

OPERATIONS DIVISION
Joint Operations Unit
SEA BORDERS SECTOR

Operational Plan (Main part)

EPN CONCEPT
Joint Operation EPN Triton 2014
2014/SBS/09

Prepared by

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Operational Plan has been agreed with the authorities of the host Member State¹, in consultation with the authorities of the home Member States participating in the joint operation coordinated by Frontex. It covers all necessary elements for a proper and timely organization of the joint operation coordinated by Frontex.

The Operational Plan is composed of the Main part, Annexes and Handbook to the Operational Plan. The Main part, its Annexes and the Handbook are an integral part of the Operational Plan, having the same importance and legal binding character.

The Main part and Annexes of the Operational Plan contain detailed and specific information related to the particular joint operation, while Handbook to the Operational Plan encloses operational information applicable to all joint maritime operations. Annexes and Handbook complement the Main part of the Operational Plan by providing complete and comprehensive description of the implementation of the joint operation.

The Main part and Annexes of Operational Plan are marked as "Limited" without prejudice to the public right of access to documents as laid down in Regulation (EC) 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001, regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents, while the Handbook to the Operational Plan has no classification mark indicated.

Operational Plan shall only be made available to the authorities referred in each MS as "Law Enforcement". This document shall be made available to other interested parties only on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with European and national rules on the protection of sensitive/classified information. Such dissemination of this document shall be done only on a case-by-case basis.

This Operational Plan may be revised at any time in order to correspond with the new operational developments. In accordance with Article 3a (2) of Frontex Regulation, any amendments to or adaptations of the Operational Plan require the agreement of the Frontex Executive Director and the host MS. A copy of the amended Operational Plan shall be immediately distributed by Frontex to the participating MS via FOSS.

The provisions laid down in this Operational Plan shall be without prejudice to the rights, obligations and responsibility of the involved Member States arising from International and EU law, as well as to the national positions and interests in relation to any possible international dispute.

The Legal framework of Frontex, Fundamental rights in Frontex coordinated activities and Code of conduct can be found in Handbook.

2. DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION

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¹ For the purposes of the present document, the term "Member State" includes also the States participating in the relevant development of the Schengen acquis in the meaning of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and its Protocol (No 19) on the Schengen acquis integrated into the framework of the European Union.

[Redacted]

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²These are fatalities based on bodies, which were found and that were reported in the official reporting system for Frontex Joint Operations (JORA).

³<http://www.iom.int/cms/en/sites/iom/home/news-and-views/press-briefing-notes/pbn-2014b/pbn-l1sting/iom-investigates-reports-of-deaths.html>

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The thorough assessment of the situation can be found in the Annex 1.

3. OPERATIONAL AIM AND OBJECTIVES

3.1. Operational aim

To implement coordinated operational activities at the external sea borders of the Central Mediterranean region in order to control irregular migration flows towards the territory of the MS of the EU and to tackle cross border crime.

The operational aims will be implemented in full compliance with the relevant EU and international law, the respect for fundamental rights in particular the access to international protection and the compliance with the principle of non-refoulement and taking into account the recommendations of the Frontex Consultative Forum.

3.2. Operational objectives

- Enhance border security
- Enhance efficiency of border security

⁴ Due to the heavy workload of the Italian authorities processing the migrants, several incidents are still pending validation, therefore the indicated figures are subject to change.

⁵ Where known. At the time of writing this assessment the nationality of about 26.4% of migrants apprehended is still unknown.

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- Enhance operational cooperation
- Enhance exchange of information
- Enhance efficiency of the exchange of information
- Identify possible risks and threats
- Establish and exchange best practices
- Support establishment of permanent structures
- Support provision of trainings

The main objectives of joint operation will be achieved by combining different type of operational activities, particularly: border surveillance and debriefing activities.

The detailed information regarding operational objectives and indicators is provided in Annex 2.

4. OPERATIONAL CONCEPT

The activities during the operation include deployment of technical and human resources in order to:

- Provide support to Italian Authorities in border surveillance activities at sea borders;
- Contribute to search and rescue in order to render assistance to persons found in distress;
- Support debriefing activities by deploying Joint Debriefing Teams in order to collect information for risk analysis purposes;
- Support identification procedures of the Host MS by deploying Screening Experts;
- Share experiences and exchange expertise as well as to constantly update knowledge on the irregular migration trends in order to adopt countermeasures to tackle the phenomena;
- Collect and assess information in order to improve the detection of human smuggling and trafficking in human beings facilitation by individuals and/or criminal networks and assist wherever possible identification and detention of facilitators;
- Provide with a clear and updated situational picture concerning the operational areas, modus operandi, main trends and possible rapid changes in this respect;
- Carry out daily and ad-hoc exchange of information between Frontex and all operational actors and structures involved;
- Promote the inter-agency cooperation and cooperation with other international and EU bodies and Third Countries.

