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GUIDELINES ON ESTABLISHING

A FIREARMS FOCAL POINT

The South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) is a joint initiative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) aimed at strengthening national and regional capacities to control and reduce the proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons, thus contributing to enhanced stability, security and development in South Eastern and Eastern Europe.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This document contains the Guidelines on Establishing a Firearms Focal Point (hereafter referred to as ‘the Guidelines’). The Guidelines are produced by the South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC); SEESAC functions under the mandate given to it by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), to “strengthen the capacities of national and regional stakeholders to control and reduce the proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons, and thus contribute to enhanced stability, security and development in South Eastern and Eastern Europe.”¹

Supported by a decision of the Council of the European Union,² SEESAC is leading the efforts to establish Firearms Focal Points (FFPs) across South Eastern and Eastern Europe. The Guidelines are intended to provide the reader with a concise and easily digestible reference to the FFP. Readers can use it as a reference to direct their efforts to establish and operationalise the FFP in their jurisdictions.

The Guidelines have been created on the basis of the research done by the author to date; the research has consisted primarily of interviews with SEESAC staff and the staff of the FFP established in Pristina, and of desk research on the FFP concept and its implementation. The underlying logic behind the Guidelines is to answer the following questions for the reader:

- What are the underlying legal, policy and operational justifications for setting up an FFP?
- What are the advantages of having an FFP?
- What is the process through which an FFP should be set up?
- What data do FFPs collect?
- How do FFPs operate?
- What is the required infrastructure for an FFP to be established and what should FFP staff know in order to operate effectively?

1 South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC), ‘About: SEESAC’, <http://www.seesac.org/About/>, last accessed 10 November 2019

2 Council of the European Union, ‘Council Decision (CFSP) 2016/2356 of 19 December 2016 in support of SEESAC disarmament and arms control activities in South-East Europe in the framework of the EU Strategy to combat illicit accumulation and trafficking of SALW and their ammunition’.

Accordingly, this document contains five substantive sections and is bookended by conclusions and recommendations. The substantive sections cover the following: the legal and policy basis for establishing an FFP (section 2); the steps to be taken in establishing an FFP (section 3), the FFP’s mandate and workflow (section 4), and an overview of the training required for FFP staff (section 6).

2. THE LEGAL AND POLICY BASIS FOR ESTABLISHING AN FFP

2.1 Summary

The establishment and operationalisation of FFPs is foreseen by a variety of instruments adopted at the European and regional levels. At the European level, the Council of the European Union expressed its commitment to establish FFPs by adopting, in November 2014, the Draft Action Plan on the illicit trafficking of firearms between the EU and the South East Europe Region for the years 2015–2019 (hereafter referred to as the ‘Action Plan’).³ The Action Plan was followed by decisions of the Council of the European Union (noted below) that reaffirmed this commitment. At the United Nations level, the commitment to establish FFPs is mentioned in the firearms trafficking toolkit intended for Member States participating in the Global Study on Firearms Trafficking.

2.2 In more detail

The EU action plan against illicit trafficking in and use of firearms and explosives, adopted in late 2015, called on “the activities under the Action Plan to be rapidly stepped up”.⁴ This call provided an additional impetus for setting up FFPs across the South East Europe region. Subsequently, the European Union Council adopted decision 2016/2356 supporting SEESAC, in “the establishment, in all seven beneficiaries [NB – Albania, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, and North Macedonia], of firearms focal points – central information–collection and analysis units supporting investigators and prosecutors, and enabling the building and updating of the intelligence picture on firearms trafficking from and through SEE.”⁵ SEESAC’s approach is also fully in line with the European Firearms Expert Group (EFE) Best Practice Guidance for the Creation of National Firearms Focal Points (NFP).

3 Council of the European Union, ‘Action Plan on the illicit trafficking of firearms between the EU and the South East Europe Region for the years 2015–2019’, 14 November 2014, ENFOPOL 359.

4 European Commission, ‘EU action plan against illicit trafficking in and use of firearms and explosives’, 2 December 2015, COM(2015) 624 final, p.13.

* For the United Nations Development Programme, references to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).
For the European Union, this designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

5 Council of the European Union, ‘Council Decision (CFSP) 2016/2356 of 19 December 2016 in support of SEESAC disarmament and arms control activities in South–East Europe in the framework of the EU Strategy to combat illicit accumulation and trafficking of SALW and their ammunition’, Annex, paragraph 3.3. It should be noted, however, that Kosovo had already an established FFP by the time Council Decision 2016/2356 was adopted.

Under the auspices of the German Federal Foreign Office, the European Union, and the Regional Cooperation Council, jurisdictions in the Western Balkans further solidified their commitment to establish FFPs through the Roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and their ammunition in the Western Balkans by 2024 (hereafter referred to as the ‘Roadmap’).⁶

The Roadmap, which was agreed by the Deputy Ministers of Interior from Tirana, Sarajevo, Pristina, Podgorica, Belgrade and Skopje serves as “a guiding and consensual document developed and owned by the authorities of the region, in achieving a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of SALW/firearms, and its ammunition, in the Western Balkans.”⁷ It contains jointly agreed overall targets, timelines, and key performance indicators (KPIs), including KPI 7: “Firearms Focal Points established and operational in each jurisdiction of the Western Balkans.”⁸ The Roadmap also includes seven goals; Goal 2 is to “ensure that arms control policies and practices in the Western Balkans are evidence based and intelligence led” by 2024, and it contains a target to strengthen the tasking, coordination and monitoring functions of FFPs by 2020.⁹

The EU has since expressed a renewed commitment and support to SEESAC in implementing the Roadmap, including Goal 2 and the establishment of FFPs, through a decision of the EU Council adopted on 19 November 2018.¹⁰

3. THE STEPS TO BE TAKEN IN ESTABLISHING AN FFP

3.1 Summary

This section covers the steps to be taken in establishing and operationalising an FFP. These steps are indicative rather than definitive, as each jurisdiction differs in its pre-existing capacities before setting up. They have been devised by analysing the examples of jurisdictions where FFPs have already been set up, but officials establishing FFPs in other jurisdictions may skip a particular step if it has been carried out in the course of previous efforts. The steps cover the entire process, from forming a working group to carrying out initial assessments of existing capacities and resources, to recruiting staff, setting up an IT infrastructure, and putting together the procedures needed for the FFP to discharge its duties.

