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COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

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COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

Accompanying document to the

Proposal for a

COUNCIL DECISION

on a Critical Infrastructure Warning Information Network (CIWIN)

SUMMARY OF THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

{COM(2008) 676 final}
{SEC(2008) 2701}

On 6 June 2008, the Impact Assessment Board of the European Commission delivered an opinion regarding a preliminary version of this Impact Assessment report. In brief, it said that the report is written in a clear language, accessible to a non-specialist and provides a detailed analysis of the possible design of the system. As regards the main recommendations, it said that the text should be improved by describing better the existing systems for alerting Member States and should present the benefits of the CIWIN more clearly.

The Board further stated that:

- The baseline scenario should be developed and the value added of the CIWIN initiative highlighted.
- The document should analyse the uptake of this initiative by the Member States.

1. THE CIWIN INITIATIVE

The Critical Infrastructure Warning Information Network (CIWIN) initiative is part of the European Programme for Critical Infrastructure Protection (EPCIP), and is concerned specifically with the information-sharing process between EU Member States and an information technology system to support this process. The establishment of CIWIN was put forward in the Communication on the EPCIP (COM (2006) 786 final), which set out the horizontal framework for the protection of critical infrastructures in the EU, comprising measures to facilitate the implementation of EPCIP, including CIWIN.

The creation of CIWIN has already been endorsed in the Council conclusions on “Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Terrorist Attacks” and the “EU Solidarity Programme on the Consequences of Terrorist Threats and Attacks” adopted in December 2004.¹

The main problems in the present situation are:

- the need for a more detailed assessment of how to protect EU critical infrastructure;
- the need for improved co-operation and exchange of information on critical infrastructures between EU Member States;
- duplication of activities;
- insufficient trust and willingness of stakeholders to exchange sensitive information.

2. OBJECTIVES

The concrete issue which requires action at EU level is to facilitate the exchange of information between Member States’ authorities (e.g. on best practices), and enable them to use the rapid alert system on critical infrastructure protection (CIP).

The objective of CIWIN is to help improve CIP in the EU and facilitate co-ordination and co-operation for information on CIP at EU level.

¹ 14894/04

The CIWIN operational objectives are:

- to provide an IT tool that will help those Member States that wish to co-operate to do so;
- to offer an efficient and quick alternative to often time-consuming methods of searching for information, i.e. create a type of “one-stop-system” for all relevant information on critical infrastructures in the EU;
- to ensure that shared information is secure;
- to enable Member States to communicate directly and upload whatever information they deem relevant.

Since some of the Member States would prefer to use only some of the functionalities that CIWIN offers, one of the main operational objectives is to identify a solution that would allow Member States an opt-in/opt-out possibility on certain aspects of the system.

3. POLICY OPTIONS

The Impact Assessment proposes five main policy options.

No policy option

Under this option no horizontal action would be taken at European level and the Member States would be left to address the issue individually.

CIWIN as an upgrade of existing Rapid Alert Systems (RAS)

Under this option CIWIN would represent an upgrade, integrating the existing RAS into a cross-sectoral RAS on critical infrastructure, available to a broader spectrum of stakeholders than just emergency services. However, this option would not allow the exchange of generic information and best practices.

CIWIN as an open platform for the (unsecured) exchange of CIP related information

Under this option an IT tool would be established and opened to the general public. This would undoubtedly help to raise awareness on CIP in Europe and increase direct information exchange among the stakeholders.

CIWIN as a secure voluntary/opt-in multi-level communication/alert system composed of two distinct functions: a rapid alert system and an electronic forum for the exchange of CIP ideas and best practices

Under this option, CIWIN would be established as an IT tool equipped to contain and transmit sensitive information, classified up to the level of UE RESTREINT. The system would have two main functions: (1) a secure forum for the exchange of information, with strong emphasis on the exchange of best practices, dialogue and the building of trust at EU level; (2) a rapid alert system for critical infrastructure. Member States would be free to use the entire system, to choose between the functions offered, or not to use the system at all.

CIWIN as a compulsory multi-level communication/alert system with two distinct functions: a rapid alert system and an electronic forum for the exchange of CIP ideas and best practices

Under this option, CIWIN would be a compulsory system, where each Member State would be obliged to upload and update the relevant information regularly.

4. BENEFITS AND DRAWBACKS OF THE POLICY OPTIONS

Policy options	Advantages	Drawbacks
Option 1: no policy change	No additional legislative proposal; Member States remain completely free to address CIP issues as they see fit	The dialogue and information sharing between Member States would remain the same. There would be no coherent, secure and efficient IT system for exchanging CIP information in Europe. No impact on improving EU security. No assurances that all relevant stakeholders in Europe have access to relevant CIP information.
Option 2: upgrade of existing RAS	A cross-sectoral RAS would be established.	High cost of ensuring the inter-operability of existing RAS. The option would not allow the exchange of information and best practices. A new platform for the exchange of information would have to be established anyway.
Option 3: open platform for the (unsecured) exchange of information	Wide access to CIP information. The private sector would be able to contribute to the platform directly. While the information included in the system is already publicly available, CIWIN would offer efficient, co-ordinated and easy access to it.	The information included in the system will be limited to non classified information only. As such information is already available, the added value of such option is limited. No possibilities to exchange alerts.
Option 4: secure and opt-in	The system would offer a	The stakeholders from the

multi-level system	secure environment for the exchange of information and contribute significantly to building trust among stakeholders. The information included will go beyond what is already publicly available. The system would enable alerts to be exchanged. CIWIN would offer an efficient, easy to use IT system. CIWIN would contribute to increasing security in the EU. CIWIN would help overcoming the fragmentation of CIP research efforts in through better co-ordination and co-operation.	private sector would not have direct access to CIWIN. The success of the system will depend on the Member States' willingness to use it.
Option 5: secure and compulsory multi-level system	All Member States would participate in the system. The information included will go beyond what is already publicly available. The system would enable alerts to be exchanged. CIWIN would offer an efficient, easy to use IT system. CIWIN would contribute to increasing security in the EU. CIWIN would help overcoming the fragmentation of CIP research efforts in through better co-ordination and co-operation.	Member States would not support the proposal. A system of obligations might not contribute to trust building and would backfire. The system might run counter to the principle of proportionality.

5. PREFERRED OPTION

After analysing the five options, Option 4 — CIWIN as a secure voluntary/opt-in multi-level communication/alert system composed of two distinct functions: a rapid alert system and an electronic forum for the exchange of CIP ideas and best practices — clearly showed the most advantageous ratio between benefits and drawbacks.

It has to be stressed that CIWIN will not revolutionise EU security, and needs to be regarded as only one of many steps towards implementing the EPCIP. CIWIN is an IT tool designed to facilitate communication around CIP topics and provides such functions as news bulletin boards, discussion groups, collaborative environments, document and workflow management features that are part of everyday internet or corporate intranet experience. Work on the CIWIN will consider a large number of features, while ensuring that their existence and use can be suppressed in situations where they are not seen to add any value or where they conflict with established practices.