

**SUMMARY OF THE TWELTH MEETING OF THE OLAF ANTI-FRAUD
COMMUNICATORS4 NETWORK (OAFCN)**

5-6 December 2007, Brussels, Belgium

1. Approval of the Agenda

Mr Buttice welcomed Members and considered the agenda for this meeting approved.

2. Adoption of the Minutes and Summary of the 11th OAFCN Meeting, Brussels, 4 May 2007

Mr Buttice apologised that the minutes had not been circulated but he assured members that the 11th meeting minutes would be circulated with these 12th meeting minutes and they would both be adopted at the next meeting.

3. Follow-up and conclusions of the 7th OAFCN Training seminar, Vienna-Bratislava, 23-26 September 2007 "Fight against Fraud on Vision – Television drama as a Means of Fighting against Fraud and Corruption. What has been achieved?"

Mr Buttice thanked members for the success of the seminar, of which all members should be proud. He asked the members, from the UK, Austria and Italy to assist in collecting the speeches made by the TV companies from those countries at the 7th OAFCN Training Seminar by 14th December 2007, because these would be published in the 3rd edition of the brochure 'Deterring Fraud by Informing the Public', to be produced in early 2008. Members were also requested to send suggestions for TV drama series stories by 31st December 2007. These suggestions would be disseminated to all members and sent to TV producers who spoke at the 7th seminar in Vienna and Bratislava.

Mr Jones (UK) suggested that it might not be pragmatic to expect the British production company to retrospectively write a script of what they said (it was presented spontaneously) but Mr Buttice asked Mr Jones to stimulate them to produce a summary or to approve the transcript of their presentations which had already been sent to them

Mr Dobleaga (Romania) introduced himself as head of DLAF in Romania. He welcomed the idea of Italian collaboration, especially regarding recent events. Mr Corsetti (Italy) had sent four suggestions to RAI. Mr Coudray (France) had talked with production companies from TF1 about a six episode series. This would be filmed in Marseille in Feb 2008 and broadcast in September 2008. However, only in the second series would international cooperation be shown. Mr Schmitz (Germany) described the production in collaboration with Italy and Hungary, but whether it would be a series or just one 90 min long programme all depended on financial constraints.

Mrs Borikova (Slovak Republic Customs) took this opportunity to introduce her replacement Mrs Hlavacova and thanked members for their support.

Mr Buttice concluded this item by emphasising the need for international cooperation to be shown in these series and he congratulated Germany and France on their progress. Mr Schmitz (Germany), Mr Coudray (France), Mr Corsetti (Italy) and Mr Jones (UK) were

asked to produce a short report for VP Kallas regarding the state of play with contacts with TV producers in their respective countries.

4. Communication experience of the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC), Community Relations Department, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, followed by “ Fighting Corruption without Fear and Favour”, TV drama advertisements 1970-2004, 30th DVD collection, ICAC

Mr Ho gave a presentation about the structure and functions of ICAC in general and in particular, he outlined the strategy of its Community Relations Department and its educational programs and public communications conducted in 2006. To illustrate how the ICAC had used TV as a means of public educational tool, he showed the participants some samples of TV ads as well as extracts from TV drama series broadcast from 1974 to 2004. He explained that approximately ten 30-second-long-TV ads are shown every week and TV series are broadcast every 3-4 years. Afterwards, he answered questions. After a request from Mrs Schembri (Malta), Mr Ho described how the ICAC was viewed in Hong Kong. In response to Mr Rebecchi (Italy), Mr Ho explained that ICAC had investigative powers as well as powers of arrest, search and detention conferred by separate legislations; i.e. the investigative powers are similar to the police force. In response to Mr Vitiello's (Italy) question, Mr. Ho explained that the ICAC would occasionally exchange operational intelligence with the Hong Kong Police Force or mount joint operations with them when they had mutual interests.

After a request from Mr Lequesne (Belgium), Mr Ho explained that out of an annual budget of about 60 Million Euro for the ICAC for the fiscal year 2006/07, around 10 million went to the Community Relations Department, covering the costs for organizing various education programs, public communications projects (including production of TV ads and TV drama programs), specific program plans and official remuneration of its 162 staff members.

In response to Mr Jones (UK), Mr Ho explained the procedure of TV series production. The investigators first provide facts to the directors, who design a TV series. The ICAC lets the production company have the freedom to elaborate on the script as they know what the public will like. From ICAC's previous experience, there were no conflicts. To conclude this item, Mr Buttice asked Mr Ho to produce an article for the 3rd edition of the brochure 'Deterring Fraud by Informing the Public'.

5. Wider debate on OAFCN membership and exchange of information

Members agreed that the OAFCN members list with contact details (including photo, organisation, position, email address, phone number and mobile phone number) should be published online to make it easier to update.

6. Discussion paper regarding UK representation on the OAFCN and OAFCN membership in general

Mr Jones (UK) raised the issue of qualification to OAFCN membership. He asked for clarity, given that at the setting up by OLAF of the OAFCN in 2001, the emphasis was on “operational partners”, that is, national authorities that have criminal investigative and prosecutions powers or with accountability for the disbursement of EU funds and therefore bodies that could collaborate with OLAF in anti-fraud actions. He asked if this was generally understood by the current membership. It was decided that the criteria for

membership should be recommended and then analysed by existing members. On the matter of the withdrawal of the British Customs (HMRC) from participation in OAFCN, Mr Buttice would prepare a letter from OLAF to HMRC to enquire about their OAFCN Membership.

