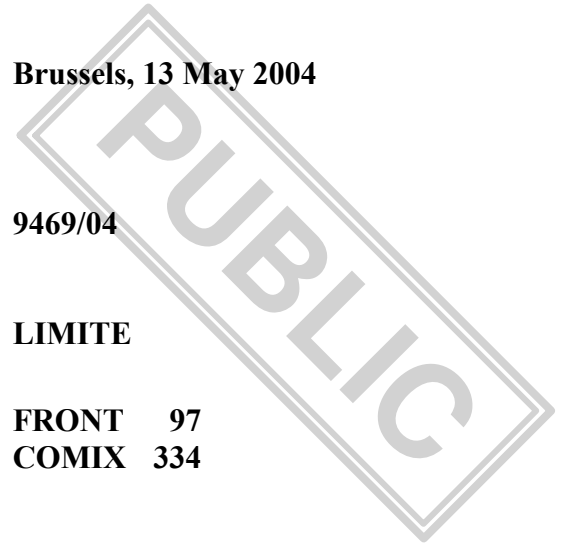
**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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NOTE

from : General Secretariat
to : Strategic Committee on Immigration, Frontiers and Asylum/Mixed Committee
(EU/Iceland and Norway)

Subject : Eastern Sea Borders Centre (ESBC)

Delegations will find attached the report of the experts meeting of the Eastern Sea Borders Centre held in Piraeus on 22-23 April 2004, transmitted by the ESBC.

REPORT

1. Representatives of the following countries and Institutions participated at the meeting:

Austria, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, United Kingdom, Norway, Cyprus, European Commission, General Secretariat of the Council, Western Sea Borders Centre (WSBC), Risk Analysis Centre (RAC), Ad Hoc Training Centre (ACT) and EUROPOL.

2. Logo of the ESBC

The attached Logo of the ESBC was presented and adopted unanimously by the participating delegates.

3. Presentations

- Presentation of Ministry of Mercantile Marine structure as well as the operational means-personnel of the Hellenic Coast Guard (HCG).
- Presentation by the HCG of advanced technological systems for the control and surveillance of maritime borders (Vessel Traffic Management Information System).
- Presentation by the HCG of Secure Sea Borders Net Project.
- Presentation by the Ad Hoc Center of Training (ACT) of the activities of the Centre in Austria.
- Presentation by the HCG of the Operational Port and Coastline Control measures and their implementation aiming at combating seaborne illegal immigration.
- Presentation by the HCG of proposed models for the future database and the Joint Operations Manual.

4. Proposed strategic activities

During the second day of the meeting the creation of the following Experts Teams was put forward:

Expert Team No 1: Operational Analysis of the contacting operations in cooperation with Risk Analysis Centre. Raw information will forward to R.A.C.

Expert Team No 2: Technological Support.

Expert Team No 3: Recording of operational means of Law Enforcement Agencies.

Expert Team No 4: Information Collection Methods – Elaboration of methods.

Member States' delegates were invited to participate at the Experts' Teams as proposed in the Council document 8397/04. They were also invited to submit further comments and/or suggestions – proposals concerning the Teams' work planning.

5. Carry-out of Joint Operations

- (a) Carrying out a Joint Operation in specific EU ports, by exchanging officers which will be coordinated by the ESBC.
- (b) Carrying out a Joint Operation in specific sea areas (focal points), of the Eastern Mediterranean Sea, in the fall 2004, based upon the experience gathered at the successful Operation TRITON already completed in March 2003 (TRITON type).
- (c) Carrying out a Joint Operation in the sea area of Cyprus.
- (d) Carrying out a Joint Operation in the Central Mediterranean sea area of Malta (eventual joint coordination with the WSBC).

Experience gained from previous Joint Operations especially “NETTUNO I and II” must be taken in to account for both operations (c) and (d).

All the above operations will be coordinated by the ESBC and will be open to the participation of all EU and Schengen Cooperation States.

Also the following criteria for these operations must be taken into the account:

- (a) Agreement of the competent National Authorities of the countries.
- (b) Agreement of the Common Unit.
- (c) Co-financing from the ARGO programme.

On the basis of the aforementioned Joint Operations' results and in view of their further risk analysis, the National Experts in the WSBC will also study the possibility of:

- (a) Repeat them anew in the future, or cancel them.
- (b) Institutionalize them, in order to proceed to their periodic implementation, in the same sea areas or elsewhere.

6. Conclusions - Activities to be conducted under the ESBC umbrella

- Active coordination and participation at the Joint Operation "NETTUNO II" that will be held in specific maritime areas of Cyprus (03/15 May 2004). The ESBC will inaugurate its operational activities with this operation, which will be conducted under its aegis. Furthermore, representatives of the ESBC will participate actively, in the activities of the Operation Coordination Center in Limmasol, by offering their expertise in order to contribute to the successful completion of the operation. An Operational Analysis of the contacting operations, as well as raw information will be forwarded to the RAC in Helsinki. The Hellenic Coast Guard will also support this operation with Operational Means (an Open Sea Patrol Ship), and will also participate at the Coordination Center in Limassol as observer.

- Conduct of a Joint Operation coordinated by the ESBC in fall 2004.
- Submission, by the end of May 2004, of an application form to the European Commission (ARGO PROGRAMME) for the suggested projects to be co-financed in the framework of the activities of ESBC and WSBC.
- The joint drafting together with the WSBC of a Common Manual for procedures and implementation of Joint Operations comprising common practices dealing with surveillance and issues on the control of maritime areas, as well as combating cross-border organized crime, illegal immigration and terrorist acts.
- The set up of a database jointly by ESBC and WSBC, which will contain the pertinent information on all available means in order to combat illegal immigration.
- Promotion and support of initiatives for the development of an advanced technological infrastructure used for the control and surveillance of maritime areas.
- Examination of the necessity for the adoption of a method for the secured exchange of information among the parties involved.
- Member States' delegates were invited to participate at the Experts' Teams as proposed in the Council document 8397/04. They were also invited to submit further comments and/or suggestions – proposals concerning the Teams' work planning.
- The Head of the ESBC will visit the following Centres:
 - the Air Borders Centre on 28-04-2004.
 - the Land Borders Centre (date to be arranged).
 - the Risk Analysis Centre on May 7th 2004.
 - the A.C.T. Centre in Austria (end of June 2004).

As it was clearly stated, that the role of the Experts' Team consists in order to provide valuable expertise to the Centre, when needed, and in case that this will be necessary for the prompt collection of relevant information which will be deemed as vital for the purposes of its proper operation. Under no circumstances the Experts' Team will affect the smooth development of the operations.

7. Administrative issues

The first Deputy Commandant of the HCG Rear Admiral (HCG) P. AGELLOPOULOS welcomed the participants.

The participants were toured in the Vessel Traffic Maritime Information System Control Center, in the J-RCC of Piraeus, the Olympic Games Co-ordination Center of the HCG and on board HCG vessels at the Port of Piraeus.

Logo of the E.S.B.C.

