

## EU Strategy for the Danube Region

Priority Area 1a – To improve mobility and multimodality: Inland waterways

Priority Area 11 – To work together to tackle security and organised crime

## Joint Working Group Meeting of Priority Area 1a & Priority Area 11 of the EUSDR

Vienna, Austria

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### MINUTES

Author(s):

**Joint Technical Secretariat of PACs 1a**

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**Time:** 25/04/2017; 14:00 – 17:30 hrs  
**Venue:** Tech Gate, Ring Stage, Donau-City-Straße 1, 1220 Wien, Austria  
**Attendants:** 16 attendants representing public authorities, border police officials and one representation of interest (see attached list of attendants)

## 1. Welcome and introduction to the joint Working Group Meeting of Priority Areas 1a and Priority Area 11 on administrative processes

Mr. **Gert-Jan Mulierman**, the representative member of the Technical Secretariat for Priority Area 1a, welcomed all participants on behalf of viadonau and explained the background of the joint PA1a & PA11 working group. Mr. Mulierman emphasised that among the various types of administrative barriers for inland navigation on the Danube the working group is first and foremost concentrating its efforts on border controls. The objective of this meeting was to revise the work already done and to agree upon the next steps to implement the recommendations for border controls published in June 2016. Subsequently, the agenda was adopted by all participants.

Mrs. **Claudia Gosch-Satzer** from the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior also welcomed all participants to the meeting. She stressed the need to move beyond the planning phase and start the implementation phase with a joint commitment to focus on solving some pressing problems for the shipping industry.

## 2. Overview of 8 priority measures including the presentation of assigned coordinators

**Speakers:** Mr. Simon HARTL (PA1a/viadonau / Coordinator for measures M01, M05, M06, M14, M15)  
Mr. Hubert GRIEPE (Bavarian State Criminal Office / Coordinator for measures M04, M10, M11) and Mr. Adrian SBARCEA (General Inspectorate Romanian Border Police)

Mr. **Simon Hartl** (viadonau) gave an overview of the status quo of the cooperation between PA1a and PA11. In the course of the working group meeting last June 20 measures were developed, of which eight were defined as priority measures. Five of these measures are being coordinated by PA1a, the remaining three are under the coordination of PA11.

Mr. **Hubert Griepe** (Bavarian State Criminal Office) introduced himself as the newly appointed coordinator for measures M04, M10 and M11. He explained his view of the current situation and stressed that working under the umbrella of the Danube Region Strategy in a joint working group generates an opportunity that must be seized. Mr. Griepe also expressed his regret that not all Danube riparian states were represented at the meeting, yet he was expecting a vivid discussion and an agreement on the next steps to implement the priority measures.

Mr. **Hartl** presented the five priority measures viadonau is responsible for and summarised what had been achieved so far. He specifically highlighted the practical manual on border controls which was updated recently. He invited all participants to distribute and review the manual and to provide feedback to PA1a. Mr. Hartl also explained that this working group meeting was being conducted as an internal session in order to review the previous efforts and to agree upon further proceedings. PA1a however intends to open the working group again for participation from the shipping industry in future.

Mr. **Griepe** introduced the three priority measures under the coordination of PA11. He stressed the complexity of the issue and acknowledged that it will probably not be possible to make all recommendations viable for all authorities and countries. Nevertheless, PA11 will focus its work on avoiding double/multiple controls and simplify processes which will enhance the efficiency of controls

for both control authorities and ship crews. Mr. Griepe expressed that he will focus on measure M04 (transnational training and know-how exchange) in the next months.

Mr. **Adrian Sbarcea** (General Inspectorate Romanian Border Police) introduced himself and offered to assist Mr. Griepe in implementing measures M04, M10 and M11. He reported that the practical manual on border controls has not yet been published by the Romanian Ministry of Transport and recommended to increase dissemination of the manual. Mr. Sbarcea also reported that Romanian authorities use an adapted version of the IMO FAL forms and that data exchange with neighbouring countries is currently not possible. He expressed his wish to establish a database that facilitates digital cross-border data transfer among control authorities. Romania is using a national database and a software application that simplifies communication between control checkpoints. Regarding M04 Mr. Sbarcea proposed to organise training sessions for control authorities and ship crews to ensure transparent and well-organised control procedures.

Mr. **Griepe** remarked that Germany is also using a national database. Nevertheless, the international exchange of data is always a difficult issue in terms of technical implementation and data security.

To conclude this part of the meeting, Mr. Hartl asked for a short tour de table to give all participants the opportunity to introduce themselves.

### 3. Presentation of preliminary results

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**Speakers:** Mr. Simon HARTL (PA1a/viadonau)  
Mr. Ulf MEINEL (PA1a/viadonau)

#### ***Measure M01 – templates for unified control forms***

Mr. **Hartl** presented the draft proposals for three different forms that are being collected by border control authorities: arrival/departure reports, crew lists and passenger lists. The draft versions were sent out in December; so far no comments were received. Mr. Hartl again asked the participants to check the forms regarding their compliance with national requirements. Mr. Hartl also asked for a first feedback from all country representatives.

Mr. **Gergely Mező** (RSOE - National Association of Radio Distress-Signalling and Info-communications, Hungary) agreed that the IMO FAL form are a good basis for a harmonised control form. In the course of the DARIF project the working group “information exchange” came to the same conclusion.

Mr. **Mario Sattler** (viadonau) stressed it would be important to take into account existing instruments like the EU Hull Database to facilitate an efficient data collection (in terms of data fields, data content, data types, etc).

Mr. **Günter Wendt** (Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior) welcomes the proposed harmonisation process. Given the fact that the IMO FAL forms are in line with the Schengen code, they can easily be used by Austrian authorities.

