


The subsidiary bodies of WEU

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URL: http://www.cvce.eu/obj/the_subsidary_bodies_of_weu-en-8dab4104-ebcd-44b5-a6a1-1f5b6aa46682.html

Last updated: 08/07/2016



The subsidiary bodies of Western European Union

There were nine subsidiary bodies of Western European Union (WEU): the Agency for the Control of Armaments (ACA), the Standing Armaments Committee (SAC), the Western European Armaments Group (WEAG), the Western European Armaments Organisation (WEAO), the Planning Cell, the WEU Military Staff, the Situation Centre, the Institute for Security Studies and the Satellite Centre.

The Agency for the Control of Armaments (ACA)

The Agency for the Control of Armaments (ACA) was set up in 1954 by Protocol No IV to the Brussels Treaty. It was based in Paris and its task was to ensure that the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) honoured its undertakings not to manufacture certain types of armaments defined in Annexes II and III to Protocol No III of the Brussels Treaty (NBCs ⁽¹⁾ and certain conventional weapons). The object was also to establish overall control of the levels of stocks of armaments of the types mentioned in Annex IV to Protocol No III held by each Member State on the mainland of Europe. The ACA can be seen as a confidence-building measure and, at the same time, a contribution to the stability of Western Europe in the period after the Second World War. It was set up in response to the French and, to a lesser extent, British concern to monitor German rearmament. Protocol No IV regulated the practical arrangements for the establishment of the ACA, which was responsible to the Council of WEU. The Agency operated either by examining documents supplied by the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) in the case of forces and depots under NATO authority, or by field surveys in the form of test checks in the case of other forces, with due regard for the economic interests of the civilian sector. Protocol No IV also set out the ways in which countries were to proceed in order to notify the Agency of their levels of stocks of armaments, and the procedure which could lead to the imposition of a sanction ⁽²⁾. Occupying, as it did, a central position in the Treaty (as did Article V on mutual assistance), the ACA accounted, until the mid-1980s, for a sizeable proportion of the WEU budget, the staffing and the space occupied in the WEU's annual report. However, a number of factors combined to strip this control and limitation policy of part of its substance. These were the amendments made to the control arrangements, the recommendations from SACEUR ⁽³⁾ (NATO) for greater flexibility in view of requests from the FRG, the sensitive nature of nuclear weapons, the French withdrawal from the integrated command, and the wish of both the Europeans and the Americans to incorporate the FRG into an arrangement designed to promote reconciliation and, in particular, shared military and strategic solidarity in the Cold War environment. As an instrument of cohesion and cooperation the ACA played its part, whereas the practical control measures were not adequate to satisfy the undertakings given. Even so, it was an independent international body with unique experience in the area of data exchanges and random inspections. Having become anachronistic in a Europe of blocs in which the allies had to be 'equal', the ACA was abolished ⁽⁴⁾ at the Bonn meeting in April 1985, following a reform set in motion pursuant to the Rome Declaration on 27 October 1984.

The Standing Armaments Committee (SAC)

The Standing Armaments Committee was a body created by decision of the Council of 7 May 1955 pursuant to Article VIII of the Treaty. The SAC, for which (as for the ACA) there was no explicit provision in the Treaty, was based in Paris. It consisted of a small number of officials of WEU, as well as permanent delegates from the Member States, who could come from the delegations to NATO. The SAC's task was to work in close liaison with NATO to develop consultations and cooperation in the field of armaments with a view to finding shared solutions which would make it easier for the Member States' governments to satisfy their requirements for equipment. The object was to conclude agreements or arrangements, either general among all the Member States or bi- or multilateral among a number of them, which could relate to problems such as research, standardisation, production and supply of armaments. These agreements were open for other NATO countries to join. The SAC reported on its activities to the Council of WEU twice a year and, through its secretariat, was the channel for cooperation with FINABEL ⁽⁵⁾. The SAC mainly conducted its studies in the area of operational research, the evaluation of military equipment and certain fields of technological experimentation. No actual WEU equipment was produced in this framework, while NATO, with its Defence Production Committee and then its Conference of National Armaments Directors (CNAD), dominated this sector, as did the Independent European Programme Group (IEPG). Even so, the SAC was a

way of organising cooperation between officials and service personnel from WEU, NATO and later Eurogroup ⁽⁶⁾ and the IEPG. In the Rome Declaration of 1984, ministers committed WEU to a reorganisation of the SAC, leading to a decision in 1985 to abolish its international secretariat in favour of the setting up of three agencies. One of these, Agency No III ⁽⁷⁾, was to supply only a weak stimulus to European cooperation on armaments, given the strength of national sovereignty, the duplication of effort and competition from other, more important bodies, the CNAD and the IEPG.

