

Military Mobility



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Military Mobility covers the movement of military personnel and assets from one place to another, including crossing borders by using different modes of transport. A smooth, efficient and effective movement of military personnel and assets across and beyond the European Union (EU) will enhance the EU's preparedness and response to crises. It will enable EU Member States to act faster, in line with their defence needs and responsibilities, both in the context of Common Security and Defence Policy missions and operations, and in the framework of national and multinational activities. Various national, European and international rules, procedures, regulations and directives are currently in place which impact, and potentially hamper, military mobility. A comprehensive European approach, to be also shared with relevant international entities, is therefore required to remedy potential issues in this regard and to allow for the swift movement of personnel and assets to the area where they are needed.

A comprehensive European approach

On 28 March 2018, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR) and the Commission presented a "Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council on the Action Plan on Military Mobility" (Action Plan), introducing such a comprehensive European approach. The Action Plan provides a coherent framework for programmes, projects, initiatives and activities to further improve Military Mobility in the EU. It builds upon the Roadmap on Military Mobility developed by an EDA expert working group, set up by decision of the EDA Member States, in September 2017.

The Action Plan identifies tasks, responsibilities and time-lines for improving Military Mobility with regard to legal aspects, customs, military requirements and cross-border movement permissions.

In addition, the European Council further invited the High Representative, the Commission and the EU Member States to advance their work on Military Mobility, both in the Permanent Structured Cooperation and in the context of EU-NATO cooperation.

EDA's role in the implementation of the Action Plan

EDA is committed to support its Member States to harmonise military aspects in regulations and reducing the administrative burden, while involving relevant stakeholders and ensuring coherence with NATO. The Agency functions as a facilitator and an interface between all stakeholders and provides a platform to exchange views.

Its aim is to:

- Pursue Military Mobility activities as tasked by the Member States;
- Monitor progress on Military Mobility activities, projects and programmes;
- Report to the Member States on the progress made on an annual basis;
- Ensure coherence with NATO.

Member States identified the following actions for EDA to address Military Mobility:



Cross Border Movement Permission

Cross Border Movement Permission concerns the procedures to acquire permission to cross borders and is an area where the EU Member States can work together to increase the consistency and/or the effectiveness of their procedures. This EDA programme has been signed by 22 Member States on 14 May 2019. In addition, two Technical Arrangements (TA) will be developed. The arrangements will lay down administrative procedures per transport mode, during crisis times, preparation for crisis, training and day-to-day business. Both TA's describe standard situations in which the impact for a host nation is reduced to an absolute minimum and required support is minimal or not required, which can lead to pre-approval of such a movement (pre-grant), thus to establish pre-grants for these situations and procedures for non-pre grant. Also both TA's will include diplomatic clearance procedures.



Customs - Harmonising the military requirements

Requests for military transport in and out of the EU are submitted to customs regulations. In this domain common standard procedures have been developed and deviating national interpretations on international legislation will be harmonised. This EDA programme has a strong link to the European Commission and will be executed in accordance with the European Union Customs Code where first results will be integrated from September onwards. As a next step, the communication process between armed forces and customs authorities will be digitised, leading to a faster approval process and a reduction of administrative burden.



Legal - rules and regulations

Legal issues for the military domain range from the requirements for safe and secure transport of personnel and military equipment, including the transport of dangerous goods, to aspects of liability including environmental legislation; from the physical and legal protection of personnel to the availability and adequacy of relevant transport infrastructure. Given that the legislative framework differs within the Member States, it is difficult for the military to respond adequately. It is therefore important to examine the measures that should be taken to improve processes and procedures, in full respect of the sovereignty of Member States and in accordance with EU Treaties and legislation. EDA conducted two surveys on Dangerous Goods and Legal aspects. The results have been discussed with Member States and will be handed over to the European Commission for their consideration before summer 2019.