WRITTEN QUESTION E-3521/02
by Carlos Ripoll y Martínez de Bedoya (PPE-DE) to the Commission
(10 December 2002)

Subject: Port inspections

On 14 November it was stated on the Gibraltar Government’s web page (www.gibraltar.gov.uk) that the MV Prestige, wrecked off the Galician coast on 13 November, entered Gibraltarian waters only once in the last four years, simply to refuel (bunkering), without coming into harbour.

This statement indicates that when a vessel is bunkering in those waters from a tank-ship operating as a fixed port installation, the Gibraltarian authorities do not consider themselves obliged to carry out the inspections provided for under international and Community legislation (Port State Control).

Does the Commission agree with this interpretation?

Does the Commission consider that bunkering is in fact a port activity and therefore subject to all obligations stemming from the legislation governing such activities?

Answer given by Mrs de Palacio on behalf of the Commission
(3 February 2003)

It is the Commission’s opinion that it would be wrong to consider that refuelling operations may not give rise to inspections pursuant to Community legislation on port State control as, in accordance with Article 3 of Council Directive 95/21/EC(1), port State control obligations apply to any ship and its crew calling at a port of a Member State or at an off-shore installation or anchored off such a port or such an installation.

With regard to oil bunkering activities in Gibraltar, the Honourable Member is asked to refer to the Commission’s answer to Oral Question No H-0800/02 by Mr García Margallo y Marfil at the December 2002 plenary session of the Parliament.


WRITTEN QUESTION E-3567/02
by Bart Staes (Verts/ALE) and Jan Dhaene (Verts/ALE) to the Commission
(12 December 2002)

Subject: Applications for ‘.eu’ domain names

Regulation (EC) No 733/2002(2) refers to the introduction of an ‘.eu’ top level domain. It states that the introduction of such a domain should increase choice and competition and promote the internal market. Article 4(2)(b) mentions the various parties who may apply for and register domain names. Article 5(2) rightly provides that, within three months of publication, Member States may notify a list of domain names with regard, for example, to geopolitical concepts. Subsequently, from 2003, a process of delegated registration is to begin via ICANN, according to the information note of November 2002 on the ‘.eu’ top level domain. In the course of 2003, the various organisations, businesses and natural persons may register for a domain name. However, inquiries among a limited sample of the population suggest that not enough information is reaching the public as yet. Moreover, it has become apparent that the various internet providers have not yet arrived at a uniform price for an ‘.eu’ domain name.

Can the Commission confirm the above and indicate how it intends to promote the dissemination of information to the public?

For non-governmental purposes, is the Commission in possession of an exact, predetermined schedule and procedure for applications for ‘.eu’ domain names?

Does the Commission distinguish among applications for ‘.eu’ domain names on the basis of whether the applicant is profit-making or non-profit-making?

If so:

- What does the Commission consider an equitable price for an application for an ‘.eu’ domain name by an organisation which is profit-making and by one which is not?
- Are not public-spirited organisations such as European umbrella organisations for students, human rights organisations and European citizens’ initiatives eligible for a free domain name?

If not:

- How will the Commission give non-profit-making organisations a fair chance of applying?


**Answer given by Mr Liikanen on behalf of the Commission**

*(3 March 2003)*

As underlined by the Honourable Members, the .eu Top Level Domain (TLD) should become operational in the course of 2003.

**Timetable for the availability of .eu domain names**

Further measures of implementation are required before the Registry effectively becomes operational. The remaining procedural steps are outlined in the .eu webpage on the Information Society website (1) and involve notably the designation of the .eu TLD Registry and the conclusion of a contract between the Registry and the Commission, the delegation of the .eu TLD to the Registry and the adoption of public policy rules.

Considering the implementation measures still required and given the need to adopt public policy rules in accordance with the procedure provided in Regulation (EC) No 733/2002 of the Parliament and of the Council of 22 April 2002 on the implementation of the .eu Top Level Domain and after consultation of the Registry, a precise timetable for the availability of domain names in the .eu TLD cannot be provided at this stage.

**Information about the .eu Top Level Domain**

Information about the .eu Top Level Domain is already available from various sources which include notably the Commission website (1), press releases and the Official Journal (publication of the Regulation (EC) No 733/2002 and the Call for Expressions of Interest for the selection of the .eu TLD Registry) (1). A large part of this information is also made available through search engines. Answers to questions are directed through information services such as the ‘info-desk’ available on the Europa website (1) or Euro Info Centers.

Dissemination of information about the .eu TLD shall, in addition, be a task to be undertaken by the .eu TLD Registry. The Regulation itself imposes a consultation of the interested parties by the Registry on the initial registration policy. Recital 21 of the Regulation clarifies that interested parties involve undertakings,
organisations and natural persons in addition to public authorities. As part of the Call for Expressions of Interest for the selection of the .eu TLD Registry, applicants were requested to provide information about the measures envisaged to promote effectively the .eu TLD.

Difference between requests of .eu domain names on the basis of non-profit or for-profit organisations

The Registry will be entrusted with the organisation, the administration and the management of the .eu TLD. The Regulation provides that the Registry shall impose fees directly related to costs incurred and the Commission is reserving the means to control the management of the .eu TLD, including its pricing policy.


WRITTEN QUESTION E-3595/02
by Camilo Nogueira Román (Verts/ALE) to the Commission
(13 December 2002)

Subject: Measures to stop the sunken remains of the 'Prestige' tanker spilling more fuel oil

What measures are being taken to stop the sunken remains of the 'Prestige' tanker spilling more fuel oil, so as to ensure the protection and preservation of the coastline in Galicia and elsewhere in Europe from the consequences of further spills?

Answer given by Mrs Wallström on behalf of the Commission
(20 February 2003)

The Commission fully shares the preoccupation expressed by the Honourable Member regarding the problem caused by the oil in the wreck of the Prestige which represents a threat not only for the coast of Galicia, but more widely for the marine and coastal environment of France, Spain and Portugal.

Immediately after the accident of the Prestige, the Commission has been in close contact with the Spanish authorities, in order to make the expertise and combating equipment of other Member States available.

More particularly, concerning the problem of the wreck of the Prestige, the Commission has proposed the participation of European experts to the Scientific Committee that has been established by the Spanish authorities in order to assess issues relating to the wreck.

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3596/02
by Camilo Nogueira Román (Verts/ALE) to the Commission
(13 December 2002)

Subject: Clean-up vessels and 'Prestige'-type disasters

When the 'Prestige' disaster hit the Galician coast, the Spanish state was unable to supply a single clean-up vessel capable of dealing with fuel oil. The vessels which arrived later from France, the Netherlands, Germany, the UK and Belgium could not start operations for several days, as they were not equipped to confront waves over 2.5 metres high. How was this lack of facilities allowed to arise? What measures will