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- Airborders

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THE EUROPEAN UNION

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SCH-EVAL 29
COMIX 598

NOTE

from : the Survey Group on Frontiers - Airborders
to : the Working Party on Schengen Evaluation

Subject : Report on the Schengen evaluation of the Benelux countries
- Airborders

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Report on the visit to Amsterdam Airport Schiphol on 9 September 2002

Structure and basic facts

Amsterdam Airport Schiphol is the main airport in the Netherlands and Nr. 4 in Europe in terms of passengers. It has direct European and intercontinental connections to 204 cities in 89 countries.

39,5 million passengers were handled in 2001. There are 89 passenger gates.

The KMAR (Royal Marechaussee) is responsible for carrying out the border controls at the airport.

An important increase in staff has taken place since 1996, in accordance with the recommendations made by the previous Schengen inspection committee. More than half of all passengers are in transit/transfer. The number of staff amounts 522.

There are three terminals, which are located in the same building.

Based on the answers by the Dutch delegation to the questionnaire, the discussions held during the inspection and the actual visit on site, the experts were of the opinion that the border control is well organised at Schiphol airport and that the staff of the Marechaussée is performing its duties in a diligent and motivated way

Equipment

The booths are located in the three terminals as follows: Terminal 1: 2 posts for arrivals and 2 posts for departures; Terminal 2: 2 post for arrivals and 1 for departures; Terminal 3: 2 for arrivals and 1 for departure.

There are 68 booths in the airport, which are nearly all equipped with an individual terminal connected to the SIS per user, with passport readers, with a docubox and with a telephone. Behind this first line, one can find several second line offices, supplemented by a specialised office for false documents as well as the necessary infrastructure for asylum seekers and for refugees. The booths are built in such a way that it is possible for a passenger to have a look from the lateral side and from behind onto the screens and generally into the operations performed by the officers. The experts encourage the Dutch authorities to put forward the plans for new booths, as it was announced. No images of the model for the future booth could yet be shown.

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The configuration of the filters is such that it does not exclude to jump over the fences or the barriers and then to reach the Schengen area, neither avoiding passing through of documents. This was particularly sensitive in those places where no iron curtain could hamper people passing behind the control desks, especially in the areas, which are not manned during 24 hours a day.

In the immediate neighbourhood of the booths, one can find the premises for supplementary checks. These areas are not entirely comparable with second line offices as meant in the EU Schengen Catalogue, since important parts of "second line" operations do take place at other premises in the airport. For example, the staff working in counterfeit and forged documents is working in another part of the airport, as does the police immigration team called "sluisteam". The experts consider that the system to have several, but smaller second line offices near the filters offers some advantages, in particular by facilitating a close contact with the officers operating in the booths. On the other hand, the "light" form of second line is not equipped as the full-fledged one should be. There was for example only an old copy available of the Schengen Common Handbook (in the 18th version), nor were there any specimen of identification documents (and no annex of the Common Manual available, related to the documents that enable to enter into Schengen area).

The office for combating false documents was well documented and professionally staffed. A bulletin called "Alert" is distributed so as to disseminate quickly relevant information.

The sign posting did not comply with the European Commission' recommendation on the situation applicable since 1 July 2002, according to which EU nationals, EEA-nationals (ISL, LIECH, NO) and Swiss nationals (CH), should have the right to make use of one lane. This should be modified. The Commission is invited to take the initiative to formally replace the former Schengen Executive Committee decision.

Controls and procedures

The controls are generally performed in a satisfying manner, whereby the officers seem to take enough time to communicate with the passenger. Nevertheless, the experts were surprised to notice that passports from US nationals are neither systematically stamped upon entry, nor were they checked into the SIS despite the fact that there was no queue.

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The experts were favourably impressed by the number and the intensity of the gate checks, among which those systematically performed on the arrivals from 20 sensitive destinations. The list of these sensitive destinations is updated every 6 months. This system is strengthened by obtaining information about passengers as from departure on, by receiving at an early stage copies of the passengers' travel documents.