Ms. **Teodora Atanasova** (Regional Directorate Border Police Ruse) explained that Bulgaria is already using an adapted version of the IMO forms in the frame of a digital solution (Single Window), which is closely interlinked with BULRIS.

Mr. **Sbarcea** reported that Romanian authorities are already using the proposed forms. Regarding Mr. Sattlers comment he agreed that the forms need to be cross-checked with the EU Hull Database.

Ms. **Ganna Tivishova** (State Border Guard Service of Ukraine) also found the proposal to be a first step towards harmonisation. She will forward the proposal to her Ministry of Interior to get detailed feedback.

Mr. **Reinhard Vorderwinkler** (Pro Danube International) supported the harmonisation of control forms. The harmonised forms are a first and necessary step to harmonise the gathered data and the

content of the control forms. At a later stage, data exchange and data collection needs to be harmonised. Skippers would welcome the opportunity to deliver their data electronically

Mr. **Hartl** explained that all existing control forms used in Danube riparian states were analysed to produce the draft version of the harmonised form.

It was agreed that all national representatives will cross-check the contents of the proposed form with national requirements in order to reach an agreement on a technical level as soon as possible. It was also agreed that the drafted forms will be distributed to the working group members together with these minutes.

In a next step, PA1a and PA11 will prepare an agreement on the administrative level and report to the respective Steering Groups to achieve endorsement of the unified form.

#### ***Measures M05 & M14 – update practical manual on border controls Measure M06 – monitoring opening hours***

Mr. **Ulf Meinel** (viadonau) presented the updated version of the manual on border controls and the monitoring results on opening hours of the control authorities. He pointed out deviations between the opening hours reported by control authorities and the opening hours reported by the shipping sector.

Ms. **Atanasova** checked the opening hours at a national level again and confirmed the previously communicated opening hours. Given the fact that control authorities and shipping crews seem to have different perceptions of these issues, PA1a will once again have detailed discussions with both sides to clarify the situation.

Mr. **Sbarcea** explained that 24/7 service is available to those skippers who register 24h in advance. Mr. **Hartl** will forward the information to shipping companies to clarify the circumstances in this case.

## **4. Project presentation: DANTE - Improving Administrative Procedures and Processes for Danube navigation**

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**Speaker:** Mr. Robert RAFAEL (Pro Danube International)

Mr. **Robert Rafael** presented the background and the objectives of the DANTE project. Mr. Rafael stressed that the work conducted in the course of the project would take into account the results of the PA1a & PA11 joint working group and creates synergies that both the working group and the project consortium can benefit from. Pro Danube International will continue to provide further input from the side of the shipping sector to PA1a.

## **5. Discussion between border control authorities and representatives of the inland waterway transport sector**

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**Moderator:** Mr. Simon HARTL (PA1a/viadonau)

Opening the discussion, Mr. **Hartl** and Mr. **Griepe** reminded the participants not to focus on the layout and format of the draft form but its primary aim: to harmonise the collected data along the Danube (content-based approach).

Mr. **Mező** reported that the electronically processed crew and passenger lists used in Hungary are an implementation fully compliant with current RIS standards and the IMO FAL Convention.

Mr. **Griepe** stated that Germany uses the Schengen code for the crew and passenger lists. From his point of view the adaption of the IMO form is a reasonable solution.

Mr. **Sbarcea** explained again that the Romanian Ministry of Transport has already adapted the IMO form and are using maritime single window. Control authorities for inland navigation are already processing some of this data. To change the control forms already in use, Romania would wait for the approval of all other riparian states.

Mr. Sbarcea further proposed a deadline of 3 months for final feedback on the draft control form from the involved national authorities in the Danube region.

Mr. **Rafael** stated that the term and the wording connected to the IMO FAL form causes irritation in the inland waterway industry. Not all Danube riparian states are part of the IMO FAL Convention, therefore the proposed term “Danube Navigation Standard Forms (DAVID)” seems much more suitable. The RIS standards which will be implemented in every country should be used as basis for the content of the data fields, although implementation of the RIS standards is far from completed.

Mr. **Griepe** raised the possibility of exchanging the results of nautical controls via a joint international database. By international exchange of data multiple controls of the same vessel could be avoided, which would be a win-win situation for both vessel operators and control authorities. There is already a pilot in operation between DE and AT for the exchange of such data, using a colour code. Since only ship related data is saved and the consent of the ship operator on the data exchange is requested, there should be no conflict with data security. Nevertheless, Mr. Griepe also pointed out that this solution would only work for nautical controls and not for border controls.

Mr. **Vorderwinkler** agreed that the exchange of basic data could be helpful, With regard to border controls, Mr. Vorderwinkler further pointed out the need to concentrate on the exchange of data, not the exchange of forms. In a first step, the control authorities need to agree on a data set, which allows all riparian states to extract the information needed on a national level. He urged the participants not to focus on the format of the proposed forms but on the content of the draft versions.

## 6. Agreement on conclusions and next steps

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**Speaker:** Mr. Simon HARTL (PA1a/viadonau)

Mr. Hartl concluded the working group meeting by summarising the next steps. The time schedule for the coming months was agreed (see attached slides). The working group members will provide feedback on the control forms until August 2017. The next PA1a & PA11 working group meeting is foreseen to take place in Budapest, probably in the last week of October. The details will be clarified in the upcoming weeks.

**To increase the effectiveness of the working group activities and to ensure a full coverage of the whole Danube corridor, it is of utmost importance that representatives from the Slovak, Croatian and Serbian border police will participate in the next working group meeting. PA1a and PA11 will approach the mentioned riparian states in the next weeks to ask for their commitment to the joint initiative.**

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