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MEDSEA**

Delegations will find attached the declassified section of the above-mentioned document.



ANNEX

**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 27 July 2006

**12049/06
EXT 1 (20.11.2006)**

**FRONT 157
COMIX 691**

NOTE

from: General Secretariat
to: Delegations

Subject: **Frontex feasibility study on Mediterranean Coastal Patrols Network -
MEDSEA**

At its meeting on 15 and 16 December 2005, the European Council adopted the Global Approach to Migration and called on Frontex to launch a feasibility study on reinforcing monitoring and surveillance of the southern maritime border of the EU, namely in the Mediterranean Sea, and on a Mediterranean Coastal Patrols Network involving EU Member States and North African countries, as early as possible in 2006.

Delegations will find attached the above-mentioned feasibility study which was transmitted to the General Secretariat on 24 July 2006.



EUROPEAN AGENCY FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF OPERATIONAL COOPERATION
AT THE EXTERNAL BORDERS OF THE MEMBER STATES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION (FRONTEX)

FEASIBILITY STUDY

ON

MEDITERRANEAN COASTAL PATROLS NETWORK

MEDSEA

Warsaw 14 July 2006

FOREWORD

The Member States of the European Union share the external borders of the EU and the responsibility for their management to protect the area of freedom, security and justice. The control and surveillance of external borders contribute to managing flows of persons entering or leaving this area and help to protect citizens from threats to their security. The cooperation between Member States is therefore essential.

According to the European Council Conclusions of 15/16 December 2005 FRONTEX was tasked to make a feasibility study on reinforcing monitoring and surveillance of EU southern maritime borders and a Mediterranean Coastal Patrols Network with the aim to creating a cooperating network enabling the control and surveillance of the entire EU southern maritime borders.

Two fundamental needs to achieve the coverage of the entire EU southern maritime borders have been defined, the first one is the operational cooperation and coordination between authorities and the second one is the coordinative EU approach. These fundamental needs constitute also the challenges, national sovereignty and framework on one hand and the shared responsibility to protect the area of freedom, security and justice on the other hand.

While the maritime area includes the coastline, the territorial waters and the high seas, the surveillance and control have to cover this variable surface. The strategic approach from Member States as well as from EU concerning EU Integrated Border Management System is the basis to define the area to be covered.

Even though a coastal network is able to cover the surveillance and control of the EU southern maritime borders, the network itself will not solve the problem of illegal immigration. The important issue for the network is to detect and intercept persons arriving to the Member States' territory thus ensuring the saving of lives at sea, additionally to have an overview of the flows of persons entering or leaving the area.

The integration of third countries to the working concept of the control and surveillance network covering the EU southern maritime borders is of high importance. Member States should continue their efforts concerning the cooperation with third countries and thereby promote their development reaching the requirement to be included in the network.

The conclusions of the MEDSEA study can be seen as a starting point by the setting up of the NCCs aiming at ensuring an organization for the cooperation and coordination of operational activities between Member States and the EU approach by including FRONTEX. Additionally NCCs have to be responsible for the operational cooperation and coordinative approach at national level.

The MEDSEA study is part of a range of activities which encompass the cooperation and coordination of activities related to border security on EU southern maritime borders. FRONTEX will continue with the BORTEC study to explore the technical feasibility of establishing a surveillance system for the coverage of the entire EU southern maritime borders.

Together, MEDSEA and BORTEC intend to give answers to needs and wishes for appropriate actions to be taken concerning border control and surveillance. The practical work to create the Mediterranean Coastal Patrols Network has to be defined and done by the involved Member States. FRONTEX is prepared to support the creation of the structure and the working concept; at EU, national and operational levels, as well as the elaboration of guidelines and procedures.

FRONTEX is prepared to launch different operational activities connected to the establishment of the structure and the working concept related to the patrolling network, such as pilot projects, joint operations, workshops and other requirements acknowledged by one or more Member States.

The Project Team

NOT DECLASSIFIED
NOT DECLASSIFIED

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The Support Group

Representatives from Member States: Austria, Cyprus, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, UK

European Commission

Joint Research Centre

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1 Summary

1.1 Introduction

The main objective of Community policy in the field of the EU external borders is to create a systematic integrated border management, which would ensure a high and uniform level of control and surveillance, an essential prerequisite for an area of freedom, security and justice.

The common rules are applied at an operational level, by the competent national authorities of the Member States. Optimal effectiveness can be reached only if they apply those common rules in a harmonised way, thus ensuring that all external borders have an equally high level of control and surveillance.

The external borders of the EU play a key role in defining and protecting the area of freedom, security and justice. The control and surveillance of borders contribute to managing flows of persons entering and leaving that area and helping to protect EU citizens from threats to their security, also constitute a fundamental element in the fight against illegal immigration.

