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EUROPEAN UNION
THE COUNCIL

Brussels, 24 April 1997

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REV 1
~~LIMITE~~

EUROPOL 19

NOTE POINT I "A"

from : K.4 Committee

to : COREPER/Council

No. prev. doc. : SN 2231/97; 7390/97 EUROPOL 19 REV 1

Subject : Europol Computer System
- Draft report to the Council

At its meeting of 22 April 1997, the K.4 Committee agreed on the annexed report.

The COREPER is invited to confirm this agreement and to forward this report for adoption to the Council as an "A" point.

The Europol Computer System

1. Introduction

Ministers will recall that in May 1995 (doc. 9546/1995 EUBOPOL 85) the Council authorised the initiation of a project to plan then implement the development of the Europol Computer System. In December 1995 (doc. 12869/1995 EUROPOL 123) the Council approved a supplementary budget of 1.4 MECU for 1996 (Stage 1) and in December 1996 (doc. 11084/96 EUROPOL 57) the Council approved a supplementary budget of 2.2 MECU for 1997 (Stage 2). The purpose of this report is to inform ministers of progress to date.

2. Stage 1: Analysis

In January 1996 a Project Team was set up in the Europol Drugs Unit (EDU) consisting of seconded personnel from the Member States. Since that date a member of the EDU Management Team has acted as Project Director and a Project Board reporting to the Europol Working Group has maintained control of the project. Consultancy support has helped ensure a high technical standard of work.

Stage 1 resulted by October 1996 in the production of a Statement of Requirement and the issue of an Invitation to Tender for Stage 2. This was followed in early 1997 by the evaluation procedure to choose the company to carry out the Stage 2 work.

Stage 1 of the project was completed well within budget.

3. Stage 2: Operational Requirement

On 8 April 1997 a major consultancy contract was awarded to Unisys to produce the Operational Requirement (Requirement Specification). The value of the contract is within the budget limit previously agreed by the Council. Work on Stage 2 is progressing well, with the full involvement of Europol National Units in the 15 Member States.

Subject to acceptance of the Operational Requirement by the Working Group, an Invitation to Tender for Stage 3 will be issued early in 1998. To ensure that the Operational Requirement is not biased towards any one potential supplier, the principle was established early in the project that the Stage 2 company producing it would not be allowed to tender for the next stage.

4. Stage 3: Develop & Supply

Provided agreement can be reached promptly on the budget and on the choice of company, the contract to develop and supply the Europol Computer System could be awarded in mid-1998, with first deliveries of some working components in the following months and full implementation of the system early in the year 2000.

The overall final budget will depend on the prices proposed by the successful company, following competitive tendering, and on the financing method chosen. For 1998 a financial provision of 3.26 MECU is proposed. This will cover the ongoing costs of the project (1.26 MECU) and a deposit of up to 2 MECU when the contract is awarded.

5. Interim arrangements, especially in regard to the analysis system

The Europol convention will enter into force before the end of Stage 3. To that end competent bodies are currently examining of the arrangements for the proper functioning of Europol. The Operational Requirement produced in Stage 2 will identify the priorities of particular relevance to an interim solution which can be brought into operation as soon as practicable. This interim solution should not entail excessive global costs for the Europol computer system.

For this purpose, a cost/benefit analysis will be made.

6. Conclusion

The project is on course and within budget. The basic design philosophy of the future system aims for simplicity to ease development, reduce costs and maximise benefits. Nevertheless the project itself is a very complex one, since the 15 Member States have differing legal, technical, operational and practical requirements which have to be integrated in the final product.

A feature of this project has been the close co-operation between the Europol Drugs unit, responsible for the day-to-day management, and the experts from the competent authorities in the Member States whose valued support and commitment will continue to be essential factors in the system's ultimate success.