The Western European Armaments Group (WEAG)

The WEAG was set up in December 1992 and became active the following year. It brought 19 Member States ⁽⁸⁾ of WEU together to pursue several objectives: to open the national defence markets up to cross-border competition, to strengthen the defence technological and industrial base (DTIB), to promote cooperation in research and development and, lastly, to make more efficient use of resources through increased harmonisation of requirements. The WEAG benefited from the experience of the IEPG ⁽⁹⁾, from which it partly stemmed, and was organised around the national armaments directors (NADs) who formed the executive. Its 'armaments' secretariat supported the WEU presidency and was accommodated in buildings belonging to the Secretariat-General. There were three panels in the WEAG, dealing respectively with Research and Technology Cooperation ⁽¹⁰⁾, Procedures and Economic Matters, and Cooperative Equipment Programmes. The three panels were required to report to the NADs, who met twice a year.

The WEAG ceased operating on 23 May 2005. The European Defence Agency (EDA) took over its work on behalf of the Member States of the European Union.

The Western European Armaments Organisation (WEAO)

The WEAO was set up on 19 November 1996 at the WEU Council in Ostend, with international legal personality. The Organisation was operational from 7 March 1997 and managed the WEAG's R&T activities; it was housed in the WEU Secretariat-General buildings. All the WEAG countries took part in the work of this subsidiary body apart from Austria. It was responsible for supporting the WEAG in respect of R&T and for letting R&T contracts on behalf of the States concerned. Several dozen projects were managed by the WEAO, using a range of instruments for promoting cooperation: the Euclid, Thales and Europa memoranda of understanding. The WEAO consisted of a Board of Directors and a Research Cell (the executive body), backed up by an intergovernmental structure under a director-general. The Board of Directors comprised a representative from each country (either the NAD or his delegate) and every decision was taken unanimously, with some exceptions at the half-yearly meetings. Its main function was to define the WEAO's general policy, lay down guidelines for the Research Cell, decide on financial options and set the policy on concluding contracts. The WEAO ceased operating on 31 August 2006, for the same reasons as the WEAG, with a positive record as regards contract management.

The Planning Cell, the Situation Centre and the WEU Military Staff

The Planning Cell was set up in Brussels on 1 October 1992 and became operational in May 1993. It was associated with the work of organising the WEU to make it more operational, as laid down in the declaration which the WEU Member States adopted in Maastricht on 10 December 1991. The Cell was composed, at the time, of some 50 officers from the Member States and associated Member States, to whom more could be added if the need arose, and its mission was to devise generic plans on the basis of potential scenarios for operations, to draw up and keep up-to-date the inventory of forces available for deployment, to prepare plans for exercises and to draft, in advance, a list of the rules of engagement. If a crisis arose, the Planning Cell could be called upon to deliver opinions, make recommendations and produce background papers on instructions from the Council. The Planning Cell was the forerunner of the WEU Military Staff, which was brought into being by decision of the Erfurt Council of Ministers in November 1997 and established on a permanent footing in May 1998. The task of the WEU Military Staff, a permanent structure with a three-star officer as director, was to implement Council guidelines and decisions with help from the (non-permanent) Military Committee. The Staff also assisted the WEU working groups in the information and decision-making process and issued directives and guidelines to the head of the Staff's Support Group, to the director

of the Planning Cell and to the head of the Situation Centre. The latter body, operational as from June 1996, was responsible for monitoring crisis zones (as indicated by the Council) and keeping track of the progress of WEU missions. The various military guidance structures described here were dissolved in the process of withdrawing responsibility from WEU at the Marseille summit in November 2000. The WEU Military Staff was to have its staff numbers cut by 35 %, as stipulated in the transition arrangement approved by the Chiefs of Staff of the Member States' armies on 17 October 2000, and was then abolished and its functions transferred to the European Union (EU) Staff, operational on 11 June 2001, following the joint theoretical exercise, JES-2001 (Joint Exercise Study 2001) conducted by WEU and NATO in the Netherlands. However, except as regards needs arising from this exercise, the Marseille Declaration suspended all routine consultation mechanisms between WEU and NATO, as it did those between WEU and EU, though without prejudice to the cooperation needed as part of the transition process.