By creating FRONTEX, the EU has equipped itself with an important tool to promote the enforcement of the EU policy for integrated border management and actively promote the gradual development and effective functioning of the EU Integrated Border Management System together with Member States and third countries.

At present the focus of FRONTEX activities is clearly on the EU southern maritime borders. From the merely operational point of view the most important and urgent step to take is to create an integrated platform of the EU Member States by synchronising the use of the national resources via a coordination network. Creation of the network will allow the reliable exchange of information and for the jointly planned border control measures among states involved. Joint operations coordinated by FRONTEX could benefit from this cooperation structure. FRONTEX plans do not terminate after covering EU Member States; the idea is to involve third countries in a gradual process.

The proposal, which is under decision in the European Parliament and the European Council, to create a funding mechanism for the implementation in the Member States of an integrated management system for the control and surveillance of the external borders, constitutes an important step towards financial solidarity and could be helpful.

1.2 Mandate

According to the Council Regulation 2007/2004 establishing FRONTEX, with a view to improving the integrated management of the external borders of the Member States of the EU, FRONTEX is a key player in the implementation of common EU policy for Integrated Border Management and actively promotes the gradual development and effective functioning of the EU Integrated Border Management System.

Taking into account the recommendation in the “FRONTEX assessment of the situation concerning illegal immigration at the EU external borders 2005” of 13 December 2005 “Counter-measures to tackle illegal immigration from African Continent should be considered, particularly at the Spanish, Italian and Greek external sea borders. A Mediterranean border control cooperation network could enhance efforts to combat illegal immigration in the region”.

According to the European Council Conclusions of 15/16 December 2005; the European Council, endorsed the Council and Member States to work closely with the Commission to implement these actions during the course of 2006, by calling on FRONTEX to:

- *launch a feasibility study on reinforcing monitoring and surveillance of the southern maritime border of the EU, namely in the Mediterranean Sea, and on a Mediterranean Coastal Patrols Network involving EU Member States and North African countries, as early as possible in 2006*

With reference to European Council Conclusion of 15/16 December 2005, FRONTEX by its Executive Director decided on 22 December 2005 to carry out a feasibility study “MEDSEA” on a “Mediterranean Coastal Patrols Network” involving the EU Member States in the Mediterranean Sea area with the objective to ensure coordination of the daily border surveillance measures between Member States’ responsible authorities, and form a reliable platform for FRONTEX-managed operational cooperation between Mediterranean Member States, and when appropriate with third countries.

The Support Group requested FRONTEX to include not only the Mediterranean Sea but the entire EU southern maritime borders.

The following Member States have been included in the study: Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain.

1.3 Objectives

1.3.1 General objective

- *To facilitate unified and cost effective operational cooperation and coordination between the Member States, and when appropriate between Member States and third countries.*

1.3.2 Specific objectives

- *To create a network for cooperation and coordination between authorities which are involved in the sea border control, surveillance and monitoring.*
- *To find a solution for communication of intelligence.*
- *To find an effective access to maritime monitoring information (scale economy).*

1.3.3 Operational objectives

- *To achieve knowledge about the experiences from existing cooperation and coordination activities.*
- *To create awareness and readiness for establishing a sea border contact network, between the Member States in the Mediterranean Sea area.*
- *To make a trustworthy operational community platform with common standards for the setting up of a coordinative network at sea borders.*
- *To initiate the working concept of coordination network on national and community level.*
- *To initiate the creation of a sea border contact network.*

- *To reach the commitment with detailed plans for setting up of a system for cost effective cooperation and coordination at national and community level.*

1.4 Methodology

The feasibility study “MEDSEA” has taken place as an intensive working period from mid January until July 2006. A ‘Core Team’, consisting of national experts representing France, Greece, Italy and Spain, and one expert from FRONTEX Headquarters have made the study and prepared conclusions.

The Core Team has been assisted by a Support Group, consisting of experts from the Member States and from the European Commission being invited for periodical meetings to discuss and promote the result of the Core Teams work. The Support Group have had members from 14 Member States; Austria, Cyprus, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain and UK, and the European Commission. Additionally one representative from Joint Research Centre and representatives from different units in FRONTEX have taken part in the Support Group meetings.

In the invitation letter to the Support Group of 30 January 2006 Member States were invited to have one national representative in the Support Group which could be assisted by other national experts. FRONTEX has repeatedly asked the representatives to ensure the national authorities’ involvement in the feasibility study.

The Core Team started its work in Warsaw in the second week of March 2006 and the Support Group was invited to their first meeting in Warsaw on 6 April 2006, where the objective and the schedule for the feasibility study were presented. The first draft report was sent to the Support Group on 27 April 2006.

The second Support Group meeting took place on 10 May 2006 in Warsaw, where the main structure of the patrolling network was agreed on. A draft of the conclusions was sent to the Support Group on 30 May 2006.

