



Annual General Meeting of Delegate Members, Nice 29 September 2006

Attendance:

Lieven Muylaert (Belgium), Daniel Koener (Luxembourg), Robert Solyom (Hungary), Joel Bastien (France), Menelaos Georgiades (Cyprus), Zygmantus Pupkus (Lithuania), Botond Hejj (Poland), Giampiero Piacentini & Marco Palladino (Italy), Palle Lundborg (Sweden), Svend Mandel Hansen (Denmark), Lasse Lehtokangas (Finland), Bora Erdengi (Turkey), Theo De Goeijen (Netherlands), Katy Stifterova (Czech Republic), Sasa Ivanc (Slovenia), Richard Dowling & Andrea Scott-Lewis (UK) & Mick O'Hanlon (Ireland).

Minutes:

Chairman Lieven Muylaert opened the 2006 Meeting and thanked Joel Bastien and his French colleagues for hosting the meeting:

“Organising an ECSA meeting of this size is not an easy thing. In a few hours, we will have 19 member states – maybe even 20 if the EU joins as a member!”

Lieven then welcomed the new faces to ECSA 2006 and he formally declared the meeting in session.

Lasse introduced the minutes of the previous Executive Committee meetings in 2006 and he told delegates that they were now being published to the website and archived with other material.

Lieven reported on the main events of the Executive Meetings in 2006:

“Much work has been done since we met last year in Amsterdam. Thanks to Katy, I had an excellent opportunity to make a presentation on ECSA before the Director General’s meeting in Prague and this was a good publicity exercise for our organisation that seeks to optimise sporting and other contact opportunities for all of our colleagues.

Lieven said his presentation to the DGs in Prague got a very positive response and some new applications for ECSA membership were received after his presentation from Turkey, Cyprus and Slovenia.

We also discussed ways to prevent similar events clashing when they are organised by different member states and Lasse has drawn up draft rules which we will discuss later on.

We also got a new domain name for the ECSA website that is much easier to find in a search. In fact, we missed getting www.ecsa.eu by only 25 minutes! However, we decided on www.ecsa-sports.eu and we have recently bought €400 worth of pens, pencils, keyrings etc with the new address which will be given out at sports meetings in the coming year to gain maximum exposure to our new website address. We also discussed applications from new member states and the senior ECSA members will be voting on these, today.

We also have a proposal from Poland to review the ECSA Constitution and we need everyone's ideas on this, today."

New Members

The Executive Meeting in Luxembourg decided to recommend a vote in favour of all the applicants to all senior members at the AGM. The Luxembourg meeting reinforced the most important ECSA principle that the aim of ECSA is to facilitate and promote sport between Customs officials as a means to removing barriers.

After a *Tour De Table*, when all the delegates introduced themselves, Lieven then called for a show of hands and the meeting overwhelmingly voted in favour of accepting the new members.

Note: The Chairman announced that the Executive Committee, in its meeting in Luxembourg, had recommended the approval of Cyprus, Slovenia and Turkey as full members of ECSA. The Chairman explained that all the conditions for full membership had been met by Cyprus, Slovenia and Turkey. Full members entitled to vote at the AGM were asked to vote to accept the three countries as full members.

The Chairman gave the EC recommendation to the AGM and each of the 14 full members voted to accept all three countries as full members.

After the vote, the Cypriot delegate requested clarification about the voting rights of Cyprus. Following investigation of the minutes of the 2004 and 2005 AGMs, it came to light that Cyprus had been accepted as a full member but had not attended an ECSA GM until today. The Cypriot delegate pointed out that Cyprus would have abstained from this vote in respect of Turkey's application but would have voted in favour of Slovenia's application. The Chairman apologised for this oversight by ECSA.

The decision means that Slovenia and Turkey are full members from 29 September.

"This is a beautiful moment for ECSA!" remarked our Chairman. "It's a very great personal honour for me to be Chairman as it is fantastic for us all to be able to meet like this. I want to assure the new members that the greater effort and help will come from the older members. You will find out about ECSA subvention policies and we will encourage you to start small, to organise and participate in tournaments in your region. Ask us for help. It will be our pleasure to help".