In case there are any other maritime operational activities related to the irregular migration phenomena implemented in the Central Mediterranean region outside the framework of JO EPN Triton 2014, the proper cooperation, timely and smooth exchange of information has to be ensured by the Host MS and Frontex with the deployment of Liaison Officers as well as other necessary actions implemented.

The detailed operational concept and Guidelines for debriefing activities are defined in Handbook.

5. IMPLEMENTATION

5.1. Period of implementation⁶

Commencement	1 November 2014	00:00 (local time)
Termination		

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⁶ Foreseeable duration of the joint operation as indicated in the Article 3a (1) (b)- of the Frontex Regulation.

5.5. Operational briefings / debriefings

All participants taking part in joint operation will receive the Operational briefing and debriefing delivered by representatives of Frontex and national authorities of host MS.

The detailed information regarding operational areas, initial plan of deployed resources and operational briefing and debriefing is provided in Annexes 4-6.

The standard plan of operational briefing and debriefing is available in Handbook.

6. COOPERATION WITH THIRD COUNTRIES, OTHER UNION AGENCIES AND BODIES OR INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

6.1. Cooperation with third countries

In the framework of the existing working arrangements between Frontex and the competent authorities of Third Countries and pursuant to Article 14(6) of the Frontex Regulation, Frontex may invite border guard/police officers to be deployed as observers in ICC Rome upon agreement of the Italian authorities.

The observers will receive appropriate operational briefing and debriefing delivered by Frontex.

The more detailed information regarding the participation and tasks of Third Country Observers in joint operation is defined in Annex 7.

6.2. Cooperation with other Union agencies and bodies or international organizations

During the joint operation the cooperation with EASO, EFCA, EMSA, EUROPOL, FRA, UNHCR, IOM and EEAS/CSDP Mission "EUBAM LYB" will be established.

More detailed information about cooperation with other Union agencies and bodies or international organizations within maritime domain is provided in Annex 8.

With the aim to improve the effectiveness of cooperation, Host MS may organize operational meetings with the Third countries, Frontex representatives and with the possible participation of the indicated Union agencies and bodies.

7. COORDINATION STRUCTURE

7.1. Partnership

Frontex is the EU coordinator, initiating, promoting and facilitating the EU MS synchronized efforts to control the external borders.

The Ministry of Interior, as National authority in charge for the coordination of the Italian Polizia di Stato, Guardia di Finanza, Guardia Costiera, Arma dei Carabinieri e Marina Militare, is the direct partner of Frontex and responsible for all border related activities within the joint operation EPN Triton 2014. The mentioned national law enforcement authorities are directly responsible for their operational implementation within the mentioned coordination.

The home MS will support the achievement of operational objectives and implementation of activities by deploying their resources to the defined locations in particular periods of time.

7.2. Main operational structures / actors and their tasks

7.2.1. Member States

- International Coordination Centre (ICC) - ICC Rome
- ICC Coordinator - Officer of Italian Guardia di Finanza (GdF)
- Joint Coordinating Board (JCB) - ICC Coordinator, IO, NO, FOC, etc
- National Official (NO) - Officers of home MS deploying maritime and aerial assets
- Intelligence Officer (IO) - Officer of Italian Polizia di Stato (PdS)
- Guest officers and Officers of the host MS
- Commanding Officer (CO) - Commander of assets
- JDT Team leaders - Officers of PdS
- Cultural Mediators
- Local Coordination Centre (LCC) - LCCs Lampedusa, Messina and Taranto
- LCC Coordinator - Officer of Italian Guardia di Finanza (GdF)
- Guardia Costiera Liaison Officer (LO) - Officer of Italian Guardia Costiera (GC)
- Navy Liaison Officer (LO) - Officer of Italian Navy (Marina Militare)
- Liaison Officer for Technical Equipment (LO/TE) - Officer of Italian Guardia di Finanza (GdF)
- Local staff of the host MS

7.2.2. Frontex

- Operational Manager (OM) and Operational Team (OT)
- Frontex Coordinating Officer (FCO)
- Frontex Operational Coordinator (FOC)
- Frontex Support Officer (FSO)
- Operational Analyst (OA)
- Special Adviser for Debriefing Activities
- Frontex Situation Centre (FSC)
 - Senior Duty Officer (SDO)
 - Frontex Support Officer (FSO FSC)
 - FOSS Service Managers
 - JORA Service Managers
- Frontex Liaison Office (Piraeus) (FLO)
- Training Unit (TRU)
- Pooled Resources Unit (PRU)
- Seconded Guest Officers
- Frontex Representative (FRN) at IT Navy - The Operational Team can be assisted by a FRN deployed at the Italian Navy Command Centre, wherefrom the most efficient support can be accomplished, to ensure the efficient coordination between JO EPN Triton 2014 and Italian Navy national activities by supporting the FOC, the deployed resources and promoting further developments.

