



Part-financed by the European Union (European Regional Development Fund)

Project on Sub-regional Risk of Spill of Oil and Hazardous Substances
in the Baltic Sea (BRISK)

Second Meeting (Financial Aspects of BRISK)

BRISK 2/2009

Aarhus, Denmark, 8-9 September 2009

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

0.1 The Second Meeting of the Project on Sub-regional risk of spill of oil and hazardous substances in the Baltic Sea (BRISK) was held in Aarhus, Denmark, on 8-9 September 2009.

0.2 The aim of the Meeting was to:

- give Project Partners (PPs) a common understanding of the general principles in the budget, inclusive shared cost;
- inform PPs about the general reporting system, what reports (forms) they have to deliver and when they have to do it;
- guide PPs in how different forms are to be filled in specifically.

0.3 The Meeting was organized by the Admiral Danish Fleet, the Lead Partner of the BRISK Project.

0.4 All Project Partners, except Latvia and Lithuania, were represented at the Meeting. The List of Participants is included in **Annex 1**.

0.5 Mr. Peter Poulsen, Project Manager of BRISK acted as Chairman of the Meeting. Ms. Monika Stankiewicz, HELCOM Secretariat acted as Secretary of the Meeting.

Agenda Item 1

Introduction to the Meeting

1.1 The Project Manager, Mr. Peter Poulsen, representing the Lead Partner, welcomed the participants of the Meeting.

1.2 The Meeting adopted the Programme and Agenda for the Meeting as included in **Annex 2**.

1.3 Mr. Poulsen informed that the revised Project application, including the Project budget has been forwarded to the Joint Technical Secretariat and approved. The changes had to be made due to lack of financing for the Russian participation in BRISK. One of the changes is that the project will be extended by half a year.

1.4 Mr. Poulsen further informed about granting by the Nordic Council of Ministers of additional funding to carry out activities in Russia complementary to the BRISK activities. The Meeting welcomed this information and thanked the Project Manager for his initiative to seek the missing funding.

1.5 The Meeting appreciated the information that prior to the financial workshop it was agreed between the organiser (represented by Mr. Carsten Jürgensen) and the Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS) (represented by Mr. Vaclav Kaplan) that key questions from the

workshop can be asked of Mr. Kaplan by the telephone. This way, key questions and answers could be communicated within the core group of financial officers of the Project and the opportunity of having almost all officers together and agreeing on common questions and answers could be utilised.

Agenda Item 2 Introduction to the project, project budget and shared costs

2.1 The Meeting took note of the general introduction by Mr. Carsten Jürgensen, COWI, on the aims of the Meeting as well as of the BRISK Project.

2.2 Mr. Jürgensen further presented the Project Partners' specific budgets, their share in the shared costs and the possible consequences of under- or overspending of the budgets (**Presentation 1**).

Agenda Item 3 Project reporting, time schedule, list of reports, timesheets and exercises in how to fill in different forms

3.1 The Meeting took note of the presentation by Mrs. Karin Rothmann Hansen, the BRISK Financial Officer, about the reporting forms that need to be filled in by the Project Partners, including a cost itemisation form and time sheets. Each participant was given a hard copy of the reporting formats.

3.2 The Project Manager informed about the extended deadline for the Project Partners' Preparation Reports and First Progress Report which have to be delivered to the Lead Partner **by 22 September 2009**. The reports have to be checked by the Project Partners' First Level Controllers.

3.3 Prior to the workshop Mr. Jürgensen and Mr. Kaplan discussed the time schedule related to the changes introduced to the project due to lack of ENPI financing. As it is a very high prioritised principle of the EU that the EU never approves budgets back in time, project budgets for the preparation phase and the first reporting phase can not be changed, although the project timeframe has been extended.

3.4 The Meeting learnt that the problem can be solved by accumulating the costs and budgets over the first three reporting periods (including the preparation phase), only after which the spending is checked versus the bidding budget. Therefore, the budgets for preparation phase and the first reporting phase can remain unchanged in the revised time schedule, whereas the budget for the second reporting phase is reduced to balance the accumulated spending. This implies that the partner budgets shall balance the budget after the reporting phase 3.