The Constitution

Lieven said that the ECSA Constitution is only a framework and it cannot answer every question. “We want a flexible Constitution that allows the spirit of ECSA to come to the fore. We want all of you to give us a list of what you want to have changed as well as your general ideas of the Constitution, before our Executive meeting, next Spring.

Note: The ECSA Executive Committee Members are: Lieven (Chairman), Mick O’Hanlon (Secretary), Katy Stifterova (Liaison Officer for new Member States), Theo De Goeijen (Website manager), Lasse Lehtokangas, Botond Hejj & Giampiero Piacentini (Ordinary Members)

The Executive Committee drafted two versions of the Constitution during the year. These were both discussed in detail at the meeting. A Unanimous decision was taken to allow the Executive Committee to proceed with the draft with a recommendation for adopting an updated Constitution at the 2007 AGM that would also incorporate any suggestions from members that are received during the year.

Website development

Palle Lundburg suggested that the website might benefit from newsflashes on the home page to enliven the impact. Theo then gave a demonstration of the website (redesigned by his colleague Cristophe Brock).

“The data is transferred from four separate servers to the new ECSA site and is maintained by three technical colleagues working together in three different countries” explained Theo. “We ought to thank Cristophe Brock, Giel Hermans and Janne Kallio.”

Theo encouraged members to send updated information to the site. “It’s very simple. You should do it as soon as possible and use it as often as possible to pot up your news and photos” he said.

ECSA Status for events

The delegates gave unanimous approval after discussing and adapting Lasse’s proposed draft on the rules for giving ECSA status to events that might clash. Everyone agreed that common sense should prevail and early notice should be given of every proposed event to avoid any possible confusion.

Lasse: “For example, there will be a clash in 2007 when Latvia and Lithuania also applied to organise the shooting competition and so did Slovakia. Sadly, neither representative is here at the AGM today. We won’t vote on either today but Katy (ECSA liaison officer for new Member States) will contact them both to work out a solution”.

Lieven: “We should not forget ECA’s aim – to facilitate countries who organise events in the spirit of friendship. We will do our best to find a solution and ratify it at the next Executive meeting, after Katy has contacted every country involved.”

There was a problem with Hungary and Slovakia who both had very good reasons to organise two separate and excellent (but clashing!) marathons that were open to participation to ECSA. Lieven explained that it was not easy to choose between them so the ECSA Executive Committee had decided to give official ECSA status to each event by rotation.

So, 2006 was to have been Slovakia’s year for ECSA status but sadly, it had not worked out that way in practise. The meeting agreed that ECSA would publicly declare which country was to have official status and to encourage its members to send athletes to that event, each year in rotation.

Lasse’s proposed drafts were discussed in detail (*the agreed drafts are included as an appendix to these minutes*)

Lieven: “I also see that three countries wish to host the shooting competition in 2007. We will set aside money for subvention and I ask Katy to talk with the three would-be hosts to negotiate which country will host the shooting.”

Andrea (UK) proposed that each of the three countries should make a short business case for the event and the Executive Committee will then decide who should get the status. Andrea’s colleague Richard Dowling also proposed that ECSA should put up rules with a model business case on the ECSA website that can serve as a template for members in such circumstances in the future.

TAXUD Contact

Lieven spoke about a letter he received from TAXUD. In that letter Mr Marinus de Graaff has been designated by Mr Verrue, Director General of Taxud as the contact person of the EU Commission. Taxud is asking how that organisation might be able to assist in ECSA’s aims. The Executive Committee will consider a reply to TAXUD.

Estonia

Estonia has applied to join ECSA. However, the application is from one of two sports clubs – a Trade Union sports club and an official Estonian Customs club. Lasse (as Finnish ECSA ‘godparent’ for Estonia) explained:

“We want to admit Estonia but only via official channels, in other words, we want to admit the sports club that has the approval of the Estonian DG.”

Lasse was given responsibility to investigate the matter further with Estonia. Katy will liase with him

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Reports on 2006/7 events & participation

The members reported on events they had organised or in which they had participated since the last AGM:

Daniel said **Luxembourg** had participated in several ECSA events including the Brussels 20k and Nijmegen.

