

Minutes of the 20th OAFCN Regular Meeting Berlin, 30 November 2011

Welcome Address by OLAF Spokesman

Pavel Bořkovec (PB) thanked Wolfgang Schmitz (WS) and the Zollkriminalamt (ZKA) for co-hosting the meeting and the training seminar in Berlin, and the German Ministry of Finance for welcoming part of the event on its premises.

1) Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted without any comments or amendments.

2) TV-chat show "The OAFCN from its origins until today": hosted by David Jones, with the contribution of Eva-Lisa Lennstraand, Arturo Cuervo, Niki Hadjiyianni and Eva Borikova, former OAFCN members

PB explained that the objective of this item was to have a handful of OAFCN members from the past to share their feelings and experiences of the Network, 10 years after its creation. He then welcomed and introduced the four former members Eva-Lisa Lennstraand, former Head of Communication within the Swedish Economic Crime Authority who retired in April this year, Arturo Cuervo, former Head of Communication within the Spanish *Guardia Civil*, Niki Hadjiyianni, former Spokesperson of the Customs & Excise in Cyprus, who had just retired last summer, and Eva Borikova, former Director of the Office of the Director General of the Customs Directorate of the Slovak Republic, and thanked them for accepting the invitation. He also thanked David Jones (DJ) for the idea of organising this collective "TV chat show" and for volunteering to be the host. He then gave him the floor.

DJ turned to Eva-Lisa Lennstraand (EL) and recalled that, like himself, she was one of the members who attended the very 1st OAFCN meeting on 10 May 2001. He asked her what her initial reaction was when OLAF invited her to attend the newly created Network. EL explained that OLAF's invitation was very welcomed not only by herself but also within the *Ekobrottsmyndigheten* as since the beginning they have fully agreed with the purpose of the Network. She added that the 10 years she spent working within the Network represented a very positive and pleasant experience.

Then DJ asked the same question to Arturo Cuervo (AC), another start-up member, who explained that when he received OLAF's invitation he immediately decided that he had to be there. Up to that moment, when he was responsible for communication, OLAF and the *Guardia Civil* had already interacted on an operational level, but not on any communication activities. He added, organising the OAFCN training seminar in Salamanca in 2002 was quite a challenge but it turned out to be a very positive and successful experience.

DJ recalled that in 2004 the EU expanded from 15 to 25 Member States and he turned to what he calls "the newer old timers". Nikki Hadjiyianni (NH) explained that since 2002 the Customs & Excise of Cyprus has participated in every single OAFCN event. She said that the most important added value of being an OAFCN member was the experience learned thanks to the active and honest cooperation within the Network, which definitely helped her organisation to improve its relationship with the press and media.

In reply to DJ's question, enquiring about her first impressions from the perspective of both a newly arrived and an Eastern country, Eva Borikova (EB) replied that that was no cultural shock as Eastern Europe is not that different from Western Europe; plus the Slovak Customs already had the habit to attend some other EU meetings. Nevertheless, she explained that OLAF's invitation covered a different subject, anti-fraud communication, and that once in Brussels she discovered that OAFCN meetings were by far the best ones she had ever attended.

Then DJ returned to EL, AC, NH and EB to discuss with them the experience of the four OAFCN seminars that were organised, respectively, in Stockholm-Helsinki, Salamanca Nicosia and Vienna-Bratislava.

DJ added that since its origins the OAFCN has evolved and changed, but has always remained strong, thanks to its two dynamic, although quite contrasting, chairmen; Alessandro Buttice and PB. DJ recalled that, in the last few years, the Network has also benefited from the contribution of some associate members.

Dorota Kwiecinska (DK, Ministry of Finance – PL) intervened from the floor to explain that the OAFCN seminar in Nicosia had a sort of Spinoza effect as it was such a wonderful experience that the Polish Ministry of Finance submitted its candidature to organise the 9th OAFCN Training Seminar in Warsaw. She added that not only was this a very positive experience both from a learning and from a networking point of view, but it also had an important added value for the organising service, as it strengthened its relationships with OLAF.

PB concluded the agenda item thanking all the panellists again for their contribution.

3) Summary of 2011 activities

PB gave the floor to Sabina Langus Boc (SLB) and David Jones (DJ).

SLB started by explaining that the background for OAFCN activities in 2011 was to be found in the two OAFCN meetings of 2010: the first one (Brussels, 7 May 2010), when PB took over as the new OLAF spokesman and when a paper note on a possible *Review of the OAFCN*, written by DJ, marked the first step of a joint reflection on the future of the Network. This reflection continued during the Network's second meeting (The Hague, 9-10 December 2010) where a *reflection group* of 16 volunteers was formed to brainstorm on how to further develop the Network. 2011 started then with two meetings of this reflection group (Brussels, 31 January and 28 March) where the OAFCN volunteers participated in some workshops and discussions which resulted in the *OAFCN vision paper*, a short document describing not only the legal basis for the OAFCN experts group, but also the OAFCN mission, organisation, activities, plus a few proposals for a more effective Network. This paper was discussed in depth during the 19th OAFCN meeting (Brussels, 6 May 2011 followed by the EC Open Day on 7 May) where the OAFCN members were divided in different working groups to discuss on the most effective communication activities the Network might develop further. During this meeting, the Advisory Board, a group of 5 OAFCN volunteers who would assist the OLAF Spokesperson in stirring the activities of the Network, was elected.