During the third Support Group meeting on 8-9 May 2006 in Helsinki there was a detailed discussion on the draft conclusions. Additionally and thanks to the Finnish Border Guard Headquarters the members of the Support Group had the opportunity to visit the coordination centre in the Gulf of Finland Coast Guard District in Helsinki. The revised draft of the conclusions was sent to the Support Group on 13 June 2006 and a draft of the final report was sent to the Support Group on 30 June 2006.

The final Support Group meeting took place on 6 July 2006 in Warsaw where the draft of the final report were commented and discussed. An executive summary of the Final Report were presented. The final report of the MEDSEA feasibility study was delivered on 14 July 2006.

1.5 Challenges

According to risk analysis carried out, the EU southern maritime borders remain the area mostly affected by illegal immigration. When third countries are unable to satisfy the expectations of their people, the situation becomes an incentive to leave for the EU Member States offering an advantage over the source country.

Criminal networks involved in the phenomenon are well organized and flexible, finding continuously new ways of actions, new routes and means, depending on the measures that law

enforcement authorities undertake to face the challenges. As soon as effective tackling measures are adopted, the phenomenon of the “displacement effects” occurs immediately.

The initiative to establish the Mediterranean Coastal Patrols Network is to set up a flexible tool to face these continuously changes of phenomenon. Cooperation with third countries of origin and transit is essential on the one hand to help third countries to fulfil the expectation of their people and on the other hand to receive early warnings about new trends. Real time intelligence allows the EU Member States to anticipate new modi operandi.

Even though a coastal patrols network is able to handle the surveillance and control of the EU southern maritime borders the patrolling network will not itself solve the problem of illegal immigration. An EU approach towards third countries is important to promote their efforts to avoid illegal immigrants’ departing.

The surveillance and patrolling network has to cover not only the coastal area, but also the high seas and the territorial waters of neighbouring countries. Therefore agreements with third countries are essential. The Mediterranean Coastal Patrols Network needs common application of the international law of sea as well as common legal framework at EU level in order to agree on operational procedures.

1.6 Information flows

Coast and Border Guard Services, Police Forces, Search and Rescue, Naval Forces, Customs, Fisheries Inspections, Maritime Safety Authorities and Port Authorities need to monitor the positions, the activities, the cargo, the crew and passengers of vessels. Information used for authority purposes differs depending on their tasks and responsibilities. Systems are accordingly being developed for particular sectors, for particular ports or coastlines. These systems mostly rely on coastal radar and reports from the vessels. The ships masters are obliged to transmit destinations, positions, cargoes and activities to the appropriate authorities at the appropriate time. Vessels calling at Member States’ ports have to transmit lists of crew and passengers for border control purposes.

The big challenge and the decisive function are to discover those vessels and small boats which are not obliged to or avoid to, transmit the information.

Coastal radar cannot see over the horizon, infrared cameras have the same limitations. Air and sea patrols from borders guards, customs, police and naval forces supplement the identification of the maritime traffic in the territorial waters and adjacent space.

The current system is based on networks of assets which will be increasingly used by both military and civilian users. Some Member States are moving towards an integrated system that combines information from different in-situ systems for a particular stretch of their coastline. The technological ways to move forward in a number of sectors are becoming relatively clear, such as the Integrated Management of the EU maritime borders.

It is possible that a better sharing of information and a wider coverage can function with fully distributed compatible systems. Action that could be considered is to develop interfaces and synergies between EU information systems determining how existing systems could be modified to handle classified or security/critical information.

1.7 Operational activities

A maritime border is a two-dimensional space; it is the line of the coast, the land immediately behind it and the adjacent territorial sea. In a broader sense, it sometimes includes part of the open sea where surveillance operations actually take place. Surveillance therefore has to cover not just an entry point, but a variable-depth surface, including ports and coastline outside defined border crossing points. One of the characteristics of the management of maritime borders is that by nature it is not a shared responsibility between neighbouring states.

The description of the existing situation gives a wide range of information about tasks and responsibilities of different authorities in the concerned Member States. There are more than 50 authorities under more than 30 Ministries. The Member States have undertaken actions to ensure the cooperation between the national authorities as well as the coordinative approach concerning external borders' security. More focus on a better sharing of information, ideas and plans to support the cooperation and coordination would promote the gradual development and effective functioning of the EU Integrated Border Management System.

The operational entities at national level dealing with maritime activities forming the future Mediterranean Coastal Patrols Network have already their own fields of responsibilities. To form the coordinative EU approach the relations between these entities in the Member States whichever their fields of tasks and responsibilities are, have to be monitored to ensure the coverage of the EU southern maritime borders.

While the Mediterranean Coastal Patrols Network is foreseen when appropriate to include third countries it would be necessary to discover the existing situation in these countries to allow their proper acceding.