Robert announced that **Hungary** will host the 2007 AGM as well as the Kaiser marathon. “We didn’t organise the 2006 marathon out of respect to our neighbours Slovakia. We would also like to give notice of our intention to organise the shooting contest in spring 2009”.

Lieven thanked Hungary: “Many decisions are not easy to take but Hungary is thanked for respectfully not proceeding with the 2006 marathon. Shooting and dog handling competitions are closely related to our core jobs and Hungary and the Central European countries lead the way.”

Joel said that **France** sent men and women to the football in the Czech republic. France will organise cross-country running on 29 March (10k for men, 5k for women) near Bordeaux and France requests ECSA status for this event. This was approved at AGM.

Menelaos thanked ECSA for the warm welcome for **Cyprus** at its first AGM. “We hope to participate and hopefully to organise an event. In particular, we are interested in tennis and we might host a tennis event for ECSA. We are also interested in 6-a-side football.”

Zygmantus said **Lithuania** participated in table tennis in Sweden, shooting in Budapes and the football in Jiloviste (June 2006) and the walking in Nijmegen. “Our thanks to the organisers. We don’t win many medals but we are very enthusiastic. We would like to get ECSA advice on how to structure sports in our administration and we ask that ECSA set up an advisory bureau based on your experience. We organise relay marathons domestically as well as floorball, athletics, national football and basketball.

We look to ECSA for help to organise our structure to maintain our impetus with Lithuanian customs sports.”

Lieven replied: “It’s good to hear what happens in each country. ECSA will provide any advice based on the senior members’ experiences and assistance we can to help Lithuania to structure a sports club. I was sad to see Guntar’s mail (from Latvia) that he could not attend today for budget reasons”.

Botond said that **Poland** only attended one ECSA event in 2006, the Nijmegen Marches. “We hosted table tennis and hope to do so again in April 2007. We seek ECSA status for this event.” This was approved at AGM.

Giampiero and Marco said **Italy** attended Nijmegen, Brussels 20k, Skiing and the Czech football in 2006.

Giampiero: “Italy was able to organise the skiing and participate in other events despite money shortages. We will organise the skiing from 4 –11 March 2007 in Val di Fasse (via Verona Airport) and we seek ECSA status for this event” This was approved at AGM.

Marco outlined an interesting Arts event organised by Associazione Dogani Italia: “We organise a painting and sculpture exhibition for works done by our colleagues in honour of St. Matthew, the patron saint of Tax & Customs officials, on 27/28 October, each year. If anyone is interested, you can see details on the ADI website, which has a link to it from the ECSA website.”

Palle said: “**Sweden** may organise a ten pin bowling event for ECSA members, if there is enough interest. We realise that participation costs in Sweden are high, so, please contact me if you are interested.”

Svend said that **Denmark**’s participation was restricted by budgetary constraints: “We sent a runner to the Brussels 20k but I don’t think we are in a position to participate in events in 2007.”

Lasse said that **Finland** has a thriving record of participation and organising ECSA events. “In addition to attending ECSA events, we also had 230 participants at our Winter Games and 400 at our Summer Games. We held the Executive Committee in Lahti. We express our thanks to Katy and her Czech colleagues for the excellent 6-a-side football in June. We also sent three runners to Kosice. In 2007 we will attend Brussels, the Marathon and Nijmegen.

2009 will also see the 50th anniversary of the Finnish Customs Sports Club and to mark this, we would like to host an athletics event and an ECSA meeting, if possible”.

Lieven thanked Lasse and noted the opportunity for 2009. He said that staging an ECSA meeting in conjunction with a national or international event is a great chance to get feedback from athletes on ECSA.

Bora represented **Turkey** at the AGM for the first time: “We are happy to participate in 2007 in the shooting and the dog handling competitions. In some time in the future, I’d like to see ECSA countries at a proposed intercontinental (Europe/Asia) marathon in Istanbul”.

