



EUROPEAN MARITIME SAFETY AGENCY

DECISION OF THE EUROPEAN MARITIME SAFETY AGENCY

concerning the terms and conditions for internal investigations in relation to the prevention of fraud, corruption and any illegal activity detrimental to the Communities' interests

The Chairman of the Board of the European Maritime Safety Agency

Having regard to Regulation 1406/2002 adopted on 5.8.2002 by the European Parliament and the Council establishing the European Maritime Safety Agency, as amended by Regulation 1644/2003 adopted on 22.7.2003 and in particular Article 20 2 c) of Regulation 1406/2002,

Whereas:

- (1) Regulation (EC) No 1073/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council (1) and Council Regulation (Euratom) No 1074/1999 (2) concerning investigations conducted by the European Antifraud Office provide that the Office is to initiate and conduct administrative investigations within the institutions, bodies and offices and agencies established by or on the basis of the EC Treaty or the Euratom Treaty;
- (2) The responsibility of the European Anti-fraud Office (hereinafter referred to as the Office) as established by the Commission extends beyond the protection of financial interests to include all activities relating to the need to safeguard Community interests against irregular conduct liable to give rise to administrative or criminal proceedings;
- (3) The scope of the fight against fraud should be broadened and its effectiveness enhanced by exploiting existing expertise in the area of administrative investigations;
- (4) Therefore, on the basis of their administrative autonomy, all the institutions, bodies and offices and agencies should entrust to the Office the task of conducting internal administrative investigations with a view to bringing to light serious situations relating to the discharge of professional duties which may constitute a failure to comply with the obligations of officials and servants of the Communities, as referred to in Articles 11, 12, second and third paragraphs, 13, 14, 16 and 17, first paragraph, of the Staff Regulations of Officials and the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Communities (hereinafter referred to as "the Staff Regulations"), detrimental to the interests of those Communities and liable to result in disciplinary or, in appropriate cases,

criminal proceedings, or serious misconduct, as referred to in Article 22 of the Staff Regulations, or a failure to comply with the analogous obligations of the Members, managers or members of staff of the institutions, bodies and offices and agencies of the Communities not subject to the Staff Regulations;

(5) Such investigations should be conducted in full compliance with the relevant provisions of the Treaties establishing the European Communities, in particular the Protocol on privileges and immunities, of the texts implementing them and the Staff Regulations;

(6) Such investigations should be carried out under equivalent conditions in all the Community institutions, bodies and offices and agencies; assignment of this task to the Office should not affect the responsibilities of the institutions, bodies, offices or agencies themselves and should in no way reduce the legal protection of the persons concerned;

(7) Pending the amendment of the Staff Regulations, practical arrangements should be laid down stipulating how the members of the institutions and bodies, the managers of the offices and agencies and the officials and servants of the institutions, bodies and offices and agencies are to cooperate in the smooth operation of the internal investigations,

(1) OJ L 136, 31.5.1999, p. 1.

(2) OJ L 136, 31.5.1999, p. 8.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

Duty to cooperate with the Office

The members of the administrative Board (hereinafter referred as to members of the constitutive bodies), the Executive Director, any official or servant of the European Maritime Safety Agency and members of the staff not subject to the staff regulation shall be required to cooperate fully with the Office's agents and to lend any assistance required to the investigation. With that aim in view, they shall supply the Office's agents with all useful information and explanations.

Without prejudice to the relevant provisions of the Treaties establishing the European Communities, in particular the Protocol on privileges and immunities, and of the texts implementing them, members shall cooperate fully with the Office.

Article 2

Duty to supply information

Any member of the constitutive bodies, the Executive Director and any official or servant of the European Maritime Safety Agency or member of staff not subject to the Staff regulation who becomes aware of evidence which gives rise to a presumption of the existence of possible cases of fraud, corruption or any other illegal activity detrimental to the interests of the Communities, or of serious situations relating to the discharge of professional duties which may constitute a failure to comply with the obligations of officials or servants of the Communities liable to result in disciplinary or, in appropriate cases, criminal proceedings, or a failure to comply with the analogous obligations of the members of constitutive bodies or members of staff not subject to the Staff Regulations, shall inform without delay his Head of Service or the Executive Director or the chairman of the Administrative Board, or if he considers it useful, the Office direct.

The Chairman of the Administrative board, the Executive Director or the Heads of services shall transmit without delay to the Office any evidence of which they are aware from which the existence of irregularities as referred to in the first paragraph may be presumed.

Managers, officials or servants of the European Maritime Safety Agency or members of staff not subject to the staff regulation must in no way suffer inequitable or

discriminatory treatment as a result of having communicated the information referred to in the first and second paragraphs.

Article 3

Assistance from the security staff

At the request of the Director of the Office, the European Maritime Safety Agency's security staff shall assist the Office in the practical conduct of investigations.

Article 4

Informing the interested party

Where the possible implication of a member of the constitutive bodies, official or servant of the Agency emerges, the interested party shall be informed rapidly as long as this would not be harmful to the investigation. In any event, conclusions referring by name to a member of the constitutive bodies, official or servant of the European Maritime Safety Agency or member of staff not subject to the Staff regulations may not be drawn once the investigation has been completed without the interested party's having been enabled to express his views on all the facts which concern him.

In cases necessitating the maintenance of absolute secrecy for the purposes of the investigation and requiring the use of investigative procedures falling within the remit of a national judicial authority, compliance with the obligation to invite the member, manager, official or servant of the European Maritime Safety Agency to give his views may be deferred in agreement with the Executive Director of the Agency..

Article 5

Information on the closing of the investigation with no further action taken

If, following an internal investigation, no case can be made out against a member, member of the constitutive bodies, official or servant of the European Maritime Safety Agency or member of staff not subject to the Staff regulations against whom allegations have been made, the internal investigation concerning him shall be closed, with no further action taken, by decision of the Director of the Office, who shall inform the interested party in writing.

Article 6

Waiver of immunity

Any request from a national police or judicial authority regarding the waiver of the immunity from judicial proceedings of a member of the constitutive bodies, official or servant of the European Maritime Safety Agency concerning possible cases of fraud, corruption or any other illegal activity shall be transmitted to the Director of the Office for his opinion.

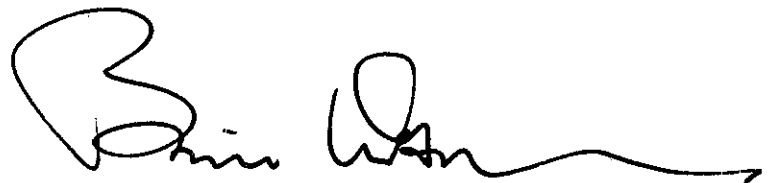
Article 7

Effective date

This Decision shall take effect on 9 December, 2003.

Done at Brussels.

For the European Maritime Safety Agency,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brian Wadsworth', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Brian Wadsworth
Chairman of the Administrative Board