A demonstration was given of the Automatic Border Passage system. This system is an application of biometric identification, which allows border passage through iris-recognition, altogether with a check on the validity of the travel document. This ensures the fastest possible way of going through borders control. In a few seconds, a recognition is performed, together with an automated check in the SIS. An alert mechanism is foreseen in case a passenger does not conform with the requirements. This system, which is currently used by approx. 6.000 persons, is restricted to holders of a passport from the European Economic Area (EU + Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein). The experts were very much appreciative of this new system. An evaluation of the system by the Dutch authorities is expected before the end of this year. Additional efforts should be made to avoid the possibility of forcing the entry into the Schengen area by jumping over the installation. Furthermore, the experts call on the international authorities to develop harmonised standards for biometrics technology, which will probably become more popular.

The controls on crews were performed by a visual check on the airline ID's and on the passport. This does not comply with the requirements of the Common Manual according to which a full control should be performed on crews even if they should receive priority at the desk. There is however a check of the magnetic badge at several doors and passages within the terminal

The passengers flows in the terminal 2, which is used for both Schengen and non-Schengen flights, is regulated by so-called flexigates or flexidoors, which can be opened manually. Those doors allow to open or close parts of the airport and to channel passengers according to the status of their flight (Schengen or non-Schengen). The opening of the doors is controlled by software based on information relating to the arrival of flights. The experts were told by the KMAR that the software is not always working properly, mainly when changes in the allocation of gates occur suddenly.

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Particular attention has been given to these doors by the Marechaussee, by controlling their correct status. The deficiencies, which were mentioned, might be improved if and when the software controlling the doors will be linked to real information originating in the apron tower. Furthermore, the experts noted that the doors are not completely hermetic on the ground, so as to leave a certain risk of passing through documents. The flexigates have opened automatically a few times in the past, when the emergency button was pressed. The experts were of the opinion that it might be useful to describe at the European level more exactly what requirements are to be imposed on flexigates.

Staff and training

Every officer of the KMAR receives training for the duration of one year (sergeant 1). After this year, they are authorized to perform all police duties. Officers charged with border control also follow a specific additional course of 3 weeks. This training deals with all the legal and practical aspects of border control including additional training to detect forgeries of (travel) documents. After the year's training and additional 3-week course, officers receive continuous on-the-job training from more experienced immigration officers. Two days a week, approximately, together with the commanding officers, 30 immigration officers take part in theme day sessions. Physical training is given every two months. Part of this training concerns the use of force.

The experts were informed that supplementary staff would be available for the KMAR in the near future. It was noted that several tasks with security implications, like the monitoring of cameras, the access to the planes or the opening of flexigates are performed by staff of a private company.

The staff appeared to be very motivated and has a good knowledge of English. It was noted that border officers are quite young and do often not stay longer in this job than 3 to 5 years. The Marechaussee should consider ways to ensure the highest level of experience and knowledge in these positions.

The training should include some more understanding of the Union's functioning. The consciousness of being administrating either national or Schengen- and EU rules seemed to be somewhat vague.

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Other topics

- The Dutch authorities mentioned that they sometimes perform random checks at the gates where the Schengen flights arrive, i.e. inside the internal European area of free movements of persons. The experts are of the opinion that such random checks should only be held when they are based on suspicion and targeted at certain people. This appears to be a violation of both the Schengen rules and the political spirit behind it.*

- The experts were informed that according to a Benelux rule, people may be allowed to leave the airport with a visum for 72 hours. This rule, being a Benelux one, entitles the passenger to enter the Dutch territory - for this restricted time - and to leave it from either Belgium or Luxembourg. This implies that the Netherlands do not know whether such a passenger actually has left the Schengen area. We were told that this rule should be abolished in the near future. The experts consider that this 72-hours authorisation - if allowed at all - should be restricted to exceptional circumstances and that the exit of the passenger should be registered.

It appeared from the figures that a relatively high numbers of visa has been issued in the airport. In 2001, the number reached even more than 10.000. This figure appears to be only acceptable if it is directly linked to seamen in transit. It should be recalled that other visa may only be issued at the borders in exceptional circumstances.

The border police is entitled in case of doubts to check the "main destination" to avoid visa shopping . However it raises also the question what happens to the person when the issuing consulate can not be reached or the main destination of a business man had to be changed in the last minute due to other commitments.

- In 2001 a total amount of 276.267,84 Euro's was paid in fines by 18 different carriers in settlements out of court for non-compliance with the duty as referred to in article 4 of the Aliens Act. In 2001 court cases took place against 4 carriers. In these cases penalties were imposed for a total amount of 71.016,60 Euro's.