The EU initiative to secure the EU southern maritime borders by surveillance measures between Member States, namely the Mediterranean Coastal Patrols Network, calls for some important tools to be in place. When responsibility for the control and surveillance of the external borders lies with the Member States it is their responsibility to ensure the national coordination. To have the structure for the EU coordination via FRONTEX it is important to have one national coordination centre in each Member State. These national coordination centres have their tasks to on the one hand coordinate the national operational activities and on the other hand to ensure that national activities are coordinated with other Member States, and when appropriate with third countries. Therefore the establishment of a secure communication network by creating an intranet is essential.

The Member States pay much attention on working together with other Member States increasingly with the actions undertaken by the EU approach with joint operations including joint patrolling and exchange of personnel.

Additionally Member States are working together with third countries, agreements have been signed and joint actions are taking place including joint patrols and exchange of officers. However it has to be mentioned that the picture differs between Member States and the concerned third countries.

The agreements reached by Member States to patrol the territorial waters of a third country allow the EU to discover the third countries' willingness to cooperate in order to avoid illegal immigration towards EU.

Member States' network of liaison officers in third countries forms an essential source of information which gives early warning information to be used when planning the operational activities.

1.8 Framework

Joint measures have shown to be very helpful to identify threats and risks as well the needs for new structures. The establishment of the EU approach launching the Mediterranean Coastal Patrols Network allows also the Member States and EU to focus on providing a legal framework for the patrolling network. Member States have so far different national legislative bases for their activities. Different application of the international law of seas as well as needs for common EU legislation concerning the activities under the patrolling network needs to be monitored further.

2 Existing situation

2.1 EU

According to the Conclusion No. 42 of the Laeken European Council of 14 and 15 December 2001 “Better management of the Union’s external border controls will help in the fight against terrorism, illegal immigration networks and the traffic in human beings. The European Council asks the Council and the Commission to work out arrangements for cooperation between services responsible for external border control and to examine the conditions in which a mechanism or common services to control external borders could be created (...).”

The EU has during the last years made remarkable efforts towards an integrated management of the external borders. The important establishment of the External Borders Practitioners’ Common Unit, the creation of the Common Integrated Risk Analyses model (CIRAM) and the establishment of operational centres, which now merged together by the establishment of FRONTEX.

According to the European Council Regulation 2007/2004, the European Council on 26 October 2004 decided to establish FRONTEX, with a view to improving the integrated management of the external borders of the Member States of the European Union. While considering that the responsibility for the control and surveillance of external border lies with the Member States, FRONTEX shall facilitate and render more effective the application of existing and future community measures relating to the management of external borders. FRONTEX shall do so by ensuring the coordination of Member States’ actions in the implementation of those measures, thereby contributing to an efficient, high and uniform level of control of persons and surveillance of the external border of the Member States.

The conclusions from the European Council on 15/16 December 2005 agreed on the urgent need in the short term for broad-ranging concrete actions, which form part of the ongoing work to ensure that migration works for the benefit of all countries concerned. Action must be taken to reduce illegal migration flows and the loss of lives, ensure safe return of illegal migrants, strengthen durable solutions for refugees and build capacity to better manage migration, including through maximizing the benefits to all partners of legal migration, while fully respecting human rights and the individual's right to seek asylum. The immediate actions should form part of a broader agenda for developing the EU's relationship with Africa and the Mediterranean countries through genuine partnership. The European Council also welcomed the complementary dialogue and cooperation being pursued by Member States in this area.

By their conclusion the European Council on 15/16 December 2005 endorsed the continuation for further activities to implement integrated border management measures of the EU southern maritime borders.

2.1.1 FRONTEX

FRONTEX can not succeed without the support, trust and participation of the border guard authorities of the Member States and the Schengen Associated Countries. More concretely speaking, FRONTEX Headquarters and the Member States’ as well as the Schengen Associated Countries’ border guard authorities shall have a network, which enables all parties involved to work trustfully, safely and effectively to strengthen the security of external borders. The creation of an

official FRONTEX network between the Member States, the Schengen Associated Countries and the FRONTEX Headquarters is indispensable.

After the FRONTEX request of 15 November 2005 Member States and Schengen Associated Countries have appointed National FRONTEX Point of Contact (NFPOC).

FRONTEX supports to the implementation of an Integrated Border Management System by its coordination of joint measures launched by FRONTEX or one of more Member States, requiring professionalism on all sides. The creation of a direct operational structure for sea border management would allow a reliable platform for joint planning and performance of activities at sea borders, between FRONTEX and Member States as well as between Member States involved.

2.1.1.1 FRONTEX Joint Support Teams (FJST)

Majority of members of the FRONTEX Management Board on its meeting on 9 February 2006 expressed support to FRONTEX Joint Support Teams idea. FRONTEX had prepared an outline that should be further developed (in areas such as e.g. threat assessment, legal basis, financing), taking sufficiently into account the foreseen initiative of “rapid reaction teams concept”. The new structure should form a gradual development towards an integrated border management at EU level, by promoting a regional solidarity. It should test and evaluate new technical solutions and procedures for advanced border control performance as well.

