



FRONTEX



**ANNUAL
INFORMATION
ON THE COMMITMENTS
OF THE MEMBER STATES
TO THE EUROPEAN BORDER
GUARD TEAMS
AND THE TECHNICAL
EQUIPMENT POOL**

2013

Contents

FOREWORD	4
INTRODUCTION	5
1. BACKGROUND	6
2. CURRENT STATE OF PLAY OF THE EBGT AND THE TEP	7
2.1. European Border Guard Teams	7
2.2. Technical Equipment Pool	8
2.3. Overall Minimum Number of Technical Equipment	9
2.4. Contributions and selection.....	10

Foreword

One year has passed since the entry into force of Regulation (EU) 1168/2011 amending Frontex's founding regulation of 2004. One of the important changes brought about by the amendment was the establishment of the European Border Guard Teams (EBGT) and the Technical Equipment Pool (TEP).

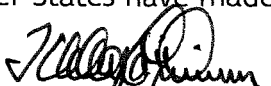
One of Frontex's core tasks is to help the border authorities of the Member States work together. Bringing assistance often means the deployment of experts and technical equipment from one Member State to another under the coordination of Frontex. Over the last years we have seen positive developments in this regard, as there has been a steady and continuous increase in the commitment of Member States, now promoted and strengthened by a legal act.

The EBGT and the TEP are the main sources of operational resources for Frontex-coordinated Joint Operations. The two pools should contribute both to an increased response capacity and to an increase in the quality of the resources deployed to the external borders by the Agency.

The number of experts enrolled in the EBGT is important, but equally important is the quality. There are 13 different profiles related to different areas of border control, such as the identification of false documents and sea border surveillance. In order to be deployable, the national experts enrolled in the EBGT have to receive training to allow them to operate effectively and safely together in other Member States. The training developed by Frontex covers different areas ranging from the study of fundamental rights and trafficking in human beings to operating in the field in accordance with regulations, operational plans and the Frontex Code of Conduct.

On the side of technical equipment, having a clear commitment on the number and types of assets being made available is a key element for proper operational planning.

During the last twelve months the Management Board has taken all necessary decisions concerning the composition and deployment modalities; and the necessary ICT infrastructure has been set-up between Frontex and the Member States. Last autumn Frontex held annual bilateral negotiations with the Member States, and now I have the pleasure to present the first 'Annual Information on the Commitments of the Member States to the European Border Guard Teams and the Technical Equipment Pool'. As can be seen, both the European Border Guard Teams and the Technical Equipment Pool have been successfully implemented in 2012 and the Member States have made fully sufficient contributions to both pools.



Ilkka Laitinen

Frontex Executive Director

Warsaw, 11/03/2013

Introduction

This report delivers information on the commitments of the Member States to the European Border Guard Teams (EBGT) and the Technical Equipment Pool (TEP) for Frontex Joint Operations 2013.

The information is presented in accordance with Article 3b(7) of the Frontex Regulation* which stipulates: *"The Agency shall inform the European Parliament on an annual basis of the number of border guards that each MS has committed to the EBGT"* and Article 7(7) of the Frontex Regulation, which stipulates: *"The Agency shall inform the European Parliament on an annual basis of the technical equipment that each Member State has committed to the technical equipment pool"*.

The report presents:

- The current state of play of the EBGT, according to the legal framework established by Decision of Frontex Management Board No 11/2012 of 23 May 2012;
- The Technical Equipment Pool, including the Overall Minimum Numbers of Technical Equipment (OMNTE) 2013 – established by Decision of Frontex Management Board No 20/2012 of 27 September 2012.

* Council Regulation (EC) No 2007/2004 of 26 October 2004 establishing a European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (OJ L 349, 25.11.2004, p. 1, as last amended)

/ 1 Background

The amended Frontex Regulation, in particular Articles 2, 3 and 7 therein, mandates Frontex to establish the EBGT and the TEP and to deploy border guards and technical equipment from the pools to joint operations, pilot projects and rapid interventions.

The EBGT and the TEP are the main sources of operational resources for Frontex-coordinated Joint Operations. The two pools should contribute both to an increased response capacity and to an increase in the quality of the resources deployed to the external borders by the Agency.