6 Roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and their ammunition in the Western Balkans by 2024, <http://www.seesac.org/f/docs/News-SALW/Roadmap-for-sustainable-solution.pdf>, last accessed 17 December 2019.

7 Roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and their ammunition in the Western Balkans by 2024, p.1.

8 Ibid, p.4.

9 Ibid, p.7.

10 Council of the European Union, ‘Council Decision (CFSP) 2018/1788 of 19 November 2018 in support of the South-Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) for the implementation of the Regional Roadmap on combating illicit arms trafficking in the Western Balkans’, article 1.

3.2 In more detail

The following are the key steps to be taken in establishing an FFP:

3.2.1 Forming a working group

The initial step to establishing an FFP is to form a working group. This can be done through a decision of the responsible minister (usually the Minister of the Interior) or government. The working group should include officials from the Ministry of the Interior (Mol)/police services responsible for investigating crimes with firearms, criminal analysis unit, officials from the ballistics unit/lab, border police and customs, prosecutors, and other officials that could be designated by the responsible Minister. The working group should be mandated with overseeing and carrying out all of the preparatory work required to establish an FFP, which is noted in the following points.

3.2.2 Carrying out an initial assessment of capacities and resources

The working group's initial task will be to take stock of the existing resources and capacities. This will include a few key elements:

- Carrying out a gap analysis of data currently collected. The FFP is an instrument for collating and analysing data in a holistic manner that allows police officers and investigators to create links between seized firearms, firearms-related crimes, and other criminal activities. In order to do that, it is paramount to have a clear view of the data currently being collected by state authorities. These might include registers of legally possessed firearms, registers of import, export, transited and seized firearms, broken down by categories (firearm's make, category, country of origin, serial numbers, etc.). All of this data should be collated in a single place.
- Assessing existing IT systems and databases. In addition to determining which data is being collected by the Mol and other relevant units and bodies, the working group should also establish which IT systems and databases are already in place, and how effective they are. It may be the case that a jurisdiction has a register of seized firearms, but that this register does not break the firearms down by location (region in the country, border post, etc.) of seizure which would limit its usefulness to the FFP in the future. Additionally, the working group should ascertain which IT systems are already in place and how compatible they are with each other (where data needs to be entered in more than one database, or where it needs to be cross-referenced, or accessed by the FFP staff). This exercise should therefore provide a detailed overview of the IT systems and databases in place, encompassing the categories of variables in the databases and the compatibility of IT systems with each other across the Mol and other institutions.
- Defining current intelligence capability. The working group should also define the state's current intelligence capability. It should ask whether the Mol is currently engaged in, or is capable of carrying out, the intelligence-led policing techniques required to effectively run an FFP, such as: developing problem profiles, developing subject profiles, producing operational assessments, strategic assessments, and risk and threat assessments, among other. In addition, the working group should

determine which other relevant capacities the Mol and adjunct agencies (such as the prosecutor's office, particularly when it is involved in criminal investigation) possess.

- Analysing the profile of staff working on firearms-related crimes. Future FFP staff will likely be recruited from the ranks of those already mandated with investigating and combating firearms-related crimes, such as the illicit trafficking of firearms. Their current positions may not require them to possess some of the skills required for working in the FFP, such as data analysis, timely report writing, among others. This analysis will help to establish the baseline for the profile of staff to be employed in FFP and to set a training curriculum for them.

3.2.3 Carrying out scoping missions

Representatives of the working group should carry out scoping missions to jurisdictions that have already established FFPs. The insights acquired during the scoping mission will provide invaluable insights for the working group in establishing an FFP. At the time of writing, officials from Podgorica, Skopje and Tirana have already visited the FFP established in Pristina and have testified as to the usefulness of this visit in their efforts to set up the FFP in their country.

3.2.4 Setting up the IT infrastructure

For the FFP to be operational, the working group will have to establish adequate IT infrastructure. The IT infrastructure would be based in the Ibase and Analysts Notebook to enable the FFPs to carry out analysis and visualize this work.¹¹

3.2.5 Assigning and training staff

The FFP will require full-time staff for it to be operational. The number of staff will differ from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, based on their comparative populations and workloads (including, for instance, the annual number of seized firearms, the number of criminal offences involving the possession, trafficking, or use of firearms, among other). Thus, while there is no predetermined number of staff, the FFP in Pristina was allocated three full-time staff by the Mol; however, in practice at the time of writing, two staff members are full-time (with the third being unable to discharge their duties due to other obligations). The two full-time staff members claim that, at a minimum, for a jurisdiction of that size, the FFP requires four full-time staff members.¹² This can be a useful reference point for jurisdictions in South East Europe forming their own FFPs.

11 For more, please see 'IBM i2 iBase', <https://www.ibm.com/us-en/marketplace/data-management> and 'IBM i2 Analyst's Notebook', and <https://www.ibm.com/us-en/marketplace/analysts-notebook>, last accessed 22 November 2019.