FRONTEX Joint Support Teams comprise border guard officers from Member States and Schengen Associated Countries, within which the members are supporting each other with personnel, technically or by offering equipment. Their locations or areas at borders are identified as extraordinary in quality and/or quantity of migration related phenomena. The teams will be seconded to the authority nominated by the Member States.

The support given by the FRONTEX Joint Support Teams shall cover all possible activities of the authorities responsible for border control, surveillance, analyses and where necessary, investigation. The support will cover operational and technical assistance as well as training.

2.1.1.2 Rapid Border Intervention Teams (RABIT)

The European Council in the conclusions of its meeting on 15/16 December 2005 invited the Commission to bring forward a proposal for the creation of rapid reaction teams made up by national experts able to provide technical and operational assistance at times of high influxes of migrants, in accordance with the Hague Programme, by the end of 2006.

2.2 **NOT DECLASSIFIED**

3 Baltic Sea Region Border Control Cooperation (BSRBCC)

3.1 History

At the 5th Ministerial Session of the [Council of The Baltic Sea States \(CBSS\)](#) in 1996, Finland proposed the setting up of a special forum for cooperation between border control authorities. A decision was taken to set up a structure at the level of the heads of relevant national authorities.

Baltic Sea Region Border Control Cooperation was established in Helsinki in June 1997, by the following countries: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia and Sweden.

Important issues:

- Development of practical forms of cooperation
- Simplification of communication between the Parties, e.g. the development of the data transmission system Coastnet
- Cooperation with Interpol and Europol in the field of border control
- Sea exercises and operations
- Exchange of information on tasks and powers of border services in the area of security controls at sea ports, marinas and sea areas
- Counteracting terrorism
- Exchange of opinions, experiences and evaluations of existing standards of security controls

3.2 Cooperation strategy

“Cooperation to combat cross-border crime and carry out environmental protection in the sea area”

The cooperation is focusing on practical cooperation at sea borders (sea areas, ports and coastal areas) actual, daily communication where border security cooperation serves as a tool for regional border security. This includes knowledge from green borders and airports to maintain situational awareness on operational activity on maritime border surveillance operations, high quality and broadly prepared joint operations.

The operational working concept depends on the local authorities in the participating countries working together on a daily basis to ensure the coordinative coverage of the entire Baltic Sea. Local authorities plan their activities in close cooperation with other national authorities and local authorities in neighbouring countries.

In the long perspective Baltic Sea cooperation is becoming a flexible regional tool for daily inter-agency (Police, Customs and Border authorities) actions, adjusted to time and changing conditions.

3.3 The organizational structure

The annual meeting of the Baltic Sea Region Border Control Cooperation border guard chiefs serves as the supreme body in the cooperation and approves the operational strategy. The organizational structure is characterized by the presidency period for one year of each participating country. Change of presidency takes place on 1 July after the annual meeting of the border guard chiefs, where an operational and economic mandate for cooperation is given.

The practical ongoing daily operational coordinative activities are normally driven by the presidency country National Contact Centre (NCC) as the International Contact Centre (ICC).

3.3.1 Secretariat

It is a part of the Baltic Border Committee (BBC) serves as operative coordinator of the whole Baltic border security cooperation and is headed by the presidency country. The Secretariat coordinates interfacing with other cooperation bodies (FRONTEX, TF-OC, etc.) and is essential for the cooperation. Secretariat is supported for a three month period at the beginning and the end of the presidency by the previous and the upcoming presidency country.

3.3.2 The Baltic Border Committee (BBC)

BBC forms the operative supreme body of cooperation. The BBC is a cooperation network of national contact persons. It is tasked with preparing and implementing the cooperation strategy by putting operative practices into action between countries in the Baltic Sea region.

3.3.3 Coastnet

It is a system which provides direct communication between authorities in neighbouring countries. A key function of Coastnet is to be a database in order to support operational activities of the Baltic border security cooperation. Coastnet will be modified to fulfil more effectively its tasks. To enhance the function of Coastnet reporting and analysis should be technically separated from the daily information exchange.

3.3.4 National Contact Centres (NCCs)

The NCCs were established in all participating countries from the initiation of the BSRBCC to ensure the coverage of the ongoing daily operational activity and additionally the elaboration of common working programs.

The NCC is a national communications centre and an operative contact point. Each participating country is responsible to have available resources for the NCC to enable daily operational cooperation.

The NCCs exchange national information about operational activities enabling functional analyses and threat assessments concerning these activities in order to submit to the ICC.

The NCCs are the link between the participating countries ensuring the coordination between countries and on the same time coordinating the national activity.

3.4 Field of action

Baltic Sea Region Border Control Cooperation covers the entire field of border security operations including the combating of cross-border crime and the carrying out of environmental protection at sea.