Theo (**Netherlands**) explained the sad outcome at this year’s Nijmegen event: “sadly, it was cancelled after the first day after two people died of heat exhaustion because of record temperatures. More than 40,000 people from all walks of life attend this event” (in which the Dutch Customs organises ECSA participation).

“We also attended the shooting, Brussels 20k and the Czech football. In 2007, we hope to go to the shooting, Brussels20k, the marathon and the table tennis.”

Katy: “The **Czech Republic** organised the 11-nation 2006 6-a-side football” (won by Czech men – again! and Finnish women) as well as a running event that attracted six countries. We also attended Brussels 20k, Nijmegen, shooting in Hungary, Table tennis in Poland and the Kosice Peace Marathon..

Sasa spoke for **Slovenia** at her first ECSA AGM: “We have regional sports events and we hold summer and winter games. We are interested in promoting a skiing event also.”

Sasa asked the AGM how each Customs administration selected the candidates chosen to represent each country. Mick outlined the Irish model as a particular example where Ireland (which does not have an official customs sports club) uses internal communications structures within the administration to canvas for candidates. Then, after applications are received, the candidates are selected on their ability. Ireland tries to spread its candidate selection wherever possible by reference to ability, gender and regional representation throughout the administration.

Andrea spoke about the **UK** sports club which has been restructured since the tax and customs administrations merged, in the UK.

“We have 120,000 staff with 40,000 members of the sports club” she said. “I’d like to thank you all on behalf of UK participants for organising all the events which we attended. As we become more established, we hope to organise an ECSA event perhaps something special like sailing or golf.”

Mick explained his own position vis a vis ECSA. “It has been my great honour to act as **Ireland**’s ECSA representative in recent years. I’ve already told Lieven that my recent new assignment within my administration means I no longer co-ordinate domestic sports events in Ireland.

The Irish Revenue has been honoured to participate in ECSA events and to organise other international events (such as the Lupton Cup) and our administration values the contacts and other benefits that arise out of these events where front-line colleagues have an opportunity to mix together.

The ECSA colleagues who organised events in 2006 in which we participated have already had contact with my colleague Mr. Tony Keogh, who has done a great job in co-ordinating Ireland’s participation in ECSA events. Tony will continue to perform this role and I am also happy to say that I will continue as Ireland’s ECSA representative for the time being.”

Lieven outlined **Belgium**’s position: “Belgium is a very traditional country and we are the same when it comes to ECSA events. We sent people to Nijmegen, Kosice Marathon and to the shooting competition and we hosted the 20k in 2006. We hope to do the same in 2007. The date for the Brussels 20k in 2007 will be the last Sunday in May.”

Treasurer’s Report

Daniel told the AGM that ECSA funds currently amount to €9,862.83. This does not include the subscriptions to be collected at the AGM which will increase the funds by €1,700. Countries absent from the AGM are also due to pay the annual €100 subscription and Daniel will follow up on this.

Daniel: “The copy of annual accounts shows how we spent funds last year. Only one sporting event attracted subvention – the Czech shooting event which ECSA supported to the amount of €630. We paid a small sum in bank charges and we also paid €290.40 for website developments and charges.

We are in a good position to assist ECSA events in 2007.”

Any Other Business

- Palle wondered whether we should approve at AGM a certain percentage of funds against the following year’s events. Andrea suggested perhaps increasing subscription fees on a sliding scale by reference to the relevant financial health of each member nation. This will be considered at the next Executive Member meeting.
- Andrea requested that ECSA should use the term United Kingdom instead of Great Britain in all future publications, including the website.
- The AGM approved a letter to be sent to Jose M. Barroso EU President (see Appendix 1)
- No changes were made at EC and no elections were necessary.
- The schedule of meetings for 2007 is:
 - EC Meeting Sweden (14 January)
 - EC Meeting London (June)
 - AGM Budapest (October)
 - EC Meeting Finland (14 December)

APPENDIX 1

Mr Jose Manuel Barroso
President, Commission of the European Union
200, Rue de la Loi
B-1049 Brussels
Belgium

Dear Mr President,

I am writing to seek your views on ways in which the European Commission might, were it so minded, assist the European Customs Sports Association (ECSA).