3.5 The Meeting raised a specific question how to fill in a table with information on salary in a timesheet form – if a net salary to be inserted into the left column is without taxes,

pension, etc. The answer from Mr. Kaplan was that it is important that the resulting total amount that is in the far right column reflects the actually paid personnel costs.

3.6 Estonia raised the question related to the change of the Estonian Project Partner. The new Project Partner – Estonian Board of Border Guard - came into the project at a later stage. The question is how the costs incurred by the first Estonian partner will be included in the time sheet reporting. Mr. Vaclav replied that the former partner can not report anything. As the partner was changed at a very early stage, no big implications will occur.

3.7 The Meeting took note of the additional clarification that has been given regarding a 20% rule. It concerns 20 % of each budget line and work package on a project level, and it can be either 20% of budget or 40.000 EUR, whatever is highest (see Programme Manual, Chapter 5.1.6. Horizontal rule no. 3 Budget flexibility rule)

3.8 The Meeting also requested a clarification regarding VAT: a) Is it only when VAT is mentioned on the invoice that it can be deducted?; and b) Is there a minimum limit for when you can not deduct VAT anymore? The reply given by Mr. Kaplan was as follows:

- Ad a) Some institutions can deduct VAT, others can not. This is stated in the Partnership Declaration and in the Project Data Form. The general rule regarding VAT is listed in the Programme Manual, Chapter 5.1.6. Horizontal rules, rule no. 7, Value added tax and other financial charges. Regarding taxes abroad, e.g. hotels etc., one should ask the First Level Controller, who advises on national methods.

- Ad b) From the EU side, there is no minimum limit. In any case, one has to liaise with the FLC.

Agenda Item 4 Shared costs and exercises in shared costs

4.1 The Meeting took note of the information by Mr. Carsten Jürgensen about the shared costs. The Project Partners will be given a note about the shared costs for each reporting period; however they are not required to fill in a shared costs table in the cost itemization form.

Agenda Item 5 Cost itemisation and exercises in cost itemisation

5.1 The Participants exercised how to fill-in the cost itemisation form.

Agenda Item 6 Reporting on communication issues

6.1 The Meeting took note of the information by Ms. Ulla Ahonen, BRISK Information Officer, about the Communication and Information activities, including the publishing of the project website and finalizing of an article template for the use by PP's (**Presentation 2**).

6.2 Ms. Ahonen reminded the Project Partners on the need to report their communication activities to the Information Officer. Especially for the publicity and communication indicators, listed in the Communication Plan, and to be reported starting from the second progress report, some further information will be needed.

Agenda Item 7 Any other business

7.1 Poland raised the question about the First Level Control in Poland. The appointed FLC in Poland does not accept the new, pre-filled reporting format provided by the JTS, and requests the previous format to be used. The Meeting welcomed the information that Mr. Kaplan will take direct contact to the Polish FLC to clarify this issue, following an e-mail explanation sent by Poland to the JTS.

7.2 The Meeting amended the list of BRISK Project Partners and Contact Persons, as contained in **Annex 3**.

7.3 The Minutes of the Meeting has been prepared by the HELCOM Secretariat.

Annex 1

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Annex 2

PROGRAMME

The BRISK Financial Meeting was organized on 8–9 September 2009, in Århus, Denmark.

The aim of the Meeting was to:

- give Project Partners (PP) a common understanding of the general principles in the budget, inclusive shared cost;
- inform PP about the general reporting system, what reports (forms) they have to deliver and when they have to do it;
- guide PP in how different forms are to be filled in specifically.

AGENDA

1. Introduction to the Meeting
2. Introduction to the project, project budget and shared costs
3. Project reporting, time schedule, list of reports, timesheets and exercises in how to fill in different forms
4. Shared costs and exercises in shared costs
5. Cost itemisation and exercises in cost itemisation
6. Reporting on communication issues
7. Any other business



Annex 3

BRISK PROJECT PARTNERS AND CONTACT PERSONS		
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