

Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD)



The EU Global Strategy (EUGS) presented in June 2016 by Federica Mogherini, the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the Commission and Head of the European Defence Agency (EDA), called for the *"gradual synchronisation and mutual adaptation of national defence planning cycles and capability development practices"* to enhance strategic convergence between Member States and facilitate and promote defence cooperation among them.

In the November 2016 Council conclusions on implementing the EUGS in the area of security and defence, Member States invited the HRVP/Head of the EDA to present proposals on the scope, modalities and content of a Coordinated Annual Review on Defence (CARD). Such an annual review would help *"foster capability development addressing shortfalls, deepen defence cooperation and ensure more optimal use, including coherence, of defence spending plans"*. Building on the Policy Framework for Systematic and Long-Term Defence Cooperation, the objective of the CARD is *"to develop, on a voluntary basis, a more structured way to deliver identified capabilities based on greater transparency, political visibility and commitment from Member States"*.

EDA as CARD secretariat

The EDA, in cooperation with the European External Action Service (EEAS), subsequently produced a concept paper detailing the various CARD elements. This paper received advice from the EU Military Committee and was also discussed by Member States' Defence Policy Directors, Capability Directors, National Armaments Directors as well as in several EU Council working bodies and the EU Military Committee.

On the basis of that work, the Council on 18 May 2017 endorsed the modalities to establish the CARD, starting with a 'trial run' involving all Member States starting in autumn 2017. This should allow Member States to test, adapt and validate the approach ahead of the first full CARD implementation in autumn 2019.

For the CARD to provide real added value, it is of great importance to ensure the most up-to-date and detailed information possible is collected from Member States on defence plans (including spending plans), as well as on the implementation of the EU capability development priorities resulting from the Capability Development Plan (CDP). This crucial role of gathering all relevant information is played by the EDA who acts as the 'CARD secretariat'.

2017 Trial Run Methodology

In order to make the 2017 CARD trial run a success, EDA developed a methodology presented to Member States' Capability Directors in September 2017, based on the following elements and procedural steps:

- **Initial Information.** EDA's starting point is an analysis of all CARD relevant information already available in EDA databases or made available by Member States, including the EU Military Capability Questionnaire (EMCQ) and NATO's Defence Investment Pledge Report for those who are also NATO Allies. The result of this first initial information gathering is shared with Member States bilaterally.

- **Bilateral Dialogues.** EDA will then enter into bilateral dialogues with each Member State individually, in order to validate, complement and consolidate the initial information gathered in the initial phase, in consistency with NATO's Defence Planning Process.
- **CARD Analysis.** Once the bilateral dialogues are completed, the EDA will compile and analyse Member States' contributions and produce a 'CARD Analysis' which will present aggregate data and identify trends regarding defence spending plans, implementation of priorities resulting from the CDP and relevant to defence research programmes, as well as opportunities for defence cooperation. This analysis will be discussed with Member States and will form the basis of the final report to be submitted to Ministers.
- **CARD Report.** The final CARD report, to be drafted by the EDA based on the outcome of the previous steps, will present the main results of the review as well as associated recommendations. Lessons learned drawn from the trial run will be derived with Member States and presented to the Council in the perspective of the first full CARD cycle in 2019.

Last update: 2 October 2017

