

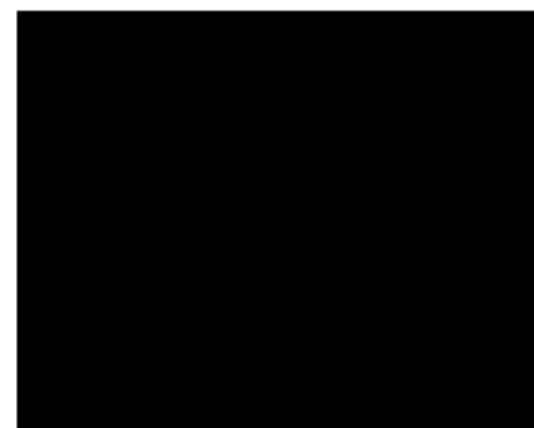


Council of the
European Union

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COVER NOTE

From:	European External Action Service (EEAS)
To:	Political and Security Committee (PSC)
Subject:	EUNAVFOR MED Op SOPHIA - Six Monthly Report 1DEC2018 31MAY 2019

Delegations will find attached document EEAS(2019) 763.

Encl.: EEAS(2019) 763

EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE



European Union Military Staff

Official document of the European External Action Service

of 9/7/2019

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Classification	RESTREINT UE/EU RESTRICTED
To	All Military Representatives Political and Security Committee [REDACTED]
Title / Subject	EUNAVFOR MED Op SOPHIA - Six Monthly Report 1DEC2018-31MAY 2019

On behalf of EUNAVFOR MED Op SOPHIA Operation Commander, please find attached the EUNAVFOR MED Op SOPHIA Six Monthly Report from. 1DEC2018 31MAY 2019

**EUNAVFORMED Operation SOPHIA**

*Via di Centocelle, 301
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Rome, 02 July 2019

Prot. nr. IT-EU [REDACTED]

To: General Claudio GRAZIANO
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Enclosure: 1

Subject: EUNAVFOR MED Operation SOPHIA Six Monthly Report.

Sir, Commandant,

please find enclosed the Six Monthly Report covering the period
1 December 2018 – 31 May 2019. I look forward to briefing the Member States on the contents
of the report.

Enrico Credendino

Enrico CREDENDINO
Rear Admiral, Italian Navy
EUNAVFOR MED operation SOPHIA
Operation Commander

EUNAVFOR MED OPERATION SOPHIA SIX MONTHLY REPORT

Reporting Period: 01 December 2018 – 31 May 2019

Executive Summary

EUNAVFOR MED (ENFM), while executing its mandated core and supporting tasks, has continued to substantially contribute to both maritime security in the Central Mediterranean region and to the capacity-building of the Libyan Coast Guard and Navy (LCG&N). Through its overall action, the Operation has continued to progress in enhancing Libyan ownership of their area of responsibility (to date, a total of 355 LCG&N personnel have been trained in all Coast Guard functions). Despite the uncertainties surrounding the two ENFM mandate renewal processes that occurred during the reporting period, continued commitment to training and monitoring helped also to offset any perception of an EU disengagement from Libya with particular reference to the whole Libyan stabilization process.

In order to clearly differentiate between the two key periods, this executive summary covers in detail:

- before the mandate extension when the operation employed naval assets;
- after March 31 when the mandate was extended and PSC instructed the OPCDR to temporarily suspend, for operational reasons, the deployment of surface naval assets.

CORE task**Until 31.03.**

When Sophia was launched, smugglers had a complete freedom of movement and were able to perpetrate their crimes up to 40 NM from the Libyan coast. It was therefore necessary to give a hard blow to the smugglers' business model which Sophia began disrupting by apprehending the smugglers and destroying the boats and the tools used for trafficking purposes. To achieve this, Sophia had to operate in the proximity of the Libyan Territorial Waters which was the area where smugglers were more active and where there was also the highest number of deaths at sea. Sophia was able to effectively fight against smugglers and handed over 151 smugglers to the Italian Judicial Authority and destroyed 551 boats used for human trafficking.

Meanwhile the area where Sophia was operating was obviously the core of the migration flow and, although the Operation has never been a Search and Rescue Operation, due to the obligation deriving by the international law, Sophia rescued a large number of migrants in distress at sea (45.000 migrants in 312 SOLAS events which represent less than 10% of the total numbers of migrants since 2015).

Since the beginning of the Operation it was clear that to have a structural impact on the smugglers' business model it was necessary to operate within Libyan territorial waters and ashore (which constitutes Phase 2B/3 within Sophia's operational plan). However, it was impossible to achieve the necessary conditions to reach Phase 2B/3 in the short to middle term which, as a reminder, are:

- Obtain a formal request from the Libyan Government of National Accord (GNA);

- Obtain a UN Security Council Resolution;
- Find a solution to the problem also known as the «legal finish», related to managing migrants rescued and suspected smugglers apprehended, in Libyan territorial waters.

The sole alternative in order to reach the desired results, was to give the LCG&N ownership of their area of responsibility by increasing their capabilities to operate at sea and tackle migrants' smugglers, while saving migrants who were dying at sea, the majority of whom were in the proximity or within the Libyan territorial waters.