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* These checks inside the Schengen area are domestic aliens supervision checks, based on national law, as referred to in article 2, sub 3 of the Schengen Agreement.

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Report on the visit to Rotterdam Airport on 10 September 2002

Structure and basic facts

Rotterdam airport is the second airport of the Netherlands. Its size and the intensity of the traffic are not comparable with the country's main airport, Amsterdam-Schiphol. 800.000 passengers were handled in 2001. The airport is mainly in use for business passengers (harbour authorities, multinational companies, oil sector) and for holiday travelers. The airport is divided into terminal areas for Schengen and non-Schengen traffic by means of a physical separation. There is a separate Jetcenter where offices are available for VIP-passengers of private flights.

The KMAR is responsible for carrying out the border controls at the airport. The number of staff amounts 63 out of which 55 are actually involved in the three main tasks: police, border controls, security.

Rotterdam-airport is closely cooperating with Amsterdam-Schiphol, i.e; by taking responsibility for some of the exceptional tasks like the arrival and departures of large groups of football supporters. This close cooperation between the airports is eased by the fact that the (private) Schiphol company is holding the shares of the Rotterdam airport company.

Generally, the experts were of the opinion that the organisation of border controls in Rotterdam fulfils the Schengen requirements, as long as the airport remains of a size which is largely under its policy objective of 4.000.000 passengers. In case that number is reached, the current infrastructure would no longer be appropriate. Passengers from both Schengen and non-Schengen have to walk over the tarmac and in case the numbers of travellers would rise, there might be misuse of the doors giving access to the Schengen respectively the non-Schengen area.

If such a spectacular increase in passenger figures would occur, the airport would need an international transit zone, which it currently lacks.

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Equipment

The number of control booths working positions amounts seven. All of them are equipped with a terminal connected to the SIS, UV-lights and a retroviewer . They were not using passport readers. Contrary to Amsterdam, the booths in Rotterdam do not allow passengers to take a look at the officers' activities from behind.

In the second line, a Docubox 2000 and a Microscope are available; a version of the Common Manual was found, but not an updated one. Distribution of the newest version, issued by the Council in Summer 2002 is advisable. The experts did not meet the local specialist for counterfeits and forgeries. Apparently, that service is not manned in every shift. Both handbooks and the Edison system were available.

A simple but useful document was shown to the experts. On a two page form, all the basic information was brought together with the essential requirements for nationals of every country in the world(visa obligation, identity documents, special situations for diplomats, etc). Such a form might prove a useful reminder for every officer in the control desk.

The sign posting did not comply with the European Commission' recommendation on the situation applicable since 1 July 2002, according to which EU nationals, EEA-nationals (ISL, LIECH, NO) and Swiss nationals (CH), should have the right to make use of one lane. This should be modified. The Commission is invited to take the initiative to formally replace the former Schengen Executive Committee decision.

Controls and procedures

During informal talks, several desk officers gave distinct personal views on the concrete implementation of the Schengen obligation as far as stamping on entry, on exit and even the checks into the SIS are concerned. Confusion, and sometimes even misinformation, seems to be existing among staff members on these issues. It is therefore advisable that the desk officers, who are often young and may lack experience, are again fully informed of their obligations in this respect.

The experts have been controlling the watertightness of the separation of passengers in different areas, as for what concerns the passing through of documents. It was noted that in the non-Schengen arrival zone, certain walls did not reach from the ground to the ceiling, or that gates could be opened manually, which might be sensitive to misuse.

Passengers and pilots from private flights, except those from companies making use of the Jetcenter, are supposed to walk over the entire airfield to undergo the border control in the main building. Crews undergo the normal checks performed on passengers.

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Staff and training

The basic training of every officer of the KMAR is identical to the one mentioned in the relevant chapter on Schiphol.

Additionally, it is worth mentioning that the KMAR has developed its own border control training making use of computers. Another special immigration programme for management and documents is in use. Furthermore, they have an exchange programme for their officers with Schiphol.