12 Interview with FFP staff, Pristina, 28 October 2019.

3.2.6 Developing standard operating procedures

The work of the FFP is characterised by processes that involve a number of different institutions and departments/units within the Mol/police services. As such, it is important that the responsibilities of each of these bodies are clear, and that these are carried out through a predetermined sequence enshrined in standard operating procedures.

3.2.7 Drafting MoUs

For the FFP to be effective, it will have to cooperate with a range of units, departments and institutions among law enforcement agencies. The FFP leadership will therefore likely need to sign memorandums of understanding (MoUs) with units that would provide operating procedures and terms of cooperation. In particular, MoUs should be signed with the department of strategic analysis, ballistic laboratories, the investigative department or criminal police, weapon registration offices, and the international cooperation department when applicable.

3.2.8 Undertaking outreach

The establishment of an FFP will mean little if its mandate, usefulness, and operating procedures are unclear. It is therefore imperative that the leadership of the FFP and of the Mol undertake research efforts to explain the FFP's workings, and particularly to the various departments and bodies that will be required to cooperate with the FFP for it to be effective. As was mentioned above, these could include units responsible for ballistics units, border police, serious crime units, among others.

4. THE MANDATE OF AN FFP AND ITS WORKFLOW

4.1 Summary

This section will present what the FFP does in practice. It will lay out its key functions and outputs, including collating data (which should be gender- and age-disaggregated, where relevant), integrating it into an up-to-date dataset on firearms and ballistics, producing relevant intelligence-led policing knowledge products (such as ad hoc reports, problem profiles, subject profiles, operational assessments, strategic assessments, and threat and risk assessments). In addition, this section will depict to the reader the workflow of an FFP, starting from the reception of a flash report, through examinations by forensics experts, and up to the production of tracing reports and further outputs, such as strategic assessments.

4.2 The aim of the FFP

The aim of an FFP is to provide an integrated tactical and strategic intelligence service that informs and supports law enforcement agencies in better understanding and effectively tackling firearms crime, minimising the risk locally and internationally.

4.3 The FFP's mandate and key functions

The FFP's mandate should include providing a **tracing service**, being a focal point for the collection of statistical data needed to compile the annual gun crime analysis report, monitor relevant SALW strategies, and/or compile the UNODC global firearms trafficking questionnaire, being a point of contact on firearms, and horizon scanning (or fore sighting).

The key functions of the FFPs include:¹³

4.3.1 Acting as a repository for firearms-related (criminal and ballistic) intelligence, while also being responsible for analysing that data.

In the course of doing so, FFP is responsible for producing strategic and operational intelligence products, for understanding the threats and trends related to firearms, and for enabling an operational response, focused on the source and distribution networks. As part of this, the FFP is responsible for:

- Collating and integrating a comprehensive, up-to-date intelligence dataset on firearms and ballistics intelligence. This is a key function of the FFP. It ensures that data on firearms and ballistics, which was previously dispersed across various departments and units in law enforcement agencies, is now collated in one place and integrated for use and cross-reference by FFP staff. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that all gun-related incidents are immediately reported to the FFP. The data should be disaggregated by all the relevant variables, such as the age, gender, place of origin of persons involved in firearms-related crime or incidents, as well as the variables pertaining to the firearm in question (e.g. make, caliber).
- Producing strategic intelligence assessments describing the scale and nature of firearms-related criminality in the jurisdiction. The FFP will carry out strategic assessments describing the scale and nature of firearms-related criminality. Strategic intelligence examines crime patterns and crime trends for management use in decision-making, resource development, resource allocation and planning. While similar to crime analysis, strategic intelligence typically focuses and provides detailed information on specific crime types, such as illicit firearms trafficking, criminal enterprises, drug traffickers, terrorists, or other forms of complex criminality. This information helps police understand the motivations of the intelligence targets and can help in deploying investigative resources, developing training programs for police personnel to better understand the threat, and provide insights which may help in target hardening.
- Developing intelligence packages for investigations and operations targeting firearm-related criminality. The intelligence packages will feature key information for investigators, including the problem profile, the subject profile, and the tactical assessment. Tactical intelligence is used in the development of a criminal case that usually is a continuing criminal enterprise, a major multijurisdictional crime, or other form of complex criminal investigation. It seeks to gather and manage diverse information to facilitate a successful prosecution of the intelligence target, and is

¹³ Arquebus, 'The Structure of an Effective Firearms Focal Point', presentation, made available to UNDP, p.6.

also used for specific decision-making to deal with an immediate situation or crisis, providing insight into the nature of the threat and the target.

- Producing ad hoc intelligence reports for investigators or prosecutors leading ongoing cases. The FFP can respond to requests to produce, or proactively initiate the production of, ad hoc intelligence reports for individual cases. These reports support investigators and prosecutors conducting ongoing investigations.
- Developing recommendations to divert and prevent firearms-related criminality. In addition to supporting ongoing investigations, delivering strategic intelligence assessments and intelligence packages, the FFP is also useful for medium- and long-term purposes. Its staff can analyse trends and use this analysis to develop recommendations to divert and prevent firearms-related crimes.
- Fore sighting or horizon scanning. The FFP can engage in horizon scanning, a “technique for detecting early signs of potentially important developments through a systematic examination of potential threats and opportunities.”¹⁴ These threats can come in many forms, including new firearms and firearm parts, new trends in the illicit trafficking of firearms, and so on.

4.3.2 Serving as a repository for all lost, stolen and recovered firearms.

This enables the FFP to have a national statistical view on the numbers and types of weapons being lost or stolen and seized.

