

**EUROPEAN UNION COMMISSION
NOTE of 13th MEETING TUESDAY 8th FEBRUARY 2011
STATE OF HESSEN OFFICE BRUSSELS BELGIUM**

1 Convening of Meeting

The European Union Commission meeting convened under the chairmanship of Vice President Davis in the Hessen State Office Brussels Belgium on 8 February 2011.

2 Registration of Representatives

The meeting was quorate with 7 European nations attending and represented:

Belgium [Boeckarts and Brisaert]; Czech Republic [Tomas]; Finland [Metso]; France [Maurer]; Germany [Roemer]; Poland [Trzcinska]; and UK [Davis]. In addition representatives of the CTIF Secretariat [Cornelia Andree] and Hessen State [Spoerhas-Eisel and Stielow] were also present and observed proceedings.

The State representative was thanked for making the meeting facilities available.

Apologies were received from 12 nations: Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Sweden.

3 Minutes of 12th Meeting Ostrava Czech Republic [Paper 13/1]

The note of the last meeting was approved and accepted

4 Matters Arising

Three matters not carried forward into the current meeting were the Treasurer's Request for Funding, the Report to the 2010 Delegates Conference and Actions for the Swedish Presidency. It was accepted that these matters were now completed.

5 EU Civil Protection Developments [Paper EU_COM_2010_600]

The group discussed recent significant changes made by the European Commission relating to civil protection. Several detailed matters were considered including:

- The relocation of the Civil Protection Unit and Monitoring and Information Centre from DG Environment to DG ECHO [EC Humanitarian Office];
- The new Internal Security Strategy now being developed by DG Home Affairs had a civil protection strand and special focus on terrorism and disaster;
- The new External Affairs Service under High Representative Ashton was considering how to utilise the synergy between internal response and EU humanitarian missions;
- Communication on further development of the civil protection modules;
- Communication on the development of consistent European risk assessment guidelines;
- Proposals made to merge the external crisis centre and MIC into one EC emergency centre; and
- Development of the Financial Instrument 2013-17 would soon commence.

It was agreed that the FRS should interact in these changes and whilst noting the importance of the National Correspondent role on behalf of each Member State some members still believed this single official route was less than satisfactory. This was because in some countries

there was ineffective dialogue between the FRS and NC and at times the Competent Authority's opinion differed from FRS practitioners.

It was also recognised that some countries had few 'disasters' that either overwhelmed their own resources or created transnational operational difficulties. This suggested that more should be done to improve direct engagement of the FRS.

Three action points were therefore proposed:

1. The CTIF approach towards the European Commission, to promote the acceptance of the fire and rescue service as appropriate actors within Europe, should be strengthened wherever and whenever possible;
2. There remained a clear need for appropriate forums to allow interaction, debate and integration between first responders and policy makers at the European level and CTIF should indicate to the Commission its ability to effectively network the FRS across Member States; and
3. CTIF should internally discuss and synthesise ideas to form a proposal(s) that could be promoted for inclusion within the next Financial Instrument and that this proposal should be communicated to the Polish and Danish delegations to inform their country's Presidency of the European Union.

ACTION All three proposals were agreed.

Action 1 All CTIF members in whatever way they felt appropriate e.g. lobby of government officials and political representatives, should promote the FRS as EU Actors.

Action 2 The Chairman would liaise with the Civil Protection Unit to suggest greater use of CTIF as two-way information route.

Action 3 The Polish representative would supply the Chairman with details of the Polish government contact point.

Action 4 All CTIF members are invited to submit to the Chairman ideas that might be included in the next civil protection Financial Instrument. Ideas discussed at the meeting included a EU citizen's awareness and education programmes, a public open web site for fire and safety education and further training for the FRS to improve transnational response capabilities.

Feedback from all CTIF EU members is requested.

6 Working Time Directive [Papers 10/1 and 13/2 EU_COM_2010_801/3]

The recently commenced second consultation on this Directive was considered. Whilst supportive of the European Parliament and Commission's desire to improve workers safety and health it was also essential to ensure EC officials and members of the European Parliament and Council understood the important negative consequences upon the ability of Member States to secure FRS protection if the proposals as drafted were adopted.

Discussion centred on how CTIF might best proceed. France, Germany and UK had had exchanges on the matter and following a bilateral meeting between France and UK in London a draft CTIF position statement had been prepared. The statement outlined the CTIF history on this issue, the reasons for concern and proposed actions that all CTIF members could follow.