Frontex contributes to the EBGT with Seconded Guest Officers (SGO) – border guards from the EU Member States seconded to Frontex and subsequently deployed by Frontex to different joint operations as members of the European Border Guard Teams.

In addition, the amended Frontex Regulation provides that Frontex may acquire, itself or in co-ownership with a Member State, or lease technical equipment for external border control purposes, i.e. to be deployed during joint operations, pilot projects, rapid interventions, joint return operations or technical assistance projects.

/ 2

Current state of play of the EBGT and the TEP

2.1. European Border Guard Teams

The European Border Guard Teams (EBGT) consist of border guards from the competent national authorities of the Member States. The members of the EBGT will be deployed to joint operations, pilot projects (Article 3(1b) of the Frontex Regulation) and Rapid interventions (Article 8a of the Frontex Regulation). The EBGT contains 13 different border guard profiles related to specific areas of border control such as: land and sea border surveillance, dog handling, the identification of false documents, second line activities, screening of irregular migrants for establishing their nationalities, etc.

Following a proposal by the Executive Director, the Management Board decides on the profiles and the overall number of border guards to be made available for the European Border Guard Teams. The overall number of EBGT pool members was stipulated in the MB decision No 11/2012 of 23 May 2012 and amounts to 1850 border guards.

At the end of 2012, the overall number of border guards in the EBGT was 1875 and it is still growing as the Member States make their contributions. Some officers are enlisted in multiple profiles, which means that all profiles except the *Field Press Coordinator* are covered to a degree that exceeds the minimum requirement.

All Guest Officers deployed to joint operations, pilot projects and rapid interventions must belong to the pool. Guest officers have been properly trained, especially concerning international law and fundamental rights, prior to their deployment to joint operations, pilot projects and rapid interventions. To this end Frontex has developed training for the EBGT members. This training was implemented in 2012 on a pilot basis with 259 members of the EBGT pool being trained and equipped with the necessary knowledge to perform their duties in joint operations at the external borders of the EU. Priority has been given to officers who are planned to be deployed shortly after the training.

2.2. Technical Equipment Pool

The Technical Equipment Pool (TEP) was established based on the Centralised Record of Available Technical Equipment (CRATE) database. CRATE was a list of technical assets established in accordance with the original language of Article 7 of Frontex Regulation. As a result of the Regulation (EU) 1168/2011 amending the Frontex founding Regulation CRATE was replaced by the TEP. The Member States were requested to revise their contributions to CRATE and to include in the TEP the relevant technical equipment.

- Maritime equipment – Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPV), Coastal Patrol Vessels (CPV), Coastal Patrol Boats (CPB) and fast boats;
- Equipment for aerial surveillance and patrolling – Fixed wing aircraft and helicopters;
- Mobile equipment for land border surveillance – Thermo Vision Vehicles;
- Equipment for border control – Mobile laboratories, Heart beat detectors and CO2 detectors;
- Hand held surveillance equipment – Night Vision Goggles (NVG) and Hand held thermal cameras;
- Dogs¹.

¹ Dog teams are considered as assets from the Technical Equipment Pool (TEP).

2.3. Overall Minimum Number of Technical Equipment

The amended Frontex Regulation stipulates that the TEP shall contain the Overall Minimum Numbers of Technical Equipment (OMNTE). The OMNTE is the amount of equipment which provides the Agency with the capability to carry out joint operations, pilot projects, rapid interventions and joint return operations in accordance with its needs. The OMNTE is established on an annual basis and is defined as "the minimum number of required technical equipment per type and per month". This category of equipment has a specific status, obliging both parties - the Member States, to make available, and Frontex, to deploy the equipment agreed to be part of the OMNTE. Thus, the establishment of the OMNTE requires special involvement from the Frontex Management Board.

The latter has the mandate to decide on an annual basis "on the rules relating to the technical equipment, including the overall minimum numbers per type of technical equipment, the conditions for deployment and reimbursement of costs". For budgetary purposes such decision should be taken by the MB by 31 March each year. (Article 7(5) of Frontex Regulation). As 2012 was the first year of the amended regulation, it was possible the Management Board to make decision only in September. The results of that decision are shown in table 1.

