



EUROPEAN DEFENCE AGENCY

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PRESS RELEASE

EDA HOSTS WORKSHOP TO HELP NEW MEMBER STATES BENEFIT FROM EUROPEAN DEFENCE EQUIPMENT MARKET (BRUSSELS, 26 OCTOBER 2006)

The European Defence Agency today hosted a workshop bringing together National Armaments Directors and officials from countries which joined the European Union in 2004 and Romania and Bulgaria with representatives of the European defence companies which often act as prime contractors for major defence equipment purchases.

The aim of the workshop was to support the new Member States whose defence industries have to undergo a significant transformation so that they can better integrate into the new European Defence Equipment Market.

Specifically, it aimed to help contractors and small and medium-sized enterprises from those countries to find future business opportunities, particularly with the established major European prime contractors and first tier suppliers, and to become more competitive. There was also a discussion about how to ensure that specialist competencies from across Europe are included in the future Defence Technological and Industrial Base.

The meeting was part of the EDA's work to share widely the benefits of the new European defence equipment market, operated on the basis of the Code of Conduct on Defence Procurement and Code of Best Practice in the Supply Chain, which came into effect on 1 July.

The Code of Conduct commits subscribing Member States (sMS) to maximising fair and equal opportunities for all suppliers based in other sMS by setting transparent and objective criteria for

FOR FURTHER DETAILS:
Malgorzata Alterman - Head of Media and Communications
Direct line: +32 (0)2 504 28 10 mobile : +32 (0) 478 96 30 97
e-mail: malgorzata.alterman@eda.europa.eu
www.eda.europa.eu

selecting bidders and awarding contracts. The Code of Best Practice in the Supply Chain is about driving the same principles down the supply chain and influencing the appropriate behaviour.

The meeting, which was organised in conjunction with the Aerospace and Defence Industries Association of Europe (ASD), allowed the new Member States to talk about their experiences of working with contractors and dealing with different technologies. The contractors explained how they identify and assess potential competitive advantages and how countries could attract inward investment in these areas.

“It is clear that the EDA participating Member States who joined the EU most recently and those who will join next year have a special transformation process to go through in their defence industries,” said Ulf Hammarström, the EDA’s Director for Industry and Market.

“Today’s workshop has helped to show the importance of the ongoing creation of the true European Defence Equipment Market where there are significant opportunities for innovative companies, whatever their size. The Agency will do all it can to help them take advantage of these opportunities.” he added.

The participants warmly welcomed the initiative. General Adam Sowa, Poland’s Deputy Armaments Director, described it “as a very useful opportunity and an excellent example of how the EDA can add value”. We see the EDA as the most important platform for facilitating our integration into the developing European Defence Technological and Industrial Base,” he said.

ENDS

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- Background information -

The European Defence Agency (EDA) was established by the Council on 12 July 2004. It is designed "to support the Council and the Member States in their effort to improve European defence capabilities in the field of crisis management and to sustain the ESDP as it stands now and develops in the future". More specifically, the Agency is ascribed four functions, relating to:

- a) defence capabilities development;
- b) armaments cooperation;
- c) the European defence technological and industrial base and defence equipment market;
- d) research and technology.

These functions all relate to improving Europe's defence performance, by promoting coherence in place of fragmentation.

The EDA is an Agency of the European Union. High Representative Solana is Head of the Agency, chairman of the Steering Board, which acts under the Council's authority and within the framework of guidelines issued by the Council.