Members present discussed and commented upon the draft paper and their views were incorporated. The amended paper, which was found by those present to be generally acceptable is attached to this meeting note marked version 2. Members considered the matter of

such importance that before approval the paper should be circulated to all EU CTIF members for consideration.

ACTION *All EU CTIF members affected by the Working Time Directive are asked to consider the attached paper and to respond to the Chairman with comments or amendments before the 1 March 2011 so that an approved paper may be adopted in time to influence the European Commission.*

Feedback before the 1 March 2011 from all CTIF EU members is requested

7 CTIF Leipzig Statement

During the Leipzig Interschutz fair in June 2010 the Deutsche Feuerwehrverband organised the first European Fire Services Conference, which was attended by senior FRS representatives from 17 Member States.

The conference was judged a major success and at the conclusion a Final Declaration was adopted that indicated the desire of the EU FRS to work together with a common voice and in a common network alongside the EU institutions to help better protect Europe's citizens. A copy of the Final Declaration is attached.

The conference discussions also highlighted the need to recognise that the national interest came first - the important principle of subsidiarity- and many believed there should be no European FRS Force. Furthermore some members believed there was a difference between response inside and outside the EU. It was also thought that the important role of volunteer firefighters should be promoted in 2011 as part of the European Commission's 'Year of the Volunteer' initiative. DFV viewed the conference as a great way of capturing many of the thoughts contained in the EU communication on volunteers, a copy of which is attached.

DFV had now started discussions with the Polish firefighters association to organise a 2nd European Fire Service Conference, to coincide with the Presidency of the Union, with the aim of influencing the EU into accepting the FRS as partners in their desire to improve civil protection.

All members were supportive of this DFV initiative but some disappointment was expressed that it was not closely branded to CTIF. This was because of the view that there are already too many Fire institutions operating in Europe, which confused EU officials and weakened the impact of the overall FRS message.

ACTION *DFV noted both the support and concern and said other members would be kept informed of progress towards the 2nd Conference*

8 2011 EU Year of Volunteer [Papers 13/4 and EU_Year_Vol]

The EU Year of Volunteer was now underway and it was explained that an early bid attempt led by France to create a Fire Conference in Strasbourg had unfortunately failed due to time constraints. The Chairman had however continued to seek support from DG ECHO for an alternative CTIF event and proposed, with support from UK CTIF, to hold a Humanitarian Aid Conference in Manchester, UK, in October 2011. A prepared paper explained the proposal and members were asked for their support.

ACTION *Members agreed to the idea in principle and agreed to consider offer individual letters of support by the 1 March 2011.*

Feedback before 1 March 2011 from all CTIF EU members is requested

9 European Projects [Paper 13/5]

Attention was drawn to the start of the Research Framework Programme 7 CRISYS Project that the Chairman is leading as Technical Coordinator under the title of CTIF. This is the first time CTIF has been associated with a major project that aim of which was to explore the practical options for a more coordinated system of crisis management at the operational level. Members would be kept informed of progress and invited to contribute.

The absence of Bulgaria and lack of communication prevented discussion of their item.

ACTION *The start of the FP7 CRISYS Project was noted*

10 RIP Cigarettes [Paper CEN_RIP_Cigarettes]

The success of this initiative, which CTIF had supported, was welcomed

ACTION *It was noted that Finland had already adopted a national standard and that progressively all EU Member States would adopt the CEN standard.*

11 Development of Fire Lexicon

The absence of Bulgaria and any communication prevented discussion of their item

12 Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting would be arranged to coincide with the CTIF Delegates meeting in Bergen Norway in September 2011. It was suggested that Norway and the other EEA and Candidate EU¹ States should be invited to join this CTIF Commission

ACTION *Chairman and CTIF Secretariat to make suitable arrangements*

13 Additional Item

Poland advised of two conferences; 4 March 2011, Poznan. Social Aspects of Education and Fire Prevention [www.edukacja.psp.wlkp.pl]. Warsaw 31 March-1 April 2011. Emergency Evacuation of People from Buildings [www.sgsp.edu.pl/emevac].

Dennis Davis
Chairman
12 February 2011

4 Attachments:

CTIF Working Time Directive Position Statement. Leipzig Final Declaration. EU Communication-Year of Volunteer. Proposed CTIF Humanitarian Aid Conference.

¹ Non EU EEA States are Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. Candidates are Croatia, Macedonia and Turkey
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