Other topics

- It should be noted that, contrary to what is the case in Amsterdam and to what one might expect from the world's main harbour, the number of seamen in transit for whom a visum has to be delivered is very low; no more than 10 until now in 2002. (cf. the high number at Schiphol)
- Another spectacular low figure is the number of asylum seekers at the border: only 2 applicants in the past five years
- The number of fines imposed based on art. 26 of the Schengen Convention (carriers liability) is no more than 10 per year.
- It is worth mentioning that two "recommendations" were made by the visited authorities. Based on their practical experience, they called upon the EU to compile a booklet with specimen of ID and residence permits, supplementary to the existing reference documents.

Local officials suggested that an initiative was taken to build a group of specialist (English speaking) to exchange information on modi operandi used by illegals or by facilitators.

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Report on the visit to Brussels national airport Zaventem on 11 September 2002

Structure, basic facts

Zaventem airport is Belgium's main airport. It has a majority of business passengers compared to leisure passengers (66% versus 34 %). More than 19 million passengers were handled during 2001, which represented a decrease reinforced by the bankruptcy of the national carrier Sabena. Since Sabena's failure, transfer passengers see their numbers reduced to 20% of the previous figures. The airline companies operating in Brussels do concentrate more on European destinations than on intercontinental flights, as a consequence the majority of flights has become intra-Schengen flights (60%).

The intra Schengen flights are performed from the new A terminal, while all the non-Schengen flights are operated from terminal B. Due to this full separation of infrastructure, there is no possibility of any intermingling of passengers. This is as a matter of fact the most recommendable situation in the interest of border controls. Transfers, both from SCH to non-Schengen (exit controls) and from non SCH to Schengen are checked at separate filters. Zaventem airport has no flexigate or otherwise.

The Federal Police is entrusted with all missions in relation to border control and surveillance. The Airport Brigade has a staff of 253, to be extended to 277. The Federal Police like the Airport authority, has proven to be fully seized by the importance and the requirements of effective border control.

Equipment

Brussels airport is controlled by an impressive number of 500 video cameras which serve both for surveillance and security, for assessing the length of queues as for possibly tracking suspected people.

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The 26 working positions in the first line are correctly oriented so as to face the flow of passengers. They are equipped with a SIS connection, scanners, UV lights, white light, white spot, retroviewer, magnifying glass, individual phone and intercom. There are no passport readers; this may be explained by the fact that the passports issued by Belgium had no passport readable strip, until the beginning of 2002 when such a strip was introduced in every new Belgian passport. The investment into such readers is nevertheless recommendable for reading other passports. This would speed up the consultation in the SIS. Actually, the consultation into the SIS is slowed down by the fact that border officers have to fill in the entire name of the passengers, and not only a few letters. Furthermore, the system does not allow any imprecision in the spelling. Passport readable devices would therefore allow the officers to spend more time in the communication with the passenger. The booths are opened on the lateral side, which may permit indiscrete looks onto the screens. On the other hand, it gives the possibility to the border officer to look laterally what is happening, to avoid the passing through of children, for example. The most recommendable equipment in such a situation would be to use one-way glass or venetian blinds. The second line is well equipped and rightly located nearby the first line of arrivals. An important collection of false documents has been brought together. There is no electronic version of such a collection, which might have been useful to improve the knowledge in these matters in other airports.

Controls and procedures:

The experts and the Belgian authorities have discussed the fact that the border police officer do not systematically stamp passports upon exit. This appears to be the way the Schengen regulation have been understood . This practice does not seem contrary to the Common Manual. The Common Manual states in its part II, paragraph 2-1-2 that "The exit stamp shall be placed on documents authorizing an alien to cross the border which contain a multiple-entry visa with a restriction on the total length of stay. The experts are of the opinion that, in principle, only systematic stamping upon exit eases the implementation of article 20 of the Schengen Convention. The experts therefore recommend to the Council to open the discussion and seek for clarification on an appropriate wording in the Common Manual, in due course. They consider basically that stamping, even if it costs a few seconds more at the booth represents a possibility to diminish the number of people overstaying their presence in the Schengen area.

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There is every week a meeting between the Police and the Airport Authority to look into the work lying ahead, changes, etc. The experts consider this frequent coordination to be useful.

