Pan European Networks of practitioners and other actors in the field of security

Practitioners are invited to associate in 4 different categories of networks:

a. Practitioners (end-users) **in the same discipline and from across Europe** (some examples: firefighters; police and intelligence bodies; border guards, coast guards, and custom authorities; explosive specialists; forensic laboratories; medical emergency teams; think-tanks on security; etc.) can get together to: 1) monitor research and innovation projects with a view to recommending the uptake or the industrialisation of results, 2) express common requirements as regards innovations that could fill in capability and other gaps and improve their performance in the future, and 3) indicate priorities as regards domains requiring more standardization;

b. Practitioners (end-users) **from different disciplines** and concerned with current or future security or disaster risk and crisis management issues **in a particular geographical area** can get together to: 1) monitor research and innovation projects with a view to recommending the uptake or the industrialisation of results, 2) express common requirements as regards innovations that could fill in capability and other gaps and improve their performance in the future, and 3) indicate priorities as regards common capabilities, or interfaces among capabilities, requiring more standardization.

Geographical priorities include:

- the Mediterranean region (including the Black Sea): to enable an EU joint network concept for border protection and other security- and disaster-related tasks, so that the entities in the network share information, collaborate better, and establish joint border surveillance scenario. The network should
provide with human infrastructure organizing operations more efficiently and enable the coordinated use of interconnected information systems and national infrastructure in the whole region;

- the Arctic and North Atlantic region: to prepare to cope as a network with the security threats that will result from the opening of the Northern passages, which are very important for the development of the region, but from which seaborne disasters are likely to arise. The current lack of infrastructure makes dealing with catastrophic incidents quite a challenge. The region needs to prepare, taking into account geographical specificities (climate-related, demographic, topologic, and in relation with the functioning of space-based systems);

- the Danube river basin: to enable an EU joint network concept for disaster resilience, so that the countries of the region, which faces natural disasters, particularly flooding in a repetitive manner, can benefit at most from the EU civil protection mechanism;

- the Baltic region: to enable innovative border control cooperation e.g. with respect to smuggling and other security related issues, to the trafficking in human beings, to maritime surveillance, and to macro-regional risk scenarios and gaps identification; to support the Baltic Sea Maritime Functionalities flagship initiative

These networks should gather the largest number of Member States or Associated Countries.

c. Entities from around Europe that manage demonstration and testing sites, training facilities, including simulators or serious gaming platforms in the area of CBRN and for first responders or civil protection practitioners, can get together to: 1) establish and maintain a roster of capabilities and facilities, and 2) organize to share expertise, and 3) plan to pool and share resources with a view to optimize investments.

Opinions expressed and reported by the networks of practitioners should be checked against what can be reasonably expected, and according to which timetable, from providers of innovative solutions.

d. In addition, support will be given in 2017 to a consortium of formally nominated NCPs in the area of security research. The activities will be tailored according to the nature of the area, and the priorities of the NCPs concerned. The network should focus on issues specific to the "Secure societies ..." challenge and follow up on the work of SEREN 3.[http://cordis.europa.eu/project/rcn/194868_en.html]

Indicative budget: The Commission considers that proposals requesting a contribution from the EU of about € 3.5 million per action for a duration of 5 years (recommended duration) for Parts a), b) and c); about € 2 million per action for a duration of 3 years (recommended duration) for Part d) would allow for this topic to be addressed appropriately. Nonetheless this does not preclude submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.
In Europe, practitioners interested in the uptake of security research and innovation (e.g. firefighters, police and intelligence communities, border guards, customs authorities, explosive specialists, forensic laboratories, medical emergency teams, etc.) are dedicated to performing their duty and to focusing on their operation. In general, practitioners’ organisations have little means to free workforces from daily operations, and to dedicate time and resources to monitor innovation and research that could be useful to them. They have little opportunities to interact with academia or with industry on such issues. All stakeholders – public services, industry, academia – including those who participate in the Security Advisory Group, recognize it as an issue.

- Common understanding of innovation potential, more widely accepted understanding, expression of common innovation and standardization needs among practitioners in the same discipline.
- More articulated and coordinated uptake of innovative solutions among practitioners from different disciplines who are often called to act together to face major crisis.
- More efficient use of investments made across Europe in demonstration, testing, and training facilities for first responders.
- Synergies with already established European, national and sub-national networks of practitioners, even if these networks are for the time being only dedicated to aspects of practitioners’ work unrelated to research and innovation (in general, to the coordination of their operations).
- An improved and professionalised NCP service, consistent across Europe, thereby helping simplify access to Horizon 2020 calls, lowering the entry barriers for newcomers, and raising the average quality of proposals submitted.

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