



Editorial

Over 250 participants attended the 2006 plenary meeting held in Cyprus representing 80 FIUs, FSRB's, and international organisations.

The important work of the IT Working Group, Operational Working Group, Outreach Working Group, Legal Working Group and Training Working Group continued during the course of the week. In addition participants were provided with Training and Breakout sessions focusing on a range of FIU related security issues, terrorism financing from UK and USA perspectives, and information on an FIU IT system, the Egmont Secure Web (ESW) modernisation project and FIU information exchange issues.

The Egmont Group would like to express their sincere appreciation to the MOKAS team and the Government of Cyprus for making the Egmont Plenary a successful event.

Neil J Jensen
Chair, TWG

Legal Working Group

The Head of the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA - UK FIU) gave a presentation on the newly organised SOCA-UK FIU. It was reported that the reorganization of their unit came into effect on 1 April 2006 when SOCA was formally established. The FIU is one of three sections of the Proceeds of Crime Department and its international team has the responsibility of acting as an interface with Egmont and other foreign agencies.

Terrorism Financing Review by the Legal Working Group

Further to the Heads' discussions in Washington (June 2005) all member FIUs should fully comply with the Egmont FIU definition as amended in June 2004. The Legal Working Group (LWG) elaborated a Complementary Interpretative Note which clearly states the requirements that apply as a minimum to comply with the Terrorism Financing (TF) component of this definition. This document, which is available on the Egmont website, also clarifies the specificity of the TF standards from an Egmont perspective, compared to their interpretation under the AML/CFT Methodology.

Heads of FIU Meeting

Future Egmont Secretariat

The Heads of FIU spent most of the meeting discussing the future organizational arrangements for the Egmont Group that will ensure its continuing operation. Consensus was reached in accepting the Canadian government's proposal to host the Egmont Secretariat in Toronto. Work on establishing the Secretariat is now underway. Decisions were also made on the size of the Secretariat and in progressing the funding formula.

Interim Permanent Administrative Support

As from 1 November 2006, the UK FIU SOCA will take over the function of PAS from CTIF-CIF (Belgium) until the Egmont Secretariat is established in Canada.

Clarification of Admission Process

The Heads discussed clarifications to the process for Candidate FIUS to become Egmont members. The Outreach Working Group (OWG) will need to conclude its discussions of potential candidates to enable the Legal Working Group (LWG) adequate time to process the questionnaire application and to consider the candidates at its March meeting.

Egmont Committee

To enable recommendations to be made to the Heads of FIU meeting later in the week, the Committee discussed organisational issues relating to the continuing operation of the Egmont Group as well as the feedback resulting from the consultation process with Egmont members.

The Committee also considered Egmont representation in groups such as the Wolfsberg Group and Interpol. Such representation would provide the Egmont Group with an opportunity to have a better understanding of the work of those organizations with regard to Anti Money Laundering (AML) and Counter Financing of Terrorism (CFT).

Finally, the Committee welcomed the Heads of the Chile, Cypriot, Malaysia and French FIUs as new Regional Representatives elected by the Heads' meetings.

IT Working Group

FIU-in-a-Box is a packaged application that was developed by AUSTRAC (Australia) and is currently operational in five FIUs in the Pacific region. A video demonstration illustrating the different functions of FIU-in-a-Box Light was presented at the Plenary meeting.

An FIU-in-a-Box Steering Committee has been created to address issues such as: product ownership; liability; prioritization; and training issues, which all need to be considered before Egmont can assume ownership and responsibility for the rollout of FIU-in-a-BOX as an Egmont product.

Outreach Working Group

The Outreach Working Group (OWG) succeeded in tackling a number of outstanding issues, mainly those that dealt with potential candidates. The OWG ensures that candidates receive a thorough consideration prior to recommending them to the LWG.

The OWG met with representatives from the World Bank, IMF, UNODC, and a number of FATF Style Regional Bodies (FSRBs) who presented their views and ideas on cooperating with the OWG with regard to non-Egmont jurisdictions, and in particular those that do not have sponsors.

It was agreed that the Chair will provide the representatives with a list of such jurisdictions to identify a point of contact. The Chair will also provide them with a document outlining membership procedures.

Training Working Group

The Training Working Group (TWG) coordinated a number of training sessions as part of the Plenary meeting.

Breakout Sessions

During the Breakout sessions a number of excellent presentations were provided. These included a presentation of SEPBLAC's (Spain) new IT System and a presentation on the ESW modernisation.

Other sessions focused on operational aspects of Terrorism Financing including the findings and financing of the London bombings and the impact on Terrorism Financing Investigations of the US Bank Secrecy Act.

Security Training Session

The TWG delivered a series of training sessions that were designed to heighten security awareness. The feedback from all sessions was excellent as the information was relevant to FIU operational staff.

Representatives of the World Bank, IMF and UNODC also attended the TWG and advised TWG members on current and potential projects.

FATF Style Regional Bodies (FSRBs)

The FSRBs and donor agencies met with members of the Egmont Committee and the different working groups. The purpose of this meeting was to enhance the cooperation between these agencies and the Egmont Group.

The role of the Egmont Group in combating AML/CFT in comparison with the role of the FSRBs and donor agencies was the main item of discussion.

The TWG has designated contact persons for the FATF, FSRBs and international organisations. Their contact details were distributed among participants to facilitate the cooperation and coordination.

ADDITIONAL PRESENTATIONS

The World Bank e-learning program

World Bank representatives coordinated the workshop "A Comprehensive AML/CFT Training: A New Approach" that was delivered to invited attendees from FIUs in World Bank identified low and middle income countries. This program is part of a broader "train the trainer" program delivered on a regional level in cooperation with the respective FSRBs. A number of Egmont members assisted the World Bank at the workshop, which was held immediately prior to the Egmont meetings in Limassol. Informal feedback heralded this workshop as a success.

IMF

The IMF gave a presentation during the Cyprus Plenary titled "Assessing the Strengths and Weaknesses of FIUs, Main findings of assessment reports conducted under the 2004 Methodology". This presentation was a follow-up to the presentation given at the Plenary Session in Washington 2005. The IMF is currently working on a paper for the cross analysis of mutual evaluations and will share this information with the TWG. That information, when coupled with the TWG's Training Needs Analysis, will provide a solid base to develop Egmont's future training programs.

UNODC

The UNODC discussed their Global Program against Money Laundering (GPML) Mentor program. UNODC Mentors are located in Africa, Central Asia, Middle East/North Africa, South East Asia, Central America and the Pacific covering 86 countries.

ITWG

In partnership with the IMF, the IT Working Group will be jointly developing a second IT training seminar for countries from Eastern Europe.

Operational Working Group

The main focus of the Operational Working Group (OpWG) was to review and resolve common obstacles of FIUs and enhance information sharing. In encouraging the exchange of knowledge and experiences between FIUs and financing of terrorism issues, points raised for discussion included Terrorism Financing lists, difficulties experienced in obtaining information from higher committees, cooperation between FIUs and law enforcement agencies, and legal frameworks.

Terrorism Financing presentations were given by the UK NTFIU and the US FBI in order to provide background into domestic authorities and the daily routines involved in undertaking such investigations. This also provided opportunities to question the cases presented.