The focus of practical cooperation is on the sea borders and covers sea areas, ports and coastal areas. However, to maintain a comprehensive picture of border security and situational awareness, the role played by other operational sectors such as the green borders and airports cannot be excluded in fighting cross-border crime.

The goal of operational activities in the cooperation is actual daily operations where border security cooperation serves as a tool for regional sea border security.

Quality and broad preparation shall be watchwords for ensuring the effective conduct of joint operations within the entire sphere of cooperation. Instructions containing both pre- and post-operational analysis to ensure effective measures are to be drawn up for operations. Blue border surveillance operations are the most outwardly visible signs of cooperation. Additionally, operational cooperation covering the entire area is carried out by information exchange at the field level and by ad hoc notifications concerning operational sectors. The cooperation is carried out at two levels:

1. Cooperation throughout the Baltic Sea Region

- Combating cross-border criminality
 - Trafficking (human, drugs, etc)
 - Illegal immigration
 - Document forgeries
 - Use of vessels and other watercraft for illegal activities
- Technical maritime development projects to foster border security
 - exchange of experiences of tools and equipment
 - BALMIS, Coastnet
- Environmental protection of the sea area
 - use of joint surveillance and pollution prevention resources
 - maintenance of situational awareness of the entire Baltic Sea Region
 - working together to investigate crimes detected

2. Local bilateral and/or multilateral cooperation

- Operational sectors mentioned above
- Local operational sectors (e.g. fishing surveillance, sea border management, exchange of experts, cooperation between port authorities on passenger ship routes, rapidly deployable local surveillance operations and use of joint surveillance resources) will depend on local needs and the jurisdiction of the authority.

Local cooperation is focused on operational activities and provides a framework for regional cooperation. Planning and reporting relating to local cooperation are implemented.

The aims of joint operations at the field level are the exchange of experts, training, economic and effective joint use of surveillance resources, working teams and surveillance operations based on local needs. Joint operations primarily take place within the framework of local cooperation.

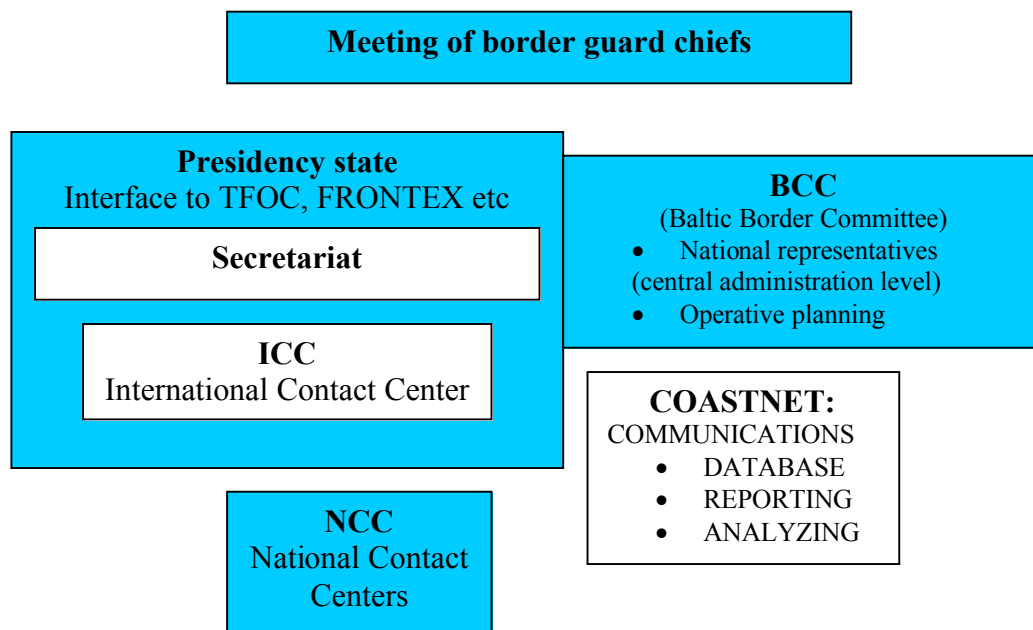
3.5 Coordination of activities

The participating countries recognise that cooperation between law enforcement agencies - particularly between the police, customs and border authorities, both nationally and internationally, is a key factor in fighting cross-border crime.

The BBC and the Secretariat are tasked to create an interface for cooperation between the Baltic Sea Region Border Control Cooperation and other fora for international cooperation to fight against crimes.

The BBC is also tasked with developing a unified cooperation plan with FRONTEX. FRONTEX may have representation to the BBC. Forms consistent with those of FRONTEX are used for reporting, statistics and analyses.

BSRBCC ORGANIZATION “regional border security cooperation”



3.6 Example of national cooperation between authorities

Finland is a member of the Baltic Sea cooperation network and has developed an integrated border management system at national level.

