Report on SENSEE "Minor" meeting

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Subject: SENSEE "Minor" Meeting

Role in event: Participant - Presenter

Place / Date: Zagreb / 12-14 April 2016

Organised by: DCAF PCCSEE Secretariat

Advisable to attend + why?: Europol is one of SENSEE's founding fathers and an active member of the Informal expert group

Participants: Covert surveillance representatives from: AT, HR, HU, RS, SI (Team leader’s level)

Date of next: 23-25 May 2016 in Podgorica, Montenegro

Special contacts: 

Related documentation: EDOC-#825803-SENSEE 1st Minor Meeting - Invitation  
EDOC-#830766-SENSEE 1st Minor Meeting - Programme
Europol Unclassified – Basic Protection Level

Background:
The Surveillance Expert Network for South-East Europe [SENSEE] was established in 2012 as an informal expert network on all matters related to cross-border surveillance. Membership is extended to representatives of all contracting partners to the Police Cooperation Convention. The PCC SEE Secretariat provides organisational support to the group.

Special Tactics has been actively supporting the network since its creation. Added value is mainly delivered through EPE management and the organisation of structured exchange with other surveillance communities like the electronic surveillance and cross-border surveillance working groups (e.g. the ARGOS conference).

Main issues:
Although the overall attendance to the SENSEE meetings increased, some of the group members struggled to live up the expectations and their commitments.

In an attempt to remedy this and increase the Group's outcome a series of "Minor" meetings will be organised next to the overall annual meeting. Split into three subgroups, neighbouring countries will discuss all aspects of covert surveillance and cross-border cooperation. The objective is to reach the desired level of interaction, increase the effective exchange of information and have all members to honour their commitments.

The Zagreb meeting was the first of its kind.

The group discussed the future of SENSEE in view of the Chair's rotation and its interaction with CSW. Group members debated in particular:

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In addition, all participants delivered full presentations on:
  - the structure, organisation and responsibilities of the various covert surveillance units within their country
  - the recruitment and training procedure for covert surveillance operatives
  - the specific human resources and personnel management arrangements
  - learning points out of conducted cross-border, controlled delivery or hot pursuit operations with SENSEE partners.

Outcome:
The new meeting format proved to be very well adapted to the audience. The smaller size pushed all partners to participate actively, to engage in and commit for future work streams.
Consequences for Europol:

Ol4 committed to liaise with CEPOL for exploring the participation options in the new online course "Police English language".

Europol's initiative and support for the organisation of the ARGOS conference will be discussed further once the two other "Minor" SENSEE meetings have been concluded.

Ol4's overall approach towards SENSEE and the initiatives for increasing exchanges with other expert groups on surveillance was fully endorsed.