4.3.3 Acting as a focal point for tracing.

The FFP traces all seized firearms from manufacturer to the last legal owner in order to assist the competent authorities in ongoing criminal investigations. In addition, it undertakes incoming tracing requests from other countries, promoting opportunities for international law enforcement investigations. Finally, it analyses firearms-tracing data to identify the type, make, model, caliber and country of manufacture of the firearm.

4.3.4 Serving as a point of contact and the centre of expertise on firearms for national and international stakeholders and partners.

4.3.5 Acting as a focal point for collecting and sharing statistical data.

The FFP provides data, statistics, information, assessments and reports for use by law enforcement agencies. This data is used to develop products such as the annual gun crime analysis report. It can also be used to monitor relevant SALW strategies and to answer the periodic questionnaire for the global firearms trafficking study administered by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime. Moreover, the data collected can be used to track trends and create definitive records for the criminal justice system.

14 Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development, ‘Overview of Methodologies’, <https://www.oecd.org/site/schoolingfortomorrowknowledgebase/futuresthinking/overviewofmethodologies.htm>, last accessed 15 November 2019.

4.4 What is the value added of the FFP?

The FFP will substantively improve the capacities of law enforcement agencies to tackle firearms-related criminality in the following ways:

- It creates institutional links between firearms-related crimes and other crimes, and provides fast, reliable, real-time information to investigators in the so-called ‘golden hour’, in the first 72 hours after the crime. The FFP ensures that all of the relevant units in law enforcement agencies have information of a firearms-related crime in the immediate aftermath of it being reported or a firearm being seized. Experience has shown that this significantly increases the odds of the said crime being solved.
- It provides the leadership in law enforcement agencies with data upon which to formulate their agencies’ strategic priorities. The FFP’s reports, which are based on data generated in the field, are used by leadership in law agencies to determine where to locate their human and material resources (for instance, whether more police officers should be assigned to combating armed robberies, or to tackling illicit trafficking of firearms), to plan staff’s continuous training (to respond to trends in criminality, including firearms-related crimes), to name just a few.
- It standardises the data that should be collected by the police force. Prior to the introduction of the FFP in some jurisdictions, it was common for data on firearms to be categorised differently across different units or departments (for instance, with various definitions of a pistol or a gun). The FFP requires the data to be standardised, which allows for more accurate statistics to be generated (for instance, on the number a certain type of firearms seized) and for improved and more useful data analysis.
- It encourages and enables regional cooperation and the sharing of information. The FFP’s ability to create risk and threat assessments is an important tool for preventing and solving crime. For instance, its ability to create risk profiles for armed robberies has proven useful in capturing robbers. Moreover, the FFP in Kosovo has had success in sharing pertinent information with counterparts in other jurisdictions and their own border police, leading to successful operations against illicit arms traffickers. According to members of the FFP itself, this would not have been possible prior to its establishment.

4.5 The FFP's key outputs

The key outputs produced by the FFP are in line with the intelligence-led policing process.¹⁵ They provide direct support to investigators and prosecutors, while also assisting in strategic planning. The key outputs produced by the FFP include:

4.5.1 Strategic assessments

Strategic assessments provide an overview of the current and long-term issues that are affecting or likely to affect the police force or the basic command unit. They are used to make recommendations for prevention, intelligence, enforcement and reassurance priorities, as well as for future policing strategy.

Purpose

Strategic assessments are an integral part of the business planning process for the police force and are created to:

- Drive the business of strategic tasking and coordination in the police force and with other law enforcement agencies
- Assist strategic business planning and enable resources to be allocated within the police
- Assist in the development of a SALW control strategy by the country in question

A strategic assessment is a living document that is current and relevant. Information collection and analysis in support of the assessment must be ongoing and include problem profiles, trends and developments. Opportunities for public consultation should also be considered. A range of staff in the police force and partners from law enforcement agencies and beyond, if necessary, should be involved in the production of the strategic assessment. Their knowledge and expertise will improve recommendations, and lead to better decision making.

¹⁵ “Intelligence-led policing emphasizes analysis and intelligence as pivotal to an objective, decision-making framework that prioritizes crime hotspots, repeat victims, prolific offenders and criminal groups. It facilitates crime and harm reduction, disruption and prevention through strategic and tactical management, deployment and enforcement” from Ratcliffe, ‘Intelligence-led policing’ (2016), p.66.

Content

The strategic assessment should be based on research and analysis of a wide range of internal and external information sources. The following should be considered for inclusion in a strategic assessment:

- Government security classification marking
- Detail on the information sources and method used in compiling the report
- A general picture of current policing issues, with consideration given to local and national priorities
- Key threats against the control strategy and emerging issues, which may include:
 - Performance against objectives
 - Analysis of crime or incident levels
 - Public perception of the issue
 - Emerging trends
 - An examination of political, economic, social, technological, environmental, legal, organisational and media (PESTELOM) factors
 - Recommendations
- The prioritisation of identified issues

The Figure 1 below contains the sample content of a strategic assessment.

FIGURE 1 – SAMPLE CONTENT OF A STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT

Introduction

- State the purpose of the assessment and who it has been produced for.
- State who has produced it, the sources used, and period it covers.
- State if recommendations are made and who is due to receive and consider the recommendations.

Threat Statement

- Give a one-paragraph statement that provides a simple, high-level summary of the current threat. **Using bold text makes the statement stand out.**

Key Points

- Include between five and ten bullet points that explain in simple terms the key, summarised points made in the assessment. Each bullet point should be no more than 1–2 sentences long.