3.6.1 Cooperation between the maritime authorities (METO)

Finland has successfully compensated for the shortage of official resources by developing multi-administrative cooperation. At a meeting on 15 April 1994, a proposal of a new working concept for Finnish maritime authorities was approved. This paved the way for the establishment of the METO committee, formed by the Finnish Border Guard, the Finnish Navy and the Finnish Maritime Administration. METO held its first meeting in May 1994 and has over the last ten years, reached a well functioning cooperation.

The basic idea has remained the same from the very outset: the coordination and development of maritime functions, the support to services and investments to increase efficiency and productivity (economy of scale). This aim has been successfully achieved. In practice, the basic idea is reflected today in the coordination of technical surveillance and other systems in sea areas.

The METO cooperation has resulted in considerable cost savings, for 1998 around 1.7 million EUR. The established cooperation has enabled the organizations to be continually aware of the plans and actions of other administrative sectors, avoiding the overlapping functions. Cooperation has also achieved an enhanced quality; the surveillance system in Finland's sea areas is considered as being one of the best in EU. The surveillance system is commonly used by METO authorities.

3.6.2 Cooperation between the Police, Customs and Finnish Border Guard (PCF)

A multi-administrative border security system calls for close cooperation between the responsible authorities both at national and international levels. In Finland, cooperation between the Police, Customs and Finnish Border Guard has a long tradition stretching back decades. The past few years this cooperation has been further intensified.

PCF cooperation is particularly designed to prevent, detect and handle offences, to control the legality of imported and exported goods, to control the legality of entry, departure and residence of foreigners and other tasks related to international operations of the PCF authorities. The cooperation is specified in a Governmental Decree.

The cooperation includes:

- Joint representatives in international cooperation of various PCF authorities
- Working groups of the authorities in border traffic
- Working groups on the control of compliance of the rules of the authorities
- Contribution to pre-trial investigations by assisting the partner primarily responsible
- Preparedness to take part in the investigation of major catastrophes
- Joint training for employees, harmonisation of communication systems
- Development of public relations
- Development of intelligence gathering,
- Joint preparation for acquisitions relating to premises and equipment
- Harmonisation of the activities and financial planning of the PCF authorities

4 Conclusions

4.1 The Model

The open question was to reach the ambitious goal of the Mediterranean Coastal Patrols Network working operationally on a day – to – day basis to tackle illegal immigration.

In order to find the most appropriate organizational form, it was necessary to explore the previous experiences, namely the existing situation in the concerned Member States. The analysis of the experiences and contributions showed two types of fundamental needs. The first one is the operational coordination between authorities and the second one is the coordinative EU approach.

The solution was found in the establishment of a centralized entity – the National Coordination Centre – in each Member State linked to FRONTEX at the EU level.

Concerning the possession of the generic and specific requisites of functionality, the essential conditions for the recognition and legitimization of the centres to entertain relationships, the following aspects would be specified:

The generic requisites are to develop planning, verification and implementation at EU level of the measures aimed at improving the security of external sea borders.

- The appropriateness of the physical structures; the systems of communication and the qualification of the personnel, especially to operate in the search of creative solutions in the context of international collaboration.

The specific requisites are the availability of appropriate equipment and of know-how in order to allow the centres to carry out the following activities:

- Planning; strategic plans, working programs and operational plans
- Coordination and assistance to daily operational activities
- Evaluation of operational activities
- Elaboration of recommendations and best practices

4.2 The Structure

The establishment of National Coordination Centres (NCCs) connected in a network with FRONTEX, will provide the EU with an important tool to fight against seaborne illegal immigration thus promoting the enforcement of the EU policy on integrated border management. This would actively promote the gradual development and effective functioning of the EU Integrated Border Management System.