The Institute for Security Studies (ISS)

The WEUISS was established by ministerial decision of the Council of 13 November 1989. The Institute was housed on the 3rd floor of the building hosting the offices of the WEU Assembly in Paris, where it began operating on 1 July 1990. The ISS's objective was to promote the security and defence identity by contributing to the overall discussion on matters relevant to it. Its task was also to keep the Council of WEU informed by means of analyses and research reports of varying degrees of confidentiality. It eventually set up synergies between strategic research institutes from the various Member States, as well as institutes elsewhere. For this purpose the Institute organised conferences, seminars, lectures and talks for participants from the institutional world, the universities, industries, the media and the armed forces. It produced a number of occasional publications and monographs in the *Chaillot Papers* series. The Institute consisted of a director, research fellows from full Member States on fixed-term contracts and temporary research scholars. By decisions taken at the Marseille summit in November 2000, the WEUISS was placed under the auspices of the European Union on 1 January 2002 as the European Union Institute for Security Studies.

The Satellite Centre

The WEU Satellite Centre was established by decision of the Vianden Council of 27 June 1991 and inaugurated at Torrejón de Ardoz in the suburbs of Madrid on 28 April 1993. It became effectively operational on 13 May 1997. The Centre comprised a Director, a Steering Committee consisting of a representative of each Member State and a staff of some 40 officers. The task of the Centre, which was under the authority of the Council, was to interpret satellite images available on the private market (in Europe, the United States, Canada, India and Russia) or which could be transferred by national military satellites such as the Helios system. The images interpreted by the experts at Torrejón were obtained by optical, infra-red or radar methods. The reading of these images helped the WEU Council take decisions at preventative stages, at moments of crisis or in post-conflict periods. They were also useful in verifying compliance with arms control agreements and in environmental hazard monitoring. The Satellite Centre was also able to make its geographic information system (GIS) ⁽¹⁾ on Kosovo available to the WEU Council, the EU, NATO and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Political control of the Centre was by means of two mechanisms: work orders were received via the national cell concerned and all work orders from WEU or full or associate Member States were submitted to the Permanent Council of WEU. Because of the sensitive nature of the data and national priorities, the WEU Council was not able to make optimum use of the instrument, owing to certain procedures involving consensus and deadlines (the Helios satellite).

Following the WEU Marseille summit in November 2000, the Satellite Centre was placed under European Union auspices on 1 January 2002 as the European Union Satellite Centre.

(December 2009)

(1) Nuclear, biological and chemical.

(2) On this question the Council takes decisions by majority vote.

- (3) Supreme Commander Allied Forces in Europe.
- (4) The ACA actually remained in existence to comply with the letter of the Treaty, but with severely reduced powers. It was placed under the same administrative management as a new agency (Agency I for the study of arms control and disarmament questions); the other two new agencies were concerned with security and defence questions (Agency II) and European cooperation in the field of armaments (Agency III). These three agencies were based in Paris; their mission was to assist the Council and they reported to the Secretariat-General.
- (5) FINABEL is a body responsible for coordinating the army staffs of a number of WEU member countries.
- (6) Eurogroup was a grouping of a number of European governments within the NATO framework from 1968 to 1993. Its mission was to coordinate the European countries' policies with a view to some degree of standardisation in military equipment. Following a decision by the Defence Ministers in Eurogroup on 24 May 1993, its activities in the field of medical training (EUROMED) were transferred to NATO and its information and telecommunications functions (EUROCOM) were transferred to WEU. Eurogroup itself was dissolved on 1 January 1994.
- (7) Agency III was finally closed down in 1989.
- (8) The full Member States were later joined, in accordance with special arrangements, by the observer countries and associate partner countries (by decision of the WEU Erfurt Council in November 1997).
- (9) On 4 December 1992 the Defence Ministers of the 13 countries in the IEPG, which was established in 1976, decided to transfer their organisation to WEU, thereby giving rise to the WEAG as the successor body. Then, in 1993, Eurogroup transferred its activities relating to logistics and future equipment design.
- (10) Research and technology.
- (11) A computerised system for the capture, storage, checking, management, analysis and display of spatial reference data for use in producing cartographic and associated information.