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The European Handbook for Defence Procurement (EHDP)

I CEN Workshop

The future reference for “Best Practice” in selecting Defence Procurement Standards.

In January 1998 the European Commission tasked the University of Sussex (United Kingdom) to conduct a study on the "Standardization Systems in Defence Industries of the European Union and the United States". On 8 November 2000 the result of this study, which today is often simply quoted as “Sussex Study”, was presented to a large group of participants in Brussels that included government representatives, industry, interest groups and the national standards organisations in the European Union.

The study report, which comprised over 400 pages, gave 32 detailed recommendations for improvement and harmonisation of national defence standardization systems in the European Union. One recommendation envisaged the development of a European Handbook for Defence Procurement (EHDP). The European Committee for Standardization (CEN) then suggested to develop this handbook during a CEN Workshop.

At that time a CEN Workshop was a yet unknown dynamic approach in the portfolio of European Standardization.

After the European Commission had issued an appropriate mandate to CEN the CEN/BT/WG 125 “Standardization for Defence Procurement”, founded in May 2001, developed a “Business Plan” for conducting the CEN Workshop 10 “European Handbook for Defence Procurement”. Standardization experts of the German Institute for Standardization (DIN) and the Federal Office of Defence Technology and Procurement (BWB) provided and still provide support and important impetus.

The longstanding experience gained in Germany in the field of collaboration between the defence technology sector, industry and DIN in terms of defence standardization was of particular value for this work.

Phase I of the CEN-Workshops 10 (WS 10)

Following the presentation of the “Business Plan” the “Kick-off Meeting” for Phase I of the CEN Workshop 10 “European Handbook for Defence Procurement” was held on 30 May 2002. It should be noted that at that time it was not assumed that this workshop would be continued for two more phases until mid-2011.

The first activity after starting the WS 10 was the compilation of all established national defence standards and standards-like documents of the participating European nations in a so-called “Initial Handbook”. Additionally, the then existing NATO Standardization Agreements (NATO STANAG) concerning materiel were

included in the “Initial Handbook”. Finally, the „Initial Handbook“ comprised more than 10,000 data sets. Germany incorporated all German Military Standards (Verteidigungsgerätenormen – VG), Material Specifications Werkstoffleistungsblätter – WL), and Technical Specifications (Technische Lieferbedingungen – TL) of the BWB.

The next step was the selection of initially eight technical application areas (key areas) that are of particular interest for the defence technology sector. In order to closely examine those key areas expert groups were to be established and experts from different national defence authorities and defence industry were to be assigned to them.

- EG 1: NBC Detectors
- EG 2: Energetic Materials
- EG 3: Fuels and Lubricants
- EG 4: Batteries
- EG 5: Packaging
- EG 6: Electrical Interfaces
- EG 7: Electromagnetic Environment
- EG 8: Environmental Engineering.

The first task of the expert groups after defining the scope was to select all defence standards, international standards and specifications from the Initial Handbook that were of relevance to the respective key areas and to complement this selection with appropriate civil standards and non-European defence standards (e.g. US Military Standards).

Only after completing this extensive preparatory work could the experts devote themselves to their core task. All standards and international standards applicable to the respective key areas had to be compared and the most appropriate ones had to be chosen as Best Practice Standards. In addition to a list of selected standards and their bibliographic data, which had to be filled in accordance with a prescribed template, a report containing recommendations and explanations for future users of the EHDP had to be developed by each expert group according to a predefined structure. The need for (future) standardization also had to be indicated.

Phase I of the CEN Workshop 10 was completed in March 2006 with the publication of a CEN Workshop Agreement. The first version of the EHDP has been available online since September 2005 at www.defense-handbook.org.

Phase II of the CEN-Workshop 10

Under a second mandate by the European Commission Phase II of the CEN Workshop 10 was conducted for another eight key areas from 23 February 2007 to October 2008 with the same organisational requirements as in Phase I.

- EG 9: Armoured Land Vehicle Technology
- EG 10: Ammunition (Secretariat: DIN NE)
- EG 11: Paints and Coatings

- EG 12: Fluid Handling Systems (Hose Assemblies and Fittings)
- EG 13: Life Cycle Management (Service Life Management – Integrated Logistic Support)
- EG 14: Life Cycle Management (Technical Documentation)
- EG 15: Electrical Power Supply: Quality of Electrical Power Supply/Portable Electric Power Generators
- EG 16: Terminology.

The working results of Expert Groups 9 to 16 were added to the EHDP website and slightly adjusted in their structure. In addition to the work in the area of Terminology EG 16 developed important general guidance documents (Framework Papers) that provided specific guidance to the expert groups of Phase II in terms of structuring of their results.

Phase III of CEN-Workshop 10 (WS 10)

The second mandate was then followed by a third mandate of the European Commission for the conduct of a third and final phase of the CEN Workshop 10.

The business plan for Phase III, included activities in another three key areas, an update of the working results of Expert Groups 1 to 8 from Phase I, the elaboration of a concept for future maintenance and refinement of the EHDP and a user-friendly adaptation of the EHDP website.

WS 10 ended in late June 2011 with the delivery of the European Handbook for Defence Procurement (EHDP) to the European Defence Agency (EDA). The EDA will ensure further updating and refinement. The intention is to incorporate the EHDP as a module (possibly under a new acronym that is still to be decided) into the European Defence Standardization Information System (EDSIS) of the EDA (<http://www.eda.europa.eu/edsisweb>).

The German side (Industry, BWB and DIN) was strongly represented in all expert groups.

In cooperation with the German maritime (supplier) industry the Normenstelle für Schiffs- und Meerestechnik – NSMT (Shipbuilding and Marine Technology Standards Committee) at the DIN e.V. (German Institute for Standardization) developed and established the Cluster EG 18 “Waste Management”.

On 20 October 2010 the fourth meeting of the EG 18 CEN Working Group was held at the Hamburg Chamber of Commerce.

The two-day meeting was strongly influenced by the contributions of the maritime supplying industry so that the Working Group (WG) made noticeable progress.

In the future the EHDP will be the “EDSTAR” (European Defence Standards Reference).

On 9 June 2011 the EHDP/EDSTAR was officially handed over to a representative of the European Defence Agency (EDA) by a representative of the European Commission in Budapest (Hungary).

In the future (presumably in July or August 2011) EDSTAR will be accessible in a new design via the website of the EDA.

At the moment the EHDP in its old version can still be accessed at <http://www.defense-handbook.org/>.

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