



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 26 October 2001**

**13307/01**

**LIMITE**

**CIVCOM 35  
PESC 431  
RELEX 135  
JAI 123  
PROCIV 56**

**NOTE**

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from : Presidency

to : Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management

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Subject : Standardisation and Interoperability

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**Aim** :To enhance the EU operational effectiveness and to improve efficiency in the use of available resources.

To that end, achieve and maintain the most effective level of standardisation in the fields of operations, administration and material.

This document should be considered as a **living document** to be improved over time, as experience is gained.

**Levels of standardisation.**

These are in ascending order :

- **Compatibility** : The capability of 2 or more items or components of equipment or material to assist or function in the same system or environment without mutual interference.
- **interoperability** = the ability of systems, units or forces to provide services to and accept services from other systems, units or forces and to use the services so exchanged to enable them to operate effectively together.

- **interchangeability** : a condition which exists when 2 or more items possess such functional and physical characteristics as to be equivalent in performance and durability, and are capable of being exchanged one or the other without alteration of the items themselves, or of adjoining items, except for adjustment and without selection for fit and performance.
- **Commonality** : a state achieved when groups of individuals, organisations or nations use common doctrine procedures or equipment.

### **Fields of standardisation**

Standards can be classified into one of three main areas, although some standards may apply to more than one area.

- **Operational standards** :

Those standards which affect future and/or current practice procedures or formats. They may apply among other things to such matters or concepts, doctrine, tactics, techniques, procedures, logistics, training, organisations, terminology, reports, forms, maps and charts.

- **Material standards**

Affect the characteristics of future and/or current material to include telecommunications, data processing and distribution. Material includes complete systems, including command, control and communications systems, weapons systems, sub-systems, assemblies, components, spare parts and materials and consumables (including ammunition, fuel supplies, stores and ammunition spares).

- **Administrative standards.**

Primarily concern terminology, which applies to both the "operational" and "material" fields.

### **Objective**

Compatibility is the minimum level of standardisation required.

The EU should strive for the standardisation level of interoperability, or higher if required, as this will better enhance its operational effectiveness.

It is understood that the required degree of standardisation may vary according to the specific capability that is envisaged.

In that respect, and for illustrative purpose, NATO defines the aim of NATO standardisation as follows : *"to achieve interoperable multinational forces, commonality of doctrine and procedures, interoperability of communication and information systems (CIS) and or relevant Alliance equipment, and interchangeability of combat supplies are required. Improvements in standardisation should be perceived as an integral part of defence planning"*

### **Standardisation process**

- Identifying standardisation requirements/deficiencies.

Standardisation requirements are derived from either a top-down or bottom-up approach.

They identify the capability to be achieved and the required level of standardisation.

- Formulating and agreeing priority standardisation objectives. Based on the agreed requirements, priority standardisation needs are identified and the standardisation objectives are formulated.

### **Coordination of effort**

Duplication of effort is to be minimised through consultation, liaison and information exchange with MS, the relevant international and regional organisations, and in particular the UN and the OSCE.

### **Glossary** (to be included as an annex at a later date)

#### *Other related items (non exhaustive list):*

*Relationship with Third States*

*Doctrine - Procedures*

*Training (=>common “language, s, techniques, tactics and procedures, ...)*

*Leading Nation – Partnership – Centrally supplied equipment/material (~Shopping list) - Sharing*

*Personnel – Disciplinary procedures*

*Degrees of standardisation (supra)*

*The systems/equipment/means must be: easy, not expensive, rapidly deployable*

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