Table 1. Overall Minimum Numbers of Technical Equipment per month and type of equipment as per Management Board Decision 20/2012.

2013	OPV ²	CPV ³	CPB ⁴	FWA ⁵	Helicopters	TVV ⁶	Patrol cars	Mobile laboratories	Heart Beat Detectors	Dogs
Jan						3	5			2
Feb						3	5			2
Mar						3	5			2
Apr			4		1	5	8		1	5
May	1		6	3	1	6	8	1	1	5
June	2		6	3	1	6	14	1	1	5
July	3	2	6	4	1	6	14			22
August	3	4	6	5	1	6	8			22
September	3	4	6	5	1	6	8			5
October	1	2		2		4	5	1	1	3
November		2				3	5			3
December		2				3	5			3

² OPV – Offshore Patrol Vessel. A vessel with autonomy more than 1500 nm.

³ CPV – Coastal Patrol Vessel A vessel with autonomy between 600 and 1500 nm.

⁴ CPB – Coastal Patrol Boat. A vessel with autonomy less than 600 nm.

⁵ FWA – Fixed Wing Aircraft

⁶ TVV – Thermal Vision Vehicle. A vehicle equipped with thermal camera for surveillance.

2.4. Contributions and selection

All Member States applying the Schengen acquis contribute to the pools. In addition, three Schengen Associated Countries (i.e. Iceland, Norway and Switzerland) also contribute to the pools. As Ireland and the United Kingdom are not applying the Schengen acquis, their participation in joint operations, pilot projects and rapid interventions is based on a case by case decision by the Frontex Management Board. However, the United Kingdom has indicated its willingness to contribute to the pools in the context of Article 12 of the Frontex Regulation.

The Member States take part in the pools based on voluntary contributions, which results in large variations in numbers between the Member States, as seen in the table below. The contributions to the EBGT pool of the particular Member States are presented in table 2.

Table 2. Contributions by Member States to the EBGT pool as of the end of 2012.⁷

MS	AT	BE	BG	CH	CY	CZ	DE	DK	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HU
No	151	36	71	62	11	24	150	29	72	26	247	77	51	35
MS	IT	LV	LT	LU	MT	NL	NO	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	SK	
No	43	39	98	1	22	181	37	19	40	208	47	72	26	

The current amount of equipment in the TEP is shown in table 3.

The amount of equipment in the TEP exceeds the OMNTE by a wide margin, which means that there has to be a selection of what pieces of equipment to deploy. This selection is based on a compiled assessment of operational needs and requirements, where Frontex takes into account the operational efficiency for the particular activity, the duration of the deployment and the estimated budget. The principle of operational solidarity is also taken into consideration. The selection takes duly into concern the resources that the host Member State deploys in the specific operational area and the needs for additional resources as required for operational purposes.

**ANNUAL INFORMATION on the Commitments of the Member States
to the European Border Guard Teams and the Technical Equipment Pool for 2013**

Table 3. The commitments to the Technical Equipment Pool by Member State and type of equipment as of the end of 2012.^{7,8}

Asset	OPV	CPV	CPB	FWA	Helicopters	TVV	Patrol cars	Equipment for border checks	Hand held equipment	Dogs
AT					1	6		2		
BE			1		1					
BG		1				8				
CH										
CY		1								
CZ						1				
DE	1				4	3	3	1	10	
DK							10			
EL								10		
EE				1		1				
ES	1	5	1	2	2			1	15	
IS	1			1						
FI	1		2	1	1	1		4		
FR	2	3	10	4	4					
HU						5	1		19	
IT	7	32	41	62	25					
LV		1		1		2		25	7	
LT					3	1	2	2	1	
LU				8				11		
MT				3						
NL			1	1			2	129		1
NO										
PL	1			2	2	2			40	
PT	2	11	79	3	1		50	2	3	
RO	1	5	2		1					
SI					2	3	6		4	2
SK				1						
SE										
TOTAL	17	59	137	90	47	33	74	187	99	3

^{7,8} This updated version accounts for amended numbers reflecting the national pools of the Member States not using OPERA pending security tests.



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