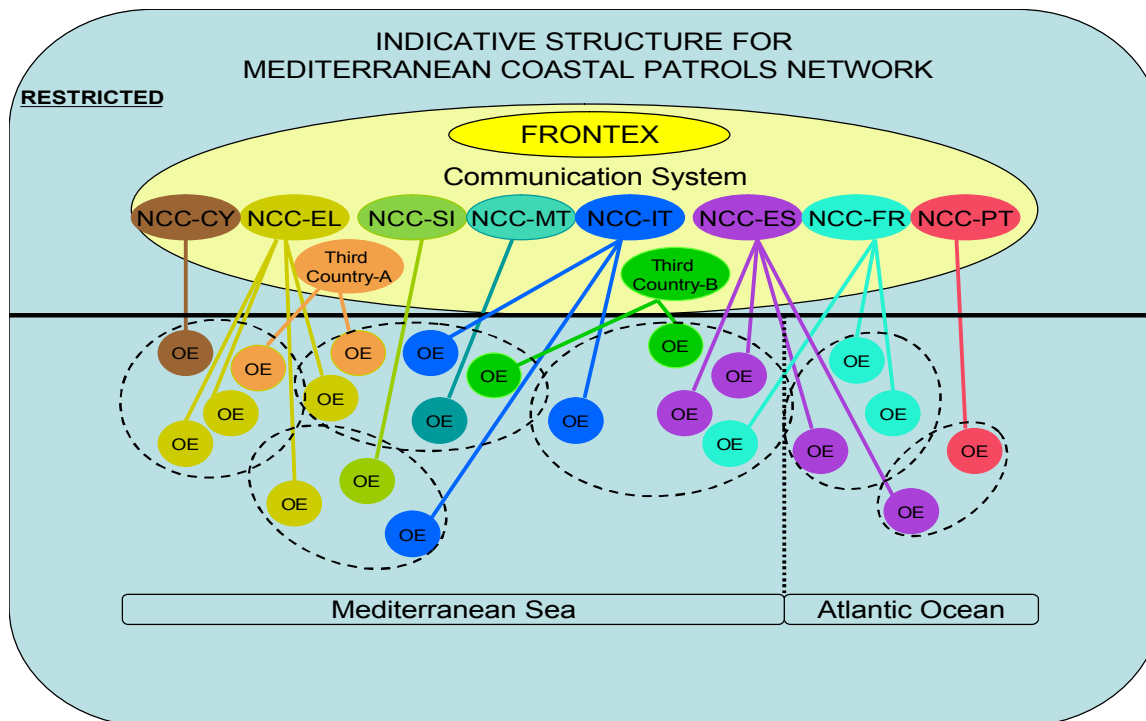
The operational working concept of the Mediterranean Coastal Patrols Network would depend to a great extent on the Operational Entities (OEs) and the cooperation between them, both at national level and between Member States. Together, these entities in the Member States would form the patrolling network to ensure the coordinative coverage of the entire EU southern maritime borders.

For the purpose of the study, Operational Entities at national level would include units of authorities dealing with maritime operational activities, although each one's involvement varies according to the fields of responsibility. They are deployed at central, regional and local level, having their own

tasks, organizational structure, premises, staff, infrastructure and equipment. Their working hours are commonly covering days and nights all the year.

The working concept and the network connecting FRONTEX and Mediterranean Member States could be extended by establishing NCCs in other Member States and Schengen Associated Countries.

When appropriate, it would be of high importance to include third countries in the network and the working concept.



The above indicative structure for Mediterranean Coastal Patrols Network shows a two – level structure consisting of National Coordination Centres (NCCs) and FRONTEX at level 1 and each NCC and Operational Entities (OEs) at level 2.

Level 1, connecting NCCs and FRONTEX, is established to organize the cooperation and coordination between Member States and with FRONTEX.

Level 2, connecting the NCC and Operational Entities at national level, is established to organize the cooperation and coordination between Operational Entities.

NCCs are the multiplier and would ensure the communication between the two levels.

4.3 FRONTEX

While considering that the responsibility for the control and surveillance of the external borders lies with the Member States, FRONTEX shall facilitate and render more effective the application of existing and future EU measures relating to the management of the external borders. FRONTEX shall do so by ensuring the coordination of Member States’ actions in the implementation of those measures, thereby contributing to an efficient, high and uniform level of control on persons and surveillance of the external borders of the Member States.

According to Article 3 of the Council Regulation 2007/2004 establishing FRONTEX, with a view to improve the integrated management of the external borders of the Member States of the European Union, FRONTEX shall evaluate, approve and coordinate proposal for joint operations and pilot projects made by Member States. FRONTEX may itself, and in agreement with Member States concerned, launch initiatives for joint operations and pilot projects in cooperation with Member States. It may also decide to put technical equipment at the disposal of Member States participating in the joint operations or pilot projects.

The Mediterranean Coastal Patrols Network is in its initial phase a pilot project and would form an ongoing joint operation at the EU southern maritime borders. FRONTEX shall evaluate the results and make comprehensive analysis of those results with a view to enhancing the quality, coherency and efficiency of continuing operations.

FRONTEX is prepared to follow up the establishment of the Mediterranean Coastal Patrols Network both administratively and operationally, particularly aiming at the:

- Creation of a communication system, the intranet
- Creation of common standards and requirements for compatible equipment
- Creation of common evaluating and reporting systems of the activities
- Initiation of/support to specific pilot projects and joint operations enhancing the establishment of the network
- Creation of a register of operational means, their capabilities, maintenance and costs
- Arrange periodical meetings/workshops and working groups to enhance the function of the network.

4.4 Member States

Responsibility for the control and surveillance of external borders lies with the Member States and they have to ensure the national coordination. The creation of a patrolling network enlarges their responsibility to ensure the coordination of common activities with neighbouring Member States and, when appropriate, with third countries.

**FROM THIS POINT TO THE END OF THE DOCUMENT (Page 93) : NOT
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