In his capacity as a member of the Advisory Board, DJ took over to present the main role and activities of this group; composed, beside himself, of Gian Luca Berruti (Guardia di Finanza, IT), Joannes Thuy (Eurojust), Nico Dusseldorf (Douanes & Accises, LU) Lorenzo Pisoni (Agenzia delle Dogane, IT) plus Wolfgang Schmitz (Zollkriminalamt, DE) representing the co-host organisation of the OAFCN training seminar. He explained that, as its first mission was to help in designing the programme for the training seminar in Germany, the Advisory Board met twice "virtually", through two fruitful phone conferences, and once physically in Berlin (September 2011), where they ended up with a concept of the agenda.

PB added that his ambition was to produce some concrete and useful results while having fun at the same time. Then he informed the OAFCN members, although this point was not included in the agenda, about the ongoing internal review within OLAF and its impact on the OAFCN. Starting from 1st February 2012, Ms Agnes Horvath (AH) would replace him as the head of the new "Investigation training & Communication" Unit while Mr Johan Wullt (JW) would take over as the acting OLAF Spokesman.

4) 11th OAFCN training seminar: aims and messages

PB thanked once again WS and the Advisory Group for their assistance in designing the programme.

He then left the floor to WS, who introduced the main theme of the 11th OAFCN Training Seminar: "Deterring fraud by informing the public – The power of pictures". He also presented ZKA's new logo, featuring the motto "keep on walking!", which should apply to the OAFCN as well.

5) "Production of Films and series about anti-fraud authorities"

Thomas Justus (TJ), executive producer and managing director at Skarabäus Entertainment, briefly explained his background and experience in producing films and series for both public and private TV in Germany. He added that his experience should encourage the OAFCN members to engage in similar projects on anti-fraud matters and he confirmed his availability to help OLAF and the OAFCN members in developing this option further.

6) AOB

No AOB.

PB ended the meeting and invited the OAFCN members to come back, after a short coffee break for the *Fraud Café*.

Fraud Café: Fraud Prevention Campaign for 2012

PB welcomed Nick Heenan (NH), the internal facilitator from the European Commission who would host, with the help of OAFCN colleagues Sabina Langus Boc (SLB) and Gian Luca Berruti (GLB), this two hour session.

SLB and GLB briefly explained the outline and the objectives of the fraud café: an interactive discussion to start defining the *OAFCN Fraud Prevention Campaign for 2012* or, in other terms, the OAFCN annual plan for 2012. They added that the content of this plan totally depends on what the OAFCN members are willing and able to do in practice, with the support of OLAF. They underlined that there is no need for just a document that will end up in a folder somewhere; but rather a constant reminder of what the OAFCN wants to achieve and carry out either on a national or an international level. They concluded by reading the calling question on which the discussion would focus "What approaches do we think would be most effective to convey a convincing Fraud Prevention message to the public audiences we need to reach?"

NH took over and, after introducing himself, he explained to the OAFCN members, the process; which would be mainly based on firstly a few rounds of discussion in smaller groups and then on a final round of consolidation and cluster-making of similar projects.

MAIN OUTCOMES CONCERNING FRAUD PREVENTION MESSAGES

- Substantial recognition amongst the members of the need to actively collaborate on joint communication projects
- Progress in the dialogue and acceleration towards realisation of specific communication projects
- Focus on developing messages for young people including children (values, morals)
- Focus on cost of fraud to ordinary taxpayers (cascaded cause-effect-cause-effect...)
- Focus on playing to the emotions of the audience (also use of music, not words)
- Focus on specifying simple message(s) and the audience(s) to receive these

- Leave the creative work to the audio-visual professionals (and trust them)
- Message on the consequences of buying counterfeit goods:
 - Lower price paid, but to criminals (do people realise they are paying criminals?)
 - Criminals may be exploiting children in third countries to produce counterfeit goods cheaply
 - Loss of revenue for fiscal authorities and legitimate businesses in EU
 - This causing reduced public investment and loss of jobs (in private industry)
- Press conferences: broadcast these from the location of the anti-fraud news (not from a press-conference room)
 - Do it right or don't do it
 - Part of a package of communication products (to be planned)
 - Also think about:
 - Logo / slogan (common identity for actions of EU 27)
 - Backdrop / banners
 - Compilation of stock-shots and semi-edited background material
 - Use of live (unedited) coverage to allow newsrooms to edit for themselves
 - Issue news alerts in advance (what, where, when), including EbS broadcast times
 - Videos for websites and for continuous newsfeeds

PB closed the working sessions by thanking once again the co-hosts, the advisory group, the facilitator, participants, staff and interpreters.

End of the meeting