The Scale of the Threat

The scale of the criminal use of firearms

- This section should set out the scale of the problem using statistics to show, for example:
 - The number of firearm offences
 - The types of offences
 - The impact (e.g. injuries/ fatalities)
 - Volumes of firearms seizures, including by type and
 - The location of offences
- Commentary on the statistics should:
 - Make comparisons to historic data, drawing out any trends and possible reasons why
 - Identify links between data and elements of the *nature* of the problem (e.g. “the rise in fatalities is linked to a growing gang culture...”) and
 - Identify where data may be incomplete or unreliable
- Charts/ graphs can communicate data effectively and break up text

The scale of firearms availability and supply

- This section should set out the volumes of firearms in circulation and seized by law enforcement using statistics to show, for example:
 - Estimates of the volume of firearms within the country, separating e.g. licenced/ illegal/ military firearms
 - Volumes of seizures at the border, and
 - Volumes of seizures inland by the police
- Commentary on the statistics should:
 - Make comparisons to historic data, drawing out any trends and possible reasons why

- Identify links between data and elements of the *nature* of the problem (e.g. “the rise in postal seizures is driven by increased use of the internet to source blank-firers”) and
- Identify where data may be incomplete or unreliable

- Charts/ graphs can communicate data effectively and break up text

The Nature of the Threat

- This section should describe and assess **who** is responsible for firearms crime, **how** and **why** they commit their crimes.
- The section should explain **what** firearms criminals do and consider the impact of the different types of criminality.
- Sub-sections could, by way of example, include (but need not be limited to):

- Organised criminals
- Street gangs
- Links to other crimes (e.g. robbery, drugs, domestic violence)

The firearms used

- The section should detail the firearms used by criminals, for example:
 - Genuine firearms (handguns, submachine guns, shotguns, etc.)
 - Converted firearms
 - Replica firearms
- Reference should be made to preferences/ availability, for example: are certain firearms chosen because they are cheaper and easier to acquire/ because they are status symbols/ because the risk if caught is lower?
- Comment on origins, prices and ease of availability
- Comment on the availability of ammunition
- Pictures can be used to illustrate firearm types and break up text

The nature of firearms supply

- This section should describe and assess **who** supplies the different types of firearm, **how** they do it, and **where** they come from.
- Trends that show how the threat is changing should be included.
- Sub-sections could include:
 - Source countries for firearms (including routes if known)
 - Methods of importation
 - Border crossing points
 - Leakage from registered dealers/ licenced firearms
 - Leakage from the military

Recommendations

- Recommendations should be made only where the assessment is to be considered by an individual/ group with the authority to agree and task the recommendations.
- Recommendations should be specific and realistic to achieve.

4.5.2 Tactical assessments

Tactical assessments are used to identify the short-term issues for consideration by units in charge of tactical tasking and coordination. They should be used to draw inferences and make recommendations for prevention, intelligence, enforcement and reassurance priorities, and future policing activity.

Purpose

A tactical assessment is created to:

- Define problems and identify subjects
- Recommend tactical options
- Review intelligence requirements
- Review recent performance and actions set at previous meetings
- Identify emerging patterns and trends

Information collection and analysis to support the assessment must be ongoing and include problem profiles, subject profiles, trends and developments. Production of the tactical assessment should involve a range of staff and partners whose knowledge and expertise will improve recommendations and lead to better decision making.

Content

Tactical assessments should not be restricted to police information on criminal activity and criminals. They need to be based on the research and analysis of a wide range of information sources, including organised crime group mapping (OCGM) and external information. The following should be considered for inclusion in a tactical assessment:

- Government security classification marking
- Detail on the information sources and method used in compiling the report
- Overview of the crime and incident picture since the last tactical tasking and coordination group
- Predictions and emerging issues for the next reporting period
- Progress and performance against current priorities
- Key planning dates
- Recommendations for prevention, intelligence, enforcement and reassurance activity

4.5.3 Subject profiles

Subject profiles are usually commissioned by the tactical tasking and coordination group to provide a detailed report of a suspect(s) or victim(s). Each profile has an assigned owner and is added to and updated until the subject is apprehended or protected. Subject profiles may also be commissioned by a senior investigating officer to assist investigations during a major or serious crime inquiry, or an intelligence manager to aid research.

Purpose

A subject profile is created to:

- Assist in the prioritisation of subjects to be investigated

- Identify intelligence gaps
- Highlight prevention, intelligence, enforcement and reassurance opportunities
- Provide justification for actions

Subject profiles should be stored centrally to enable information to be retrieved if necessary.

Content

The subject profile should be based on the research of the subject and on analysis of a wide range of information sources (both open and closed), including Organised Crime Group Mapping (OCGM) and external information. It should have the appropriate Government Security Classification marking, and it should be comprised of the following categories:

- Summary and authorisation – content may include:
 - Date and version control
 - Reasons or justification for targeting subject
- Personal record – content may include the subject’s:
 - Family and relationships
 - Lifestyle and habits
 - Employment details
 - Criminal record details
 - Financial profile
 - Links to OCGM data
- Subject profile analysis – content may:
 - Provide information, based on analysis, to develop prevention, intelligence, enforcement and reassurance recommendations
 - Predict both criminal activity of the suspect and/or impact or vulnerability of the victim
 - Highlight potential new sources of information on the subject
 - Assess the threat posed by, or risk to the, subject
- Content may include prevention, intelligence collection, enforcement and reassurance plans
- Content may include a risk assessment which identifies the effect of a range of impact factors and suggests actions to counter or minimise them

4.5.4 Problem profiles

Problem profiles are usually commissioned by the Tasking and Coordination Group (T&CG) to provide a greater understanding of established and emerging crime or incident series, priority locations or other identified high-risk issues.¹⁶ The T&CG commissions the development of problem profiles and allocates specific owners to them. Problem profiles may also be commissioned by an intelligence manager to aid research.

