

# GUEST ARTICLE

from the desks of  
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## Community investments stimulate cycle of benefits

The European Commission has commissioned a project called Security Upgrade for PORTs, SUPPORT for short, with the ambitious aim of improving port security in major and minor European ports, while improving trade flow through these ports as well.

European port security is high on the agenda at the EC's Brussels headquarters, but there are some obstacles that need to be addressed, including:

- Lack of a central body for European port security;
- Low awareness among terminal operators; and
- Lack of international (and European) standards for training and security equipment.

Port security, as a concept, is treated differently in the various European member states, with no Europe-wide appreciation and handling of port security matters and no European Department of Homeland Security. A European body that concerns itself exclusively with port security and has executive powers of enforcement does not exist.

However, the Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport – DG MOVE – at the European Commission has recently published a white paper on a roadmap toward a Single European Transport Area which explicitly mentions “convergent and enforced” security across all transport modes. The European Maritime Safety Agency, EMSA for short, combines with DG MOVE to provide policy support for port security, but both agencies have wide-reaching tasks well beyond pure security.

There are some other European bodies involved, but coordination between them is not always fully integrated. EMSA advises on maritime safety issues as well, while FRONTEX, formally the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union, advises on and assists with border

control issues. EUROPOL, short for European Police Office, can be an asset in combating organized crime. However, these organizations have no executive powers and cannot control national operations. For example, a EUROPOL officer cannot arrest a suspect in a member state, but rather must request assistance from national police.

This leads to the second issue – the terminal operators.

Terminal operators are generally either private enterprises principally concerned with making profits, or they can be owned by local municipalities with political aims of “serving the region.” Port security investments are seen as a necessary nuisance, a cost that reduces profits through investments and barriers in the flow of goods.

Exacerbating this is the fact that many operators see port security as a low-priority issue, something that should be dealt with by the state police or military.

Regarding the final issue of lack of centralized standards, currently, some ports have interpreted security legislation in such a way that they have installed access control systems, fences, closed-circuit TV and intrusion alarm systems, while other ports have interpreted that a yellow line around the terminal boundary is sufficient to be in compliance. Clearly, this is a very unsatisfactory state of affairs.

It is within this challenging domain that SUPPORT aims to effect change that will increase port security in the European Union. The SUPPORT project will tackle this problem from a multitude of angles.

First, we will take a corporate security management approach, based on the International Organization for Standardization's ISO 28000, but developing it further to be fully compliant with initiatives such as the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism, or C-TPAT, and the Authorized Economic Operator, or AEO, program. The International Ship and Facility Security Code, ISPS Code for short, and its port directive will form the underlying cornerstone. We will embrace the lessons of Rotterdam's port and its holistic approach to security, as applied in the past 10 years.

Second, we have undertaken a detailed review of potential threats, their probability and potential for disruption as a way of highlighting threats, paying close attention to financial consequences and impacts.

Finally, we will develop an interactive tool that can showcase cost vs. effectiveness for security measures aimed at mitigating specific threats. Our method aims to show an explicit link




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between flow, cost and effectiveness, and thus provide ports with investment decision tools that currently do not exist.

We will also focus on issues such as recognized port security training and awareness training, as well as waterside security matters, both above and below water, recognizing that this is one of the major areas where perhaps the biggest gaps exist today.

The project will issue periodic updates on its progress, trackable at [www.support-project.eu](http://www.support-project.eu) on the Web. Those wishing to provide feedback or gain further information may send an email to [supportproject@bmtproject.net](mailto:supportproject@bmtproject.net) or use the contact page on the website. 

*Dr. Papas, who holds his doctorate in management information systems from the University of Surrey, England, and Mr. Cornell, who holds a master's degree from the Stockholm School of Economics, are both members of the executive board of the European Commission Seventh Framework Program SUPPORT Project.*



Guards engage in securing a pier at the Port of Rotterdam.