The tasks and roles of operational structures / actors are defined in Handbook.

Description of the tasks and specific instructions to guest officers and other participants (Rules of engagement) are defined in Annex 3.

8. COMMAND, CONTROL, COMMUNICATION AND REPORTING

8.1. Command and control

Operational command of aerial and maritime assets of the participating MS remains with the respective MS, while the coordination of the assets is in the hands of the ICC after consultation with the National Officials (NO).

In case of requested support from a competent Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC) during a SAR event, the coordination of the participating unit is transferred from the ICC to the RCC.

NOs are under the command and control of the respective home MS.

Commanding Officers (CO) are the Commanders of assets according to their national legislation.

Command and control of GO, Cultural Mediators and Observers from Third countries remain with the competent national authority of the host MS.

SGO perform their tasks under the instructions from the border guards of the host MS, while their command and control is exercised by Frontex.

GO and SGO under FSO profile perform their tasks under the instructions and command and control of Frontex.

The general command and control provisions are defined in Handbook.

Command and control scheme is defined in Annex 9.

Names of the host MS border guards and police responsible for cooperating with the teams, in particular those of the border guards/police who are in command of the teams during the period of deployment, and the place of the teams in the chain of command are included in Annex 11.

8.2. Operational communication

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

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Detailed information about communication and FOSS is provided in Handbook.

Contact details of participants can be found in Annex 11.

8.3. Communication with Press

Frontex is strongly committed to the principle of transparency, therefore, as a general rule; media should be granted access to operational areas. However, guest officers are allowed to talk to the media only within the limits set by specific guidelines for the participating officers.

A network of press offices of all involved authorities will be established and all contact details shall be sent to the press@frontex.europa.eu address. A compiled list will be distributed to all parties involved.

The communication strategy on the Border Control Operational Actions on the territory of the Italian Republic is common for Frontex and the host MS.

Frontex and Italy shall nominate Dedicated Press Officers (DPO) who will be entirely responsible for coordination of all matters related to interview requests, press visits to the operational area and any other

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press-related matter related to JO EPN Triton 2014 in general, as well as on the ground. They will work closely with the ICC Coordinators. Press visits to the JO EPN Triton 2014 will be organised by Frontex and, depending on the area of interest, by the Italian authorities accordingly. Frontex Information and Transparency Unit may arrange, upon agreement with the ICC, the deployment of a guest officer (GO) with the profile of field press officer coordinator.

Frontex communication policy, rules and guidelines for handling media requests are included in Handbook.

The contact details of Frontex press office members (Spokesperson and Press Officer) and dedicated press officers of national authority of the host country are indicated in Annex 11.

8.4. Reporting

The examples of templates of all reports are provided in Handbook. The templates in Word format are stored on FOSS.

8.4.1. Incidents reporting and JORA

All relevant incidents that have occurred within the joint operation shall be reported via JORA System.

Comprehensive information on JORA is provided in Handbook.

The list of JORA actors, the incidents reporting structure and JORA incident template attributes list, JORA Timeline of reporting are described in Annex 10.

The JORA Guidelines are available in FOSS.

8.4.2 Reports of participants

Type of report	Description	Responsibility	To be sent to	
DAILY REPORTING PACKAGE	ICC Daily report and/or JCB Minutes	Operational overview on a daily basis, covering the last 24 hours (00-24:00)	ICC	
	Standard Patrolling Schedule	Register of activities performed by the deployed assets	ICC	
	Team Leader's Daily Report	Joint Debriefing Teams (JDT) activities on a daily basis	Team Leader (TL)	
	Team Leaders - Landing Report	Joint Debriefing Teams (JDT) activities upon landings	TL /Debriefing experts	
	Interviews	Information collected after each interview of the migrant	TL/ Debriefing Experts	
	IO Daily Report	Updated information from the operational scene for intelligence purpose	Intelligence Officer (IO)	

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Technical Equipment Mission Report	Information about the activity performed by the assets	CO, NO	
Report from National Briefer	Information on National briefing provided to participants of the JO	National Briefer	[Redacted]

8.4.3 Daily reporting package

The Daily reporting package shall be prepared by the ICC Staff and shall consist of the reports indicated in a chapter above.