ECSA was founded in 1992. ECSA's principal goal is to promote, through sport, good relationships between European Customs/tax administrations. Joint sporting events are laid on between European Customs administrations. As at 2006, ECSA member states were Belgium, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Germany participates through the Customs administration sports club in Cologne. Slovenia and Turkey were admitted as new members at the recent Annual General Meeting.

Sporting events organised by ECSA member administrations include football, marathons and half-marathons, shooting, table tennis, bowling, cross-country and Alpine skiing, a four-day walking event in Nijmegen and events for Customs drugs dogs.

We believe that these events

- *Increase mutual understanding between Customs officials;*
- *Strengthen team spirit;*
- *Build a positive image of Customs.*

We also believe that these benefits make a contribution to the achievement of the work objectives of Customs administrations. Furthermore, we believe that they contribute to the attainment of Customs 2007 programme objectives and to the establishment of cordial relationships between old and new European Union Member States.

ECSA's only regular source of income is the membership fee of 100 Euros received from each member state. Due to this restricted budget, we can only give limited financial support to sports event organizers. You will understand that we are especially keen to give support to new Member States and accession countries, to

enable them to arrange their own Customs sporting events and to participate in ECSA events. However, many new Member States and accession countries also have very restricted budgets themselves.

We believe our efforts to promote good relationships between European Customs administrations through sport are in accordance with the objectives of the European Union and trust that the Commission feels the same. Should that be the case, we hope that the Commission might be able to demonstrate its support in practical ways, and we would appreciate hearing from the Commission what these ways might be.

Should further information be required, please do not hesitate to contact me. We also have a website <http://www.ecsa-sports.eu>

In closing, I would note that we have also written to Director General Verrue, concerning ways in which ECSA might co-operate more closely with TAXUD.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully

Lieven Muylaert
Belgium
Chairman, European Customs Sports Association

Other Executive Committee members:

Daniel Koener Luxembourg Treasurer

Mick O'Hanlon Ireland Secretary

Katy Stifterova Czech Republic

Lasse Lehtokangas Finland

Botond Hejj Poland

Giampiero Piacentini Italy

APPENDIX 2



2006



ECSA TREASURER'S REPORT

| NR | DATE | TRANSACTION | CURR. | EURO- | EURO+ | TOTAL |
|----|------------|------------------------------------|-------|--------|---------|---------|
| | 07.10.2005 | Starting balance 2005 | € | | | 8884,15 |
| 1 | 07.10.2005 | Suscription Luxembourg 2005 (bank) | | | 100 | |
| 2 | 07.10.2005 | Bank costs | | 1,73 | | |
| 3 | 07.10.2005 | Suscription Cash Amstardam | | | | |
| | | BE | | | 100,00 | |
| | | CZ | | | 100 | |
| | | DK | | | 100 | |
| | | FI | | | 100 | |
| | | FR | | | 100 | |
| | | HU | | | 100 | |
| | | IT | | | 100 | |
| | | IR | | | 100 | |
| | | LE | | | 100 | |
| | | LI | | | 100 | |
| | | NL | | | 100 | |
| | | SE | | | 100 | |
| | | SV | | | 100 | |
| | | UK | | | 100 | |
| 4 | 07.10.2005 | CZ KATY shooting event | | 630,00 | | |
| 5 | 07.10.2005 | PL (2004) | | | 100 | |
| 6 | 31.12.2005 | bank cost | | 1,20 | | |
| 7 | 31.12.2005 | bank cost | | 1,50 | | |
| 8 | 31.12.2005 | interest | | | 105,91 | |
| 9 | 31.03.2006 | bank cost | | 1,14 | | |
| 10 | 06.04.2006 | sitehosting BVBA | | 145,20 | | |
| 11 | 15.05.2005 | sitehosting BVBA | | 145,20 | | |
| 12 | 30.06.2005 | interest | | | 0,74 | |
| 13 | 30.06.2006 | bank cost | | 2,00 | | |
| 12 | 26.07.2006 | Suscription 2006 LUX (bank) | | | 100 | |
| 13 | 07.09.2006 | Suscription CYPRUS (bank) | | | 100 | |
| | | | | 927,97 | 1906,65 | 9862,83 |

ECSAtreasurer1

| | | |
|--------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Bank Account | NR LU32 0019 6112 3506 5000 | 8576,88 |
| Bank Account | NR LU41 0019 1855 1905 4000 | 1285,95 |
| Total | | 9862,83 |

Daniel Koener
ECSA Treasurer

APPENDIX 3



ECSA – Pictures download

We are happy to propose you an web service where you can download the pictures.

