



Working group on European Security and Defence
Minutes of the meeting of Tuesday, 10 February 2009 on
COMMON TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR DEFENCE GOODS

Chaired by Karl von Wogau MEP, Chairman of the European Parliament's
Subcommittee on Security and Defence

Introduction by

- Karl von WOGAU MEP

Speaker:

- John KETCHELL, Director New Opportunities and Pre-Standards, CEN (European Committee for Standardisation)
- Richard FROH, Deputy Assistant Secretary General and Director for Armaments Directorate NATO

1 Karl von Wogau

Mr von Wogau stressed the importance of standardization for a common European market for security and defence goods. He welcomed the speakers and gave the floor the floor to Mr Ketchell.

2 John Ketchell

Mr Ketchell gave an overview over the European Standards Organisations (ESOs) CEN, CENELEC and ETSI. He described European standardization as a consensus based, voluntary, stakeholder driven process, based on the principles of openness and transparency, national commitment, technical coherence, at the national and European levels, integration with other international work, market relevance and adherence to WTO code. Mr Ketchell gave an overview over the role of CEN in the defence sector. He mentioned the desire to harmonise the approach to defence procurement in Europe (level playing field/European single market). He said that CEN created a Working Group of its Technical Board (CEN BT/WG126) to examine defence standards issues and a CEN Workshop 10 – Defence Procurement - to prepare guidance. Mr Ketchell also spoke about the cooperation between CEN and NATO (CEN/NATO Agreement of 2004, foresees smooth transition of appropriate standards to civil side; CEN participates in the NATO Civil Standards Management Working Group). Mr Ketchell mentioned that the CEN Workshop 10 on Defence Procurement, an informal standards group open to any interested party globally, was producing a European Standard Handbook for Defence Procurement. Results would be available on www.defense-handbook.org.

Mr Ketchell stressed the valuable role of European Standards Organizations in removing barriers to trade and added that there was still a work to do to break these barriers down. He underlined that military procurement could benefit (lower costs, access to more markets etc.). Mr Ketchell said that there should be a close cooperation between regulatory authorities (European Commission, national governments) and international partners (ISO, IEC, ITU-T). He underlined CEN's willingness to collaborate further with the military standards sector, to inform, and to align where possible.



3 Richard Froh

Mr Froh stressed that for NATO standardisation was an instrument to achieve interoperability and to reduce costs through economy of scale. Mr Froh reported about almost 100 technical groups where national experts coming from capitals of Member States develop STANAGs and APs. He stressed that interoperability failures cost lives and waste resources and underlined that standardisation enabled NATO military forces to communicate, think, work and fight together. Mr Froh said that from NATO perspective, since the planning for and conduct of military operations was one of NATO's prime reasons for being, achieving interoperability was essential. In the current NATO operations, it had however proven difficult to achieve practical interoperability.

Mr Froh said that the NATO Strategic Commands had identified the "ability to communicate at all levels of commands" as the most important current interoperability shortfall within the Alliance. He gave some practical examples of technical standardisation in support of interoperability.

He reported that NATO had initiated an Action Plan for Enhancing Interoperability last summer, after the Bucharest Summit. This plan was a major step towards enhancing interoperability.

4 Discussion

There was a discussion about harmonization of equipment for European missions and operations and about the coordination of standardization in the military and in the civilian field.

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