The ICC is responsible for the dissemination of the Reporting Package on a daily basis [Redacted] to Frontex (Operational Team and FSC) via emails to [Redacted]

8.4.4 Serious incident reporting

Type of report	Description	Responsibility
Serious Incident Report	A Serious Incident Report is an alert message that shall be reported immediately (within 2 hours after recognition) to FSC and the host MS' authorities in case an incident, natural or caused by human action, occurs which may affect, or be relevant to a particular Frontex activity, the safety and security of participants in Frontex activities, the Agency's mission and reputation, or any combination thereof, having special regard to any allegation of violation of Fundamental Rights.	All participants of the JO

Serious Incidents Catalogue is available in Handbook.

8.4.5 Frontex reports

Type of report	Description	Responsibility	To be sent
FCO report	Feedback on performed activities in the area	FCO	[Redacted]
FOC Daily Report	Overview of the operational activities related to the 24-hour period of the preceding day - to be sent until 13:00 CET	FOC	[Redacted]

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FSO Daily / Flash Report	Overview of the operational activities related to the 24-hour period of the preceding day - to be sent until 11:00 CET if it is Daily Report and to be sent immediately if it is Flash Report	FSO	[REDACTED]
FRN at Navy HQ Daily Report	Contribution to the daily reporting regarding the activities implemented by the Italian Navy in the Operational Area with regards to irregular migration	FRN at Navy HQ	[REDACTED]
Weekly/Bi-weekly Analytical Report/Update (WAR/WAU)	Analytical assessment of the factors impacting the situation in the operational area, trends, patterns	OA	[REDACTED] The ICC shall disseminate the WAR to the participants deployed in the operational area (experts, NO) and to the contacts of all authorities involved in the JO. WAU shall be sent by RAU to the corresponding email addresses and uploaded on FOSS.
FSC Situational Report	Overview of the operational activities related to the 24-hour period of the preceding day	FSC SDO	Will be uploaded on FOSS under the responsibility of SDO to be accessible for MS and distributed to other stakeholders by email only in case they do not have access to FOSS

8.4.6 Document alert and Reference Manual

The officers are requested to compile the Reference Manual Alert Form each time a relevant document forgery is detected. This compiled alert shall be inserted in the daily report package and later integrate the Reference Manual if the relevance will justify it.

8.4.7 Frontex Fusion Services

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9. ORGANISATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND LOGISTICS

9.1. Arrangements of deployed resources

9.1.1. Operational resources management system (OPERA)

The Operational resources management system (OPERA) is an integrated web-based system for the management of the operational resources pooled and deployed in Frontex coordinated activities. Information related to the availability and deployment of the resources is available in the application.

All information required for issuing accreditation cards for participants shall be introduced by participating MS via Opera.

More information about Opera is provided in Handbook.

9.1.2. Composition of the teams of guest officers and deployment of other relevant staff

The deployed officer from the home MS will form joint teams with the officers of the host MS in line with Article 10(3) of the Frontex Regulation.

Joint Debriefing Teams (JDT) will be deployed in the operational area. Each team will be composed of a Team Leader (nominated by the respective national authority of the host MS), two Debriefing Experts from home MS and one Cultural Mediator.

Screening Teams will be deployed in the landing/disembarkation areas to support local authorities. Each team will be composed of a Team Leader (nominated by the respective national authority of the Host MS), two Screening Experts from Home MS and one Cultural Mediator.

In order to ensure the flexibility of the debriefing and screening activities, Screening and Joint Debriefing Teams can be redeployed from one location to another based on the operational needs.

9.1.3. Technical equipment deployed by Member States

Technical equipment deployed by the MS in the operational areas to foster the border control activities may include Open Sea Patrol Vessels (OPV), Coastal Patrol Vessels (CPV), Coastal Patrol Boats (CPB), Helicopters (HELO), Fixed Wing Airplanes (FWA) and any other type of equipment agreed and confirmed by Frontex and the MS.

MS should deploy appropriate number of air crews, in order to fulfill the agreed patrolling hours.

9.1.4. Management of the operational assets⁹ deployed by Frontex

Pooled Resources and Joint Operations Units deal with the distribution and retrieval of operational assets in the operational areas, according to the procedures in place.

More information about arrangements of deployed resources and operational assets is available in Handbook.

The initial plan of deployed resources is available in Annex 5.

All participants shall get familiar and apply the Tasks and specific instructions to guest officers and other participants (Rules of engagement) defined in Annex 3.