The web address is : <http://www.volcar.org/esca/index.php>

- 1°) You can see an thumbnails presentation where is possible to enlarge the selectionned picture,
- 2°) You can download any picture with an right-click and selecting the « Save the picture as » item.

For any problem, contact by email :

Joel Bastien at joel.bastien@douane.finances.gouv.fr

or

Francois Gatto at francois.gatto@douane.finances.gouv.fr

Thanks a lot.

APPENDIX 4

ACCEPTED DRAFT of Ruling for ECSA Status for Sports Meetings (as agreed at AGM 2006)

1. The member states shall apply to the Chairman and the Secretary in writing about their planned hosting of ECSA sports events for the following year before the Annual General Meeting in October. The Chairman shall distribute the applications of the member states before the date of the AGM to enable all representatives to consider the applications in advance. The Chairman and the Secretary will include these applications in the minutes of the AGM, so that all countries will have the same information. Any application received by the Chairman and the Secretary after the AGM will usually not be considered.
2. If two or more member states apply to host a sports event of the same type, the Executive Committee in winter will consider the applications and will decide to which member state the ECSA status will be granted. The guiding principle to be followed is that the holder of the sports event **shall rotate annually** between member states.
3. The AGM empowers the Executive Committee to decide in the cases where the above principles have not been followed.
4. Granting of ECSA status for the sports events can only be taken by AGM.
5. The AGM may grant the ECSA status to one or more sports events arranged by a certain member state.

APPENDIX 5

Agreed text (at AGM) for ECSA support for member states organising events which have received ECSA status (approval for funding)

1. A member state to which ECSA status was granted for more than one sports meeting is entitled to choose the sports meeting at which the support will be targeted.

A member state which arranges more than one sports meeting can only receive ECSA financial subvention for one event.

2. The member states shall apply to the Chairman and the Secretary in writing about their planned hosting of ECSA sports events and request financial support for the following year before the AGM.

The Chairman shall distribute the applications of the member states before the date of the AGM to enable all representatives to consider the applications in advance.

The Chairman and the Secretary will include these applications in the minutes of the AGM so that all countries will have the same information. Any application received by the Chairman and the Secretary will usually not be considered.

3. The AGM decides the principles by a majority of votes for the annual grant of the financial support for each sports event.
4. The Treasurer drafts the annual ECSA budget for the coming year and submits it to the AGM for approval.

APPENDIX 6

Minutes of ECSA Webmasters Group (14/9/06)

Introduction:

Lieven Muylaert (ECSA Chairman) welcomed the ECSA Website Working Group in Brussels and stated the importance of the website. It should be a modern instrument which gives actual and archive information, serves as a contact point for the members and overall contributes to a positive image of the organisation.

Conclusions:

1. Access for all ECSA Countries:

All agreed on having a protected part on the website where member countries can adjust their information. Each country has access only to his/her information.

Reports can be included by each country that hosted an event detailing special coverage of that event.

2. Outline Library of ECSA Meetings etc:

Lieven proposed a creation of a separate section on the website to house all information from the beginning of ECSA until now.

This library can be useful to track the origins of policies and the initial aims of ECSA.

3. Content Management System –Expression Engine:

To improve performance and create more options, a Content Management System (CMS) is a powerful solution.

CMS allows webmasters to administer the website in an easy and efficient manner. It also allows ‘non-experts’ to make changes to separate parts of the website, for example the individual country pages.

The CMS costs €150 for non-profit organisations (like ECSA). This is a one-time cost without annual charges. It also allows us to create contact groups that can become useful in getting the right query to the right person.