

Latest News

Expert group looks into protection of critical energy infrastructures for defence

Brussels - 17 October, 2016



On 17 October, the Protection of Critical Energy Infrastructures (PCEI) expert group, established in May of this year, met at the EDA under the chairmanship of the Hellenic Ministry of National Defence. The Ministries of Defence (MoDs) of Cyprus and Greece offered to take the lead on this project within the framework of the EDA.

Colonel Georgios Drosos, Head of the Infrastructure & Environment Department of the Hellenic MoD, was appointed as the group chairman. He stressed that the group's main objective was "to assess how EU legislation on the Protection of European Critical Energy Infrastructure can be applied by the defence sector in a holistic way".

Each and every part of defence critical infrastructure needs to be protected appropriately to ensure that the overall energy supply chain can function properly. As Colonel Drosos said, maintaining and improving regional energy security and sustainability within the EU will contribute to achieving this goal. The expert group's chairman also stressed that possible shortfalls can be addressed by developing "projects of common interest for the defence sector".

Collaboration between defence and research

To promote joint efforts and scientific collaboration between the defence sector and the research community, Professor Athanasios Konstandopoulos, chairman of the board of the Centre for Research and Technology Hellas (CERTH) was appointed as the co-chairman of the group. Professor Konstandopoulos pointed out that "the task of securing Energy Strategic Autonomy in a highly connected world presents challenges and creates opportunities for strengthening collaboration between the research community and the defence sector". He called on stakeholders "to face the challenges and exploit the opportunities."

To accomplish its goals, the PCEI expert group will use the expertise of EDA Member States' Ministries of Defence, national academic and research centres as well as EDA's partners: the European Commission DG ENERGY, Joint Research Centre, and the NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence.

Air Commodore Peter Round, EDA Capability Armaments and Technology (CAT) Director, stated that "EDA aims through the PCEI Experts Group to identify common capability and research shortfalls and to address them collectively to help to achieve resilience of Armed Forces in Europe."

Denis Roger, EDA European Synergies and Innovation (ESI) Director, emphasized that "in times of crises, it is imperative to ensure the continued availability of secure and sustainable energy supplies and we are glad that EDA can contribute to this vital work by exploring the defence element of critical energy infrastructure."

The PCEI expert group is supported within EDA at an inter-directorate level (CAT and ESI) by CAT Project Officer Protect, Constantinos Hadjisavvas, and ESI Project Officer Energy and Environment Systems, Richard Brewin.

Way Ahead

The next PCEI experts group meetings will be hosted by Cyprus in January 2017 and by Greece in March 2017. The meetings will be open to all the participating Member States of the Agency, the Agency's partners as well as other international organisations.

Background

Securing Energy Strategic Autonomy for European Defence (SESAED) is becoming more vital than ever for national and international security and economic prosperity due to the increased number of terrorist attacks, and the emerging threats from hybrid and asymmetrical warfare as well as vulnerability to the impacts of climate change and natural hazards across Europe.

Hence, Protection of Critical Energy Infrastructures was identified as one of the component areas to be examined as part of the Consultation Forum for Sustainable Energy in the Defence and Security Sector (CF SEDSS) which was jointly launched by the European Defence Agency (EDA) and the European Commission in October 2015.

In May 2016, the PCEI Experts Group was established to explore PCEI further from a defence point of view. The Cypriot and the Hellenic Ministries of Defence (MoDs) offered to take the lead on this project within the framework of EDA. In this effort academic and research support is provided by the KIOS Research Center, the Cyprus University of Technology, the European University Cyprus, the Centre for Research & Technology, Hellas CERTH and the National Technical University of Athens (NTUA).

More information :

[Energy and Environment Programme \(EDA project page\)](#)

[Second meeting of the Consultation Forum for Sustainable Energy in Defence opens in Dublin \(EDA webnews\)](#)