Mr Lesmes Anel (Spain) added at the end that he supported Mr Jones (UK) and Mr Schmitz (Germany), in so far as new membership to the OAFCN should be analysed by the Network together. Mr Buttice agreed with this in principle, but mentioned the exceptions, for example a request from Europol. After a change in structure, Mrs Nikolova (Bulgaria) would no longer be able to be an OAFCN Member from the Financial Intelligence Agency, as she would no longer be spokesperson, but journalist. However she could continue her membership, representing the Journalists Against Corruption Club. He also suggested having Associate Partners, for example in ICAC Hong Kong. He concluded by thanking everyone for their pragmatic approach.

7. Planning of the next OAFCN meetings/training seminars and the European Institution's Open Day 10 May 2008 "European Year of the Intercultural Dialogue"

The Open Day 2008 would take the same format as in 2007.

Mr Cassar (Malta) suggested using written media- magazines and postcards (to be made available in airports) to target businessmen rather than the average citizen.

Mr Buttice asked the members for their input to the conception of the anti-fraud Eurobarometer OLAF is planning for 2008. He stressed that their feedback is useful as it is important to 'go local' and to have perception from the Member States. Mrs Piovano would send the link for the Eurobarometer 2004 to members in order to remind them of the set-up.

Mr Buttice asked for suggestions for the venue of the next OAFCN seminar, to be held in October 2008 (financed under the usual conditions, under the reservation of the availability of budget). Ms Hadjiyanni spoke on behalf of the Customs and Excise department in Cyprus and offered to host the seminar. The offer was welcomed by the members and happily accepted.

The question of the topic of the next OAFCN seminar was put to discussion. Mr Buttice suggested two topics: Firstly, exploring new means of communication such as Web TV, You Tube, Blogging etc. Secondly, the protection of journalists' sources. The second topic could be a response to the International Federation of Journalists' request for intensified dialogue following the ruling of the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

Mr Montemagno (Italy) stressed the importance of the topic of journalists' sources for the work of law enforcement services.

Mr Führnstahl (Austria) said he would send a summary of an initiative in Austria 'Summer Universities' and invited members to this event in 2008. Mr Lesmes Anel (Spain) added that it was important to raise awareness of anti-fraud measures using the media. Mr Lequesne (Belgium) stressed the importance of targeting young people. He mentioned that young people watch less TV and read fewer newspapers, yet spend up to

six hours a day on the internet. Mr Newald (Austria) supported the idea of working with young people. Mr Coleman (Ireland) added that the Institutions' 'credibility' should be explored. He said that the public put less trust in official messages from government organisations. His special point was that "word of mouth" amongst the public had shown to be an effective form of communication.

Members agreed on the following solution:

- The next OAFCN seminar – to be held in Cyprus, notionally in October – will be dedicated to new media.
- The next OAFCN meeting would take place in May in Brussels. It would last two days, instead of one. One day would be the normal meeting. The other day would be entirely dedicated to the dialogue with IFJ and discussions on the topic of protection of journalists' sources. Mr Jones, Mr Schmitz, Mr Rebecchi and Mr Cassar volunteered to prepare presentations. Mr Wojahn would compile and send a questionnaire to find out the legal situations in each Member State on the protection of sources, in light of the European Convention on Human Rights.

8. Debriefing on Training Seminar for journalists, held in Sofia, 7 September 2007

Mrs Nikolova (Bulgaria) was congratulated on her 'Journalist of the Year' award and described the training seminar to bring a higher level of competence to the media and state representatives. Mrs Balevska (Bulgaria) described the Journalists against Corruption Club, which raises awareness in Bulgaria. Then Bulgaria National Television's ACTION DVD was shown.

9. Development of Relations with the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)

The Tillack case was summarised and discussed, in order to be prepared for similar cases in the future. Aidan White, the IFJ Secretary General, explained the case from a journalist's point of view. Mr Consoli, President of the International Press Association (API-IPA, representing foreign journalists accredited to the European Institutions in Brussels), said that the Commission should take responsibility of the situation in Member States regarding legal provisions for journalist protection. Mr Buttice responded that the Tillack file was handed to the Belgian authorities on the basis that its rules required it to bring suspected misdemeanours to the attention of national authorities. Furthermore OLAF must respect the law in Member States. In conclusion it is a struggle between the right of journalists and the obligations of investigative bodies. Mrs Werner, member of the Cabinet of Commission Vice-President Kallas, called for a more balanced approach. She recalled that freedom of the press is a pillar of democracy but that corruption is a threat to democracy.

After Mr White, Mr Consoli, Mrs Werner and Mr Strotmann had left, members discussed their approach and experience with the question of protection of journalists' sources. Mr. Schmitz (Germany) did not share Mr. White's view that individual cases like the "Tillack case" or a similar case in Germany ("Cicero") were a threat for democracy.

Mr Jones (UK) commented that the Tillack case had been bruising for those directly involved. It was an interesting case study that OLAF had raised at the OAFCN on a number of occasions and he expressed a hope that lessons, once learned, could assist all to move forward.