⁹ Frontex owned assets

9.2. Tests and trials

JO EPN Triton 2014 will serve as a platform for implementation of other Frontex coordinated activities such as EPN Staff Exchange, Compatible Operational Image, Positioning System and any other tests and trials, after consultation and approval of Frontex and Host MS.

9.3. Transport and lodging

The use of rental car is to be approved in advance by the Operational Manager and expenses should be included in the relevant financial documents. In this case all practical/logistic issues should be arranged by participants themselves in advance.

Upon arrival and departure, transportation from/to the airports to/from the hotels should be arranged by the participants themselves.

Frontex (Operational team) will not make any bookings or reservations of the flights, accommodation, etc.

Information regarding accommodation can be found in Annex 12

9.4. Field visits

Prior to deployment of aerial and maritime assets, it is recommended for home MS to perform a field visit in order to get familiar with the operational area, local authorities and other stakeholders. The field visit should be approved by the Operational Manager and agreed with the ICC Coordinator in advance.

The LCC Coordinator or the LO/TE will support the field visits in accordance with the ICC and Frontex instructions.

Field visit delegation of two persons will be reimbursed by Frontex.

9.5. Logistics

9.5.1. Heavy equipment, firearms and ammunition

Debriefing Experts and screening experts shall not (are not allowed to) bring and carry any kind of service weapons (gun, truncheon, handcuffs, pepper spray).

9.5.2. Change of crew

Before executing the change of crew of asset deployed, the home MS shall inform Operational Team in due time in order to ensure delivery of the operational briefing / debriefing for crewmembers.

9.5.3. Diplomatic clearance

The Home MS deploying aerial and maritime assets should make all necessary arrangements in advance to obtain the diplomatic clearance to allow the state aircraft and/or government vessels operated for non-commercial purposes to enter the territory and have access to the airports/ports of Host MS.

It is also suggested that Home MS deploying aerial assets request the needed diplomatic clearances to enter air space of neighbouring MS (Malta and Greece).

The Home MS should respect the time needed for issuance of diplomatic clearance according to national procedures and submit clearance request for the diplomatic clearance in time in order not to jeopardise the timely start of the mission.

9.6. EPN Yellow Pages

To facilitate organisational arrangements and logistics related to the deployment of resources, the information about the host MS and operational areas of joint maritime operations - EPN Yellow Pages - is available on Sea Borders website on FOSS:

(<https://foss.frontex.europa.eu/OperationalActivities/SeaBorderSector/EPNYellowPages2013/tabid/1100/Default.aspx>).

More information about EPN Yellow Pages is provided in Handbook.

10. EVALUATION

10.1. Member States and Third Countries

Reports	Benchmarks
Report from Participant	<p>Shall be submitted to Frontex within 7 calendar days after deployment via email: [REDACTED]. Relevant sections of the report will be distributed to [REDACTED].</p> <p><i>Template of the report is available on FOSS</i></p>
Final Report from Member State	<p>Shall be submitted to Frontex within [REDACTED] after deployment or termination of the joint operation via email: [REDACTED].</p> <p><i>Template of the reports is available on FOSS</i></p>
Final Report from Third Country	<p><i>Template of the reports is available on FOSS</i></p>

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The final payment will not be processed before Final Reports from MS and Third country are submitted to Frontex. If only few GOs were deployed by Home MS, the Report from Participant may be sufficient, if prior agreed with the Operational Manager.

10.2. Frontex

Reports	Benchmarks
Frontex Evaluation Report	<p>The results of the joint operation will be evaluated and Frontex Evaluation Report (FER) will be transmitted within 60 calendar days after the termination of the JO to the Management Board together with the observations of the Fundamental Rights Officer referred to in Article 26a of the Frontex Regulation. FER will be uploaded on FOSS.</p>

11. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

In accordance with the decision of the Frontex Executive Director, Frontex will co-finance the joint operation. Frontex will reimburse eligible costs incurred by participating MS authorities in relation to deployments of human and technical resources provided that the Framework Partnership Agreement is in force.

Detailed financial provisions are described in Handbook.

ANNEXES

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Annex 2	Operational objectives and indicators
Annex 3	Description of the tasks and specific instructions to guest officers and other participants (Rules of engagement)
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Annex 8	Cooperation with other Union agencies and bodies or international organizations
Annex 9	Command and control scheme
Annex 10	JORA (JORA actors, JORA Incidents Reporting Structure, JORA Incident Template Attributes' List, JORA Timeline for reporting)
Annex 11	Contact details
Annex 12	Organizational arrangements and logistics