¹⁶ The tasking and coordination group (T&CG) is a concept of intelligence-led policing. The T&C process provides managers with a mechanism for operational decision making at strategic and tactical levels. Proactive leadership is essential in this process. To enable managers to prioritise the deployment of resources, decisions should be based on a thorough understanding of the problems. Forces should have a system for recording all T&C decisions, operational plans and results. The T&CG can be implemented at strategic, operational and tactical level.

Purpose

A problem profile is created to:

- Provide detail on crime trends or hot spots that require greater analysis than can be provided in the tactical assessment
- Provide a vehicle for the application of one or more analytical techniques to a problem
- Assist in subject identification and selection (suspects or victims)
- Assist in the prioritisation; of specific problems that pose a risk
- Identify intelligence gaps
- Highlight prevention, intelligence, enforcement and reassurance opportunities
- Provide justification for actions

The problem profile must be current and relevant. It should be added to and updated until the problem is dealt with, then stored for retrieval if necessary.

Content

The profile varies according to the nature and significance of the problem. It should be based on the research and analysis of a wide range of information sources, including OCGM and external information. It should have the appropriate Government security classification marking, and be comprised of the following categories:

- Summary and authorisation – content may include:
 - Date and version control
 - Justification for targeting, including tests of proportionality and necessity
 - Reasons or justification for targeting subject
- Problem profile analysis– content may:
 - Answer: Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?
 - Assist in the prioritisation of problems
 - Provide information, based on analysis, to develop prevention, intelligence, enforcement and reassurance recommendations
 - Predict the evolution or pattern of a problem
 - Highlight potential new sources of information
 - Assess any threat or risk posed by the problem
 - Identify whether the problem occurs cross-border

4.6 The workflow of the FFP

In order to better present the functioning of an FFP, this section will briefly present its workflow in the case of an individual firearm event. It presents different work processes and the sequence in which they are normally employed. This process has been simplified in order to make the workings of an FFP more easily understood; in real life, the work flow of an FFP may not be as neat (the workflow is also presented in figure 3, below).

1. The initial firearm event...

The FFP is immediately informed of a firearm-related incident by e-mail;

2. ...leads to a flash report

The initial firearm event (for instance, the recovery of a firearm, cartridge, bullet, ammunition or explosive) leads to the generation of a flash report by the police officer leading the investigation, or in charge of the crime scene, at local level. When a weapon is recovered, the flash report will be accompanied by two pictures (of the left and right face of the weapon) in order to clearly identify the weapon and/or the serial number (when present and not altered).

3. Upon receiving the report, the FFP...

- Verifies the identification of the weapon
- **Begins tracing the weapon/ammunition/explosive seized.** The FFP determines if the weapon is:
 - **Legally held** (in the registration database) or reported lost or stolen or
 - **Illegal** (if there is no data on it in the registration database or in the import database).

If it's illegal, the FFP will...

- ...**Send a request to the ballistics laboratory to further examine the weapon.** The laboratory will examine the weapon for its ballistic characteristics and verify whether the weapon or bullet/cartridge is linked to another case (for instance, if a bullet was fired from the same weapon in another case). **If the domestic tracing does not uncover the origin of the seized firearm, the FFP will...**
- ...**Attempt to trace it internationally.** This can be done, for instance, by using, Interpol's iArms database. Alternatively, the FFP may use the proof houses database to check the CIP mark, approach the producer or its counterpart in the producer's country of origin
- Once it has ascertained the origin of the seized firearm/ammunition/explosive (the FFP has 72 hours to do so for domestic traces, and eight days for international traces), **the FFP will develop an ad hoc intelligence report to support the investigation.** If the FFP subsequently obtains additional information, it will be fed into the investigation later. If the prosecutor or investigator do not refer back to the FFP, its role in this particular individual case is concluded. **If, however, prosecutors or investigators do refer back to the FFP with more questions...**
- ...**The FFP may be called on to further participate in the investigation.** It may be required to analyse data from the report, which may also influence the course of an investigation (for instance, FFP staff may ask the prosecutor to delay a prosecution so they could try to establish further links with other firearms-related offences)

