Private security: network of contact points for the responsible national authorities. Initiative Spain

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PURPOSE : to set up a Network of contact points of national authorities responsible for private security. LEGISLATIVE ACT : Council Recommendation 2002H0627(01) regarding cooperation between the competent national authorities of Member States responsible for the private security sector. CONTENT : to recall, private security activities can only be understood and considered as complementary and subordinate to public security; this is why the European Union Member States have various checks and administrative procedures regulating security activities carried out by private individuals, thus ensuring that security can be enjoyed by all. An analysis of the private security sector reveals that a number of problems sometimes exists, such as the entry of unqualified people into the profession, the lack of product type-approval standards, the low level of training of private security agents, irregularities in the running of firms, or infringements of provisions regulation the activities of companies providing private security services. In the context of the European Union, two seminars were held (in 2000 and 2001) with private security experts which exposed a number of shortcomings suggesting that the activity and provision of services by natural and legal persons involved in the private security in the single market should be supervised and regulated. For instance, there is a need to set up permanent communication channels to exchange situations and experiences facilitating the solution of operational problems arising in that area and to carry out intelligence exchanges between the various police services. Consequently, it seems convenient and appropriate to set up a network of contact points of national authorities with responsibility for private security. This is the aim of this Recommendation. The Council recommends that Member States encourage and facilitate cooperation and collaboration between national authorities responsible for the private security sector with a view to: - exchanging experience in the handling of information supplied by private security firms in accordance with national law, which is material to public security; - establishing best practices in the handling of information which is supplied by private security firms and is material to public security. In addition, Member States should also organise, for the abovementioned purposes at least every two years, a meeting of the national authorities responsible for the private security sector. ENTRY INTO FORCE : 13 June 2002.