The experts were puzzled by the procedure for denying entry to a passenger. Before taking such a decision to deny entry and even in obvious cases such as a passenger travelling without any means of subsistence, the Police has to report to the Aliens Office, in downtown Brussels, to make a decision. Such a decision is taken "within a few hours". Therefore, it is impossible to send anyone straight back with the same flight he arrived with. The experts were told that the only case in which the police is allowed to instantly send back a person is when the passenger arrives without any document. This might be a hypothetical situation since such a passenger will most probably apply for asylum. *

Crews of cargo flights and most of the companies are controlled through the General Aviation center called Abelag.

The sign posting did not comply with the European Commission' recommendation on the situation applicable since 1 July 2002, according to which EU nationals, EEA-nationals (ISL, LIECH, NO) and Swiss nationals (CH), should have the right to make use of one lane. This should be modified.

The Commission is invited to take the initiative to formally replace the former Schengen Executive Committee decision.

Staff and training

Border police officers appeared to be motivated and have an excellent mastering of several languages. They show a real stability in office as border controllers, where some of them spend their whole career. The experts appreciated very positively the fact that a special training module is dedicated to multi-culturalism, since this forms an important part of the work. Every shift starts with a briefing during which recent events, trends, threats etc are discussed.

After the basic training one must follow the "functional training programme on border control" before performing border control.

* Belgium considers this to be too strict an interpretation of article 3 of the law of 15-12-1980, which foresees in several more possibilities to send back people.

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The Federal Police recently developed and implemented a 172 hour lasting theoretical programme - including mainly: legal framework, control methods and on the spot risk analysis, training on false and/or falsified travel documents - combined with a 136 Hrs training on the spot (during the training on the spot the “candidates” are assisted by special trained “mentors”). Zaventem airport had the most recent version of the Common Manual in its offices. An interesting manual has been distributed for the staff, giving them quick insight in practical situations by a short presentation of the applicable rules.

They have distributed furthermore a compendium of the visa requirements, on an A4 colour overview, which is laid down in every booth. This overview can be very useful and practical, provided that it is kept up-to-date.

The controls on many crews did not seem appropriate. Actually, the crews find their way out from the aircraft through the C terminal, which is no longer in use. Consequently, they are not being controlled.

Other topics

- It was noted that Belgian officers, like their Dutch colleagues, have their own (personal) stamps which is not the case in other countries. It is important to monitor the use and the presence of stamps.
- Contrary to the Netherlands, the Belgian authorities do not perform any systematic, or even random controls in the Schengen area. Such controls are only performed when there is an individual, targeted suspicion.
- Belgian police is performing approx. 20 gate checks every day, on targeted risk flights. The experts consider this to be the most secure way of safeguarding sensitive flights.
- A sudden rise of fines imposed due to the carriers liability appeared from the questionnaire. The explanation given to it was that a previous system with MoU's with the airliners instead of fines proved not to work. The carriers were not sufficiently encouraged to perform their duties. A new system, with an increasing level of penalties according to the results (number of undocumented PAX) seemed to work quite well.

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Report of the visit to Charleroi Brussels South Airport on 12 September 2002

Charleroi Brussels South Airport is Belgium's second largest airport. The number of passengers handlings rose from 200.000 in 1997 to 750.000 in 2001 and an estimated number of about 1.200.000 at the end of 2002. The airport authorities expect a further spectacular increase in passenger number, up to 3 million in the year 2005, when a new terminal will be completed. The non-Schengen traffic originates mainly from the UK and Ireland, whereas some flights originate from Algeria or Morocco.

The controls are performed by the Federal Police, whereas the Walloon Ministry of Transport is responsible for maintaining the security at the airport. This mission includes the security control of the persons and of the luggage present on the runway side as well as the general surveillance. 26 officers currently compose the workforce.

The airport is divided into a Schengen area and a non Schengen area and has in the middle an area which can be used for both Schengen and non Schengen.

The experts are of the opinion that Charleroi Brussels-South airport generally fulfils the Schengen requirements for an airport of this size

Nevertheless, it appears that on some points, for example on controlling General aviation and crews, the amount of staff (5 people per shift) is at the limit of the required capacity.

The infrastructure of the cafeteria and even more of the duty free shop is in principle not compliant with the general principle of separating flows. The experts were of the opinion that other solutions should be found to remedy this awkward situation that shopkeepers are ensuring the separation of flows. This solution should be implemented before the new terminal is built.