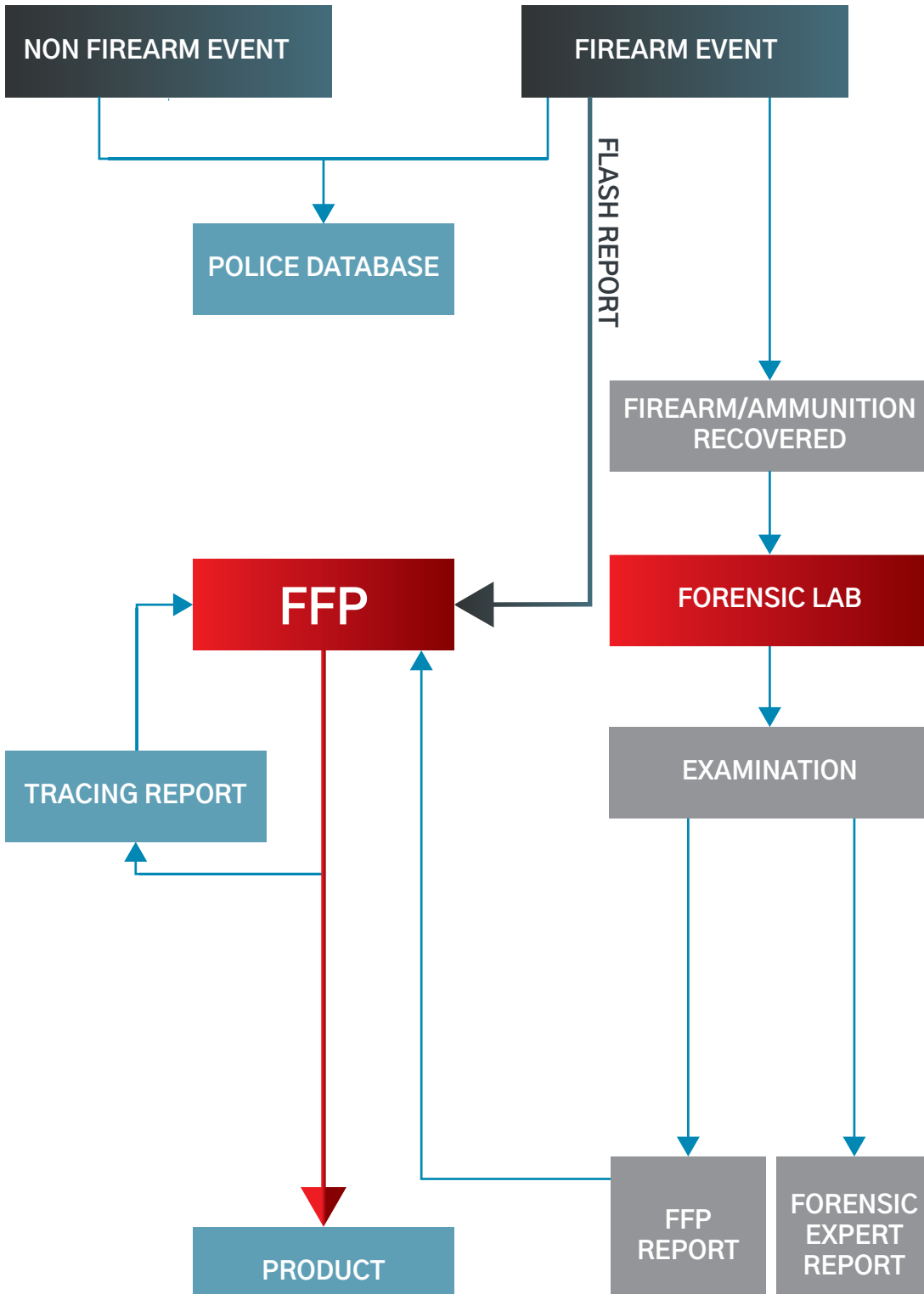
4. In addition to the ad hoc reports, the FFP will also report periodically

The frequency of FFP's reports will depend on its standard operating procedures, but it could be, for instance, that it will have to submit 'big picture reports' (such as strategic assessments,

FIGURE 2 – SAMPLE FLASH REPORT FROM THE FFP IN KOSOVO

RAPORT I SHPEJTË / HITAN IZVEŠTAJ / FLASH REPORT						
Lloji I incidentit Vrsta incidenta Type of incident				Nr. i rastit # Br. Slučaja # Case no. #		
Etnikisht I motivuar Etnički motivisano Etnically motivated		Po Da Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jo Ne No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	E pa njohur Nepoznato Unknown
Data e incidentit Datum incidenta Date of incident		Koha: Vreme Time		Koordinatat në hartë Koordinate na mapi Grid. Ref.		
Vendi I incidentit Mesto incidenta Incident location				Etniciteti i rajonit Etnička propadnost oblasti Ethnicity of area		
Stacioni/Njësi Stanica/Jedinica Station/Unit				Telefoni Telefon Phone		
Komandanti I Stacionit/ Njësitit Komandir Stanice/Jedinice Stn/Unit Commander				Telefoni Telefon Phone		
Polici që i është përgjigjur rastit Policajac koji se bavio slučajem Responding Officer				Nr KI # Br. ID # ID #		Ndërimi Smena Shift
Polici hetues Policajac koji vodi istragu Investigating Officer				Nr KI # Br. ID # ID #		
Data e raportimit Datum podnošenja izveštaja Date of report				Koha: Vreme Time	Dërguar nga Poslato Sent by	
A është përdorur arma Upotrebljeno oružje Weapon used		Po Da Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Lloji Vrsta Type		
	I e Dyshimti Osumnjičeni Suspect	D. e Lindjes D. Rođ. DOB	Gjinia Pol Sex	Kombësia Etnička pripadnost Ethnicity	Vendbanimi Mesto boravka Current address	I arrestuar Po/Jo Uhapšen Da/Ne Arrested Y/N
1		01.02.1995.	M	Shqiptar/Kosovar	Bardhosh Prishtinë	PO
	Viktima Žrtva Victims	D. e Lindjes D. Rođ. DOB	Gjinia Pol Sex	Kombësia Etnička pripadnost Ethnicity	Vendbanimi Mesto boravka Current address	I lënduar Po/Jo Povređen Da/Ne Injured Y/N
1						/
	Dëshmitari (Ankuesi) Svedok (Žalioc) Witness (Complainant)	D. e Lindjes D. Rođ. DOB	Gjinia Pol Sex	Kombësia Etnička pripadnost Ethnicity	Vendbanimi Mesto boravka Current address	I lënduar Po/Jo Povređen Da/Ne Injured Y/N
1						
Përshkrimi i shkurtë i incidentit / Kratak opis incidenta / Short description of incident / .						

FIGURE 3 – THE WORKFLOW OF AN FFP



or the reports aimed at developing recommendations to divert and prevent firearms-related criminality).

5. TRAINING FOR FFP STAFF

5.1 Summary

This section includes a brief overview of the training required for future FFP staff, including: core training for analysts, advanced ballistic intelligence training, training in core intelligence analysis, intelligence gap analysis and collection plans, risk and threat assessments, and gender analysis.

