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- **INDUSTRY** -

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**JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS****Europol****- Rules of procedure of Europol's Joint Supervisory Body**

The Council agreed to the rules of procedure of Europol's Joint Supervisory Body which were adopted unanimously by the Body on 22 April. This leaves only two further steps to be completed in order to enable Europol to take up its activities - which is expected at the latest by the beginning of July - namely the ratification of the Protocol on the privileges and immunities of Europol's officials and the conclusion by all Member States of bilateral agreements with the Netherlands on the national liaison officers.

The Joint Supervisory Body will have the task of reviewing the activities of Europol in order to ensure that the rights of the individual are not violated by the storage, processing and utilisation of the data held by Europol. In addition it will monitor the permissibility of the transmission of data originating from Europol.

It will be composed of not more than two members or representatives of each national supervisory body for data protection, who will be appointed by the Member States for five years, the term being renewable. They have to be independent and not bound by instructions in the exercise of their duties, only subject to the law.

The rules of procedure also refer to the Appeals Committee which will be composed of one member of each delegation in the Joint Supervisory Body. This Committee is responsible for examining complaints lodged by individuals with regard to data dealt with by Europol. The rules of procedure determine the Committee's functioning, in particular the use of languages, the institution of the appeal procedure and the preliminary consideration of the complaint, the possibility of hearing the parties, witnesses and experts. The text also contains provisions on the confidentiality of the proceeding as well as on its costs.

**- Appointment of the Director and Deputy Directors of Europol**

The Council adopted the act of appointment, as from the moment of the taking up of activities of Europol, of the Director and Deputy Directors of Europol.

From the moment of the taking up of Europol's activities, Mr Jurgen Storbeck is appointed Director of Europol for a period of 5 years. Also from that moment, appointed as deputy Directors are:

- Mr Willi Bruggeman for 4 years
- Mr Gilles Leclair for 4 years
- Mr Emanuele Marotta for 3 years
- Mr Georges Rauchs for 3 years
- Mr David Lawrence Valls Russell for 4 years.

- **Extension of Europol's mandate to deal with forgery of money and means of payment**

Following its agreement in principle at its session (Justice and Home Affairs) on 3/4 December 1998, the Council formally adopted a decision aimed at extending Europol's mandate, as from the date when Europol takes up its activities, to include the fight against forgery of money and means of payment.

In view of the forthcoming introduction of the euro, this extension of Europol's tasks will contribute to protecting the euro from any counterfeiting and to effectively preventing related criminal activities. The decision is without prejudice to the respective roles in this area of Europol, the Commission (UCLAF) and the European Central Bank.

**Recommendation on the detection of falsified documents in Member States' Visa Departments**

The Council adopted a recommendation on the provision for the detection of false or falsified documents in the visa departments of Member States' representations abroad and in the offices of domestic authorities dealing with the issue or extension of visas.

The aim of this recommendation is to establish uniform levels of expertise and equipment for detecting forged documents in the visa issuing authorities of Member States with a view to preventing document abuse when third country nationals enter and stay in the territory of Member States.

Under the terms of the recommendation, Member States should improve the conditions for issuing visas, in particular by ensuring that staff are increasingly better able to detect false or falsified documents through appropriate equipment and by putting the necessary emphasis on the skills and abilities required to carry out these examinations, including systematic training. By deciding on how to improve in the competent offices the conditions for issuing visas, the determining factors should be the number of visa applications and the known levels of falsifying and counterfeiting documents. The minimum level of technical provision (staff and equipment), differentiated on the basis of either low, intermediate or high risk of forgery, is laid down in an annex to the recommendation.

By endeavouring to bring staff training and staff level as well as equipment gradually into line with the criteria of this recommendation, Member States are also asked to promote local consular cooperation through measures such as considering the common use of equipment, the opening up of training courses to staff from other Member States or the sharing of knowledge and experience of technical staff.