Equipment

The six control booths are equipped with a terminal connected to the SIS, UV-lamp, a magnifying glass, a telephone and a retroviewer, which is considered sufficient. However, the experts recommend to invest in automatic passport readers. The investment into such readers is recommendable for reading other passports.

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This would speed up the consultation in the SIS. Actually, the consultation into the SIS is slowed down by the fact that border officers have to fill in the entire name of the passengers, and not only a few letters. Furthermore, the system does not allow any imprecision in the spelling. Passport readable devices would therefore allow the officers to spend more time in communication with the passenger.

This absence leads to insufficient time for proper investigating about the passengers' aims, for comparing the picture with the person facing the booth, Furthermore, it appeared that due to the lack of time, border control officers decided to skip stamping some US and New-Zealand passports. An important number of cameras has been installed. They serve both for the safety in the airport as for monitoring queues or for tracking individual passengers through the building.

As far as entry and exit stamps are concerned, it appeared that they were not personally dedicated to the border officers, nor was there a list indicating who is in use of which stamps. This might lead to the impossibility to track where a mistake was made, or to deal with a complaint about the treatment suffered from a particular officer.

The booth themselves are built according to the best practices, with a sideview. An additional feature would be to have one way glass for this sideview. Since, staff is sitting relatively high over the area where passengers walk through, additional mirrors might prove useful, for instance to avoid children passing through. The booth were not placed so as to face the lines of arriving passengers. This makes it difficult for the staff to perform the necessary profiling of the passengers. Actually, no real communication ever took place between passenger and officer during the visit of the experts. Another explanation may be found in the mastering of the English language; since many flights connect with London and Ryanair is sort of core business in the place, more emphasize should be put on English courses and practice of the English language.

Experts have been considering whether it would be advisable to send all crews for border controls together with the other passengers instead of having them pass through the crew and GA corridor. Given the fact that the Common Manual does not require to do so, that there is a probability that the GA booth is not manned, especially with only a staff of 5 people, the police's attention is asked to consider this problem, which might at some stage represent a security problem.

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Within each counter a national guide summarizing the Schengen rules (including annex 11 of the Common Manual) was available. In the second line, it was an older version of the Common Manual (19th version) which was available. *

The experts were satisfied to see that the signposts do take into account the most recent situation, which allows EU , EEA and Swiss (CH) passengers to present themselves at one counter and the non-EU passengers (or all passengers) at the other counter.

Staff and training

- The number of staff (26) (Federal Police) has not followed the recent rise in the number of passengers. The additional staff which has been asked for should be made available at short notice. This is in particular a necessity when an unusual event occurs, like two important planes from non-Schengen origin arriving simultaneously. Equally, there is not enough staff able to perform thorough investigation in the second line, on the Projectina device (to check documents) for instance, since this specialised staff is involved in the regular duties of every officer. Airport security is administrated by 23 security people.

Other topics

Even if the number of visa issued at Charleroi-Brussels South is relatively low (30 to 50 per year), it was noted that the administration of the visa stock should be considered carefully; the safe where the visa were kept, was open.

The experts were appreciative of the camera control system and of the 100% luggage check, which is performed.

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* Belgium added that there is an updated electronic version of the Common Manual.

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Report on the visit to Luxembourg airport on 13 September 2002

Structure, basic facts

Luxembourg airport is the one and only Schengen-external border in the country. The airport is a modest player in Europe as far as passengers are concerned, but is a major player for freight.

Luxembourg airport of Findel is actually Europe fifth largest airport for cargo in Europe. Cargolux, the national freight carrier is even world's fourth cargo transporter. Findel operates mainly planes from countries which may be qualified as non-risk countries. 1.664.000 pax were handled in 2000.

The expert team did not visit the cargo area.

The airport has only one terminal, whereby the passengers from Schengen and non Schengen flights enter through two different gates on one finger.

It is the Grand Ducal Police (airport control service SCA) being in charge of border controls as well as of security, airport control and general police work. It emerged from this Benelux evaluation that when comparing staff figures in comparable airports in Belgium and the Netherlands, the Grand Ducal Police at Luxembourg airport has approximately only half of the staff it should have.

Even if the current staff is performing its control duties in a meticulous way, the Schengen concept of Integrated Border Management requires more in terms of checks, surveillance, cooperation, intelligence, analysis, detection, etc.