5.2 In more detail

Future FFP staff, and their counterparts, will likely have to be trained on particular skills and knowledge in order to discharge their duties adequately. The training should be attended by delegates from a number of relevant disciplines from each beneficiary, including analysts, intelligence professionals, investigators, forensic ballistic experts and representatives from border agencies.

The training should be laid out in a training plan, which could cover the following six modules:

5.2.1 Advanced Ballistic Intelligence and Firearms Management and Control

This includes training in the completion of the following standard intelligence products;

- Intelligence Report Grading & Evaluation
- Intelligence Requirements
- Intelligence Gap Analysis
- Intelligence Collection Plan
- Threat and Risk Assessment
- Strategic Assessment
- Tactical Assessment
- Problem Profiles and
- Subject Profiles

During the training, the participants should be provided with templates, matrices and example documents to assist them in the production of these core documents. Delegates should carry out exercises in the completion of intelligence products that focus entirely on firearms problems within their own jurisdictions. This process would allow them to begin to build real time intelligence requirements, gap analysis and collection plans that could be developed and applied in their workplace.

5.2.2 Core Intelligence Analysis covers:

- Critical and creative thinking of criminal analysts
- Inference development skills
- Key intelligence products such as problem profiles, subject profiles, operational assessment and strategic assessment
- Analytical techniques and
- Theories and charting protocols

5.2.3 Core Essentials, Importing & Analysis for Analysts

The intelligence products considered under module 1 should also be included in this module, which covers the core training for analysts.

5.2.4 Core Intelligence Research (including Gap Analysis and Collection Plans) for Researchers

Participants should be trained on:

- Understanding the critical issues, processes and procedures necessary to establish and set up an FFP
- Setting an Intelligence Requirement and applying a recognised structure and methodology to that process
- Completing an Intelligence Gap Analysis and applying a recognised structure and methodology to that process
- Developing an Intelligence Collection Plan and applying a recognised structure and methodology to that process and
- Developing a well-structured and purposeful Strategic and Tactical Intelligence Assessment

Again, delegates should be provided with example templates and matrices for active use, and these matrices should be applied to real time firearms issues in their own jurisdiction. This process is intended to support participants in developing documents and intelligence products that could be of immediate operational relevance and benefit in the workplace.

5.2.5 Firearms Management and Control

This course provides specific training in firearms and ammunition identification and categorisation.

5.2.6 Threat /Risk and Strategic Assessments in Relation to the Criminal Use and Trafficking of Firearms

This course refers to the development of threat and risk and their impact levels.

6. CONCLUSIONS, CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section contains conclusions, challenges and recommendations.

6.1 Conclusions

Each jurisdiction in the Western Balkans has committed itself to establishing an FFP with SEESAC's assistance, through the adoption of the Roadmap. Moreover, the European Union has mandated SEESAC with supporting the establishment of FFPs in South Eastern and Eastern Europe. While fulfilling these legal and political commitments is an important benchmark on the path to the EU accession, this document has also shown that there are other, intrinsic, benefits to setting up an FFP:

The FFP assists police at local level in implementing intelligence-led policing in area of firearm-related crime.

As weapons are a horizontal issue in various criminal fields, an FFP can provide leads to organised crime groups and solve a multiplicity of cases.

The FFP considers firearm-related crime holistically – as part of the bigger picture of criminal activity, rather than on a case-by-case basis. This, in turn, allows law enforcement authorities to adopt a preventive (rather than a reactive) attitude, and to better distribute their resources.

FFPs have a positive cost-benefit ratio. Namely, relative to the FFPs significant upside, law enforcement agencies do not require significant human or material resources to establish or to manage FFPs.

6.2 Challenges

As with other mechanisms that put into practice intelligence-led policing, the effectiveness of FFPs is dependent, in large part, on the individual motivation of officers and their willingness to file reports on a timely basis (as an FFP cannot perform its analytical function without the data contained in reports).

An operational FFP requires meaningful cooperation and coordination between prosecutors and investigators, particularly when it comes to sharing operational information.

The European Union's Data Protection Law Enforcement Directive enshrines citizens' fundamental right to data protection whenever personal data is used by criminal law enforcement authorities for law enforcement purposes.¹⁷ By the nature of their work, FFPs will handle personal data protected under this Directive, and may find it challenging to implement its provisions requiring them to keep data in a form which "allows identification of the individual for no longer than is necessary for the purpose of the processing" and to ensure the data is "appropriately secured."¹⁸

6.3 Recommendations

Each jurisdiction in Southeast Europe wishing to establish a fully functioning FFP should ensure that they have the following crucial elements in place: (i) adequate human and material resources; (ii) a clear remit drawn from firm legal and/or policy commitments; and (iii) well-developed processes of the sort described in section 4.6 of this document, which would ensure that all ballistic evidence recovered is sent for ballistic examination as soon as possible.

Law enforcement agencies founding the FFPs (and, following their establishment the FFPs themselves) should carry out outreach activities. They should engage with prosecutors, investigators and other counterparts to ensure they are aware of the FFP's purpose, how the FFP is dependent on their cooperation, and what benefits they can draw from it.

FFPs should not be thought of as useful only to resolving 'weapons cases' in the narrow sense of the word. Rather, due to the ubiquity of weapons in various criminal fields, FFPs should be integrated into task forces consisting of officers investigating crimes related to a wide variety of subjects, such as drugs, weapons, economic crimes, among others.

¹⁷ Directive 2016/680 of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 27 April 2016, OJ L 119, 4.5.2016, p. 89–131.

¹⁸ Ibid, art.1.



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