In order to reach that level the concept of border controls should be completely reviewed to face the possible threats of illegal immigration. In this respect, it might be useful to cooperate with the authorities of other airports to assist in such a review. The success of Luxembourg for cargo activities should be accompanied by the necessary strengthening of the staff and the equipment and by a regular assessment of the current working routines, ways to improve it and the need to invest in new technology.

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No intelligence work is performed in the airport. Risk analysis on a regular basis would certainly be helpful to the police to better keep an updated insight in the current threats in the field of security, safety and illegal immigration. Using the model applied in Belgium, with a daily briefing at the begin of every shift to discuss recent events, trends, forgeries, etc would probably provide supplementary information compared to the current system of "self-service" from the information files.

It should be noted that in terms of results of controlling activities, the number of refusal of entries is quite high at Findel, compared with the size of the airport.

Equipment

The equipment in the booths complies with the requirements (SIS-terminal, scanner, magnifyer, etc.). The booths themselves are protected from intruding views. A police office is appropriately located near the filter. This would really be an asset if monitoring of the area in front of the booths through open glass walls was possible.

There are no passport readers; this may be explained by the fact that the passports issued by Luxembourg have no passport readable strip. The investment into such readers is nevertheless recommendable for reading other passports. This would speed up the consultation in the SIS for the officers and allow to devote more time to communicate with the passengers.

The sign posting did not comply with the European Commission' recommendation on the situation applicable since 1 July 2002, according to which EU nationals, EEA-nationals (ISL, LIECH, NO) and Swiss nationals (CH), should have the right to make use of one lane. This should be modified. The Commission is invited to take the initiative to formally replace the former Schengen Executive Committee decision.

The falsification office had an comprehensive collection of false and counterfeit documents, both on hard copy and via Edison. For further consultation, a stand-alone facility communicating with the German central authority for false documents, in Koblenz, is available. At the time of the visit no image of a sufficient size could be uploaded due to the lack of a cd rom device.

RESTREINT UE

Controls and procedures

Upon entry from non-Schengen flights, passengers walk either on the apron or are transported by bus to the non-Schengen entrance. Supervision in order to ensure that no one is turning around the building so as to come in the Schengen-area is advisable; the current camera system overlooking the runway should be extended with such a feature or should be overlooked by police officers.

Within the non Schengen entry corridor, there is a real risk of passengers slipping into the Schengen area (either through the lateral door or alongside booth nrs 1 and 3 where a passage is systematically left open without any fencing or electronic device. This passage is used by crew members and staff of the airport, who were not subject of any check despite this place being close to the Police office and beside the control booths. It is important to verify that all doors (nearby the entry checks, gate 7 etc) are closed or, that those doors can only be opened for individual use, by the staff. Using technological devices like magnetic badges would be an asset. During the inspection, it was possible to leave or enter the area for international transit, over a fence and through a door, in order to go to the ground floor and enter the Schengen area through the Schengen entry.

Given the importance of cargo traffic, the Luxembourg authorities should ensure that all crews from cargo flights are systematically controlled, which should not necessarily be through checks in the main building. Several measures would contribute to that, among which the systematic closing of every gate leading to the landside, picking up cargo crews by bus, collecting information about the crew at the earliest stage etc.

The experts noted that there is no systematic stamping, for instance, a US traveller was only asked for his means of subsistence. A deeper inquiry into the travellers motive should be made, which might be eased when passport readers are obtained. This would leave additional time for communication between the passenger and the border control officer.

RESTREINT UE

Staff and training

Out of a total number of 29 Grand Ducal Police staff, in charge of border control and airport security, 3-4 people per shift are dedicated on border controls; this is considered by the experts to be less than minimum in comparison with similar concepts in other countries; Actually, it is doubtful whether this allows to cover anything more than the minimal required duties. For example, the necessity to accompany a non-Schengen transfer passenger to the extra Schengen zone cuts the remaining staff by half.

The experts recommend that, apart from ordinary police continued training and false documents training, a more comprehensive training for border control officers be developed, including a determined number of training days per year. This training should include border checks and surveillance, risk assessment, intelligence and trends in illegal immigration. This could also occur in partnership with other Schengen airports.

Other topics

- It was noted that very few visa had been issued at the border. Nevertheless, visa stickers should be kept in a secured place which is not easily accessible.

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