It was therefore decided that Sophia would support the Libyan capacity building in order to allow them to gradually take ownership of their territory, in accordance with the EU comprehensive approach which should lead to a full handover of responsibility to the Libyans by 2020. The new task to train the LCG&N was therefore introduced into the mandate on August 30th 2016.

To force the LCG&N to become the primary actor and progressively take full ownership of their area of responsibility, ENFM decided to gradually assume a "second line" posture with its naval assets and, starting from June 2017, thanks to a combination of activities, including training coordinated by ENFM and some bilateral initiatives by Member States such as the provision of equipment, the LCG&N became increasingly more capable in conducting all Coast Guard functions in their area of responsibility.

After 31.03.

The reduced migrant flow in the Central Mediterranean Sea proves today that the model described above has been successful.

As a matter of fact, the combined contribution of training and equipment provision has enabled a noteworthy improvement in the operational capabilities of the LCG&N over time, which showed significant improvement. Libyans have been gradually taking ownership of their area of responsibility, thus their increased capacity does not require, at the moment, a direct role of ENFM surface naval assets in fighting migrant smugglers and human traffickers.

At the same time, in order to continue to deliver the desired effects in the core task, the employment of aerial assets has been essential either to enhance the maritime situational awareness in the AOO, to provide the "early detection" capability of SOLAS events (essential for the LCG&N to successfully operate saving lives at sea) and to remotely monitor the LCG&N activities at sea in order to better assess their capacities.

So, in relation to the Core Task, considering the achieved capacities of the LCG&N and their ability to operate against migrant smuggling and human trafficking within their area of responsibility, combined with a significant reduction in the migratory flow from the Central Mediterranean Route, it is manageable, at the moment, for the Operation not to have surface naval assets available provided that the following conditions are met:

- The lack of naval assets is limited in time, in order not to undermine the naval dimension of the Operation, the credibility achieved to date and to avoid reputational damage to the EU;
- The LCG&N continue to efficiently operate within their area of responsibility, with an enduring capacity to react to the departures of migrants off the coast of Libya;
- The irregular migration departures from Libya structurally changed and the migration flows will not have a sudden increase.

However, the possibility of a new humanitarian crisis associated with the possible amplified threat related to terrorism and foreign fighters trying to reach Europe, cannot be ruled out. In this situation, the LCG&N could be outstripped and the EU would be required to provide an immediate response. ENFM ships involvement would be therefore necessary (i.e. as in 2016, when in a single weekend there were about 50 boats leaving the Libyan coast at the same time with a total of 15.000 migrants).

To note that, information sharing and coordination with other stakeholders operating in the area, such as Frontex, the Nato Operation Sea Guardian and the IT Operation Mare Sicuro, has also been essential to keep achieving the desired success within the CORE task.

CIAT

Until 31.03.

ENFM is the only organisation actively enforcing the UN Security Council Resolution 2420 (2018) against the illicit arms trafficking in the Central Mediterranean. This has been certainly the case before the extension of the mandate when surface ships were employed in the area of operation conducting hailings and friendly approaches on suspicious vessels while acting as a strong deterrent against arms trafficking into Libya.

After 31.03.

With reference to the CIAT task, the temporary suspension of naval assets has prevented ENFM to carry out potential kinetic actions such as boarding, visits and searches on vessels suspected of arms trafficking. CIAT activity has become therefore less effective, making it difficult for the Operation to obtain concrete effects toward the illegal arms trafficking toward Libya. This has also heavily impacted the deterrent effect that ENFM has achieved in the high seas.

In order to mitigate the negative impact deriving from the lack of naval assets available, the use of aerial assets capable of long range and endurance has been essential to build a clear maritime picture and gather intelligence for the CIC, which has continued to be a link between ENFM and law enforcement actors, MS judicial authorities and the international community (with particular reference to EU Law Enforcement Agencies and the Shipping Community). This way of operating can clearly have only a temporary mitigating nature. To obtain full effectiveness in the execution of the UN Security Council Resolution and, at the same time, to avoid a loss of credibility on the part of the Operation and more generally of the European Institutions, it is necessary to return to employing naval assets.

It is necessary to underline that, considering the deterioration of the security situation in Libya and the reported repeated violations of the arms embargo at sea, it would be politically and operationally particularly relevant for the EU to re-deploy naval assets to efficiently contribute to the full implementation of UNSCR 2473 and actively act in light of the stabilization of Libya.

GIOS

In relation to the GIOS task, ENFM does not currently have the authority to conduct any activity such as inspections of vessels designated by the UN in accordance with UNSCRs 2146 (2014) and 2441 (2018). The main tools for delivery on this activity are information collection capabilities such as satellite imagery (EU SATCEN), MPRAs electro-optical imagery, RPAs full motion video/imagery and submarines.

As the task of Gathering Information on Oil Smuggling (GIOS) is based upon airborne surveillance, reconnaissance activities and products, the temporary suspension of surface naval assets is manageable in relation to the Operation's ability to fully deliver the task.

Using the information collected from a variety of sources, ranging from intelligence collected from our assets, to information/intelligence exchange with relevant stakeholders (Frontex/Europol/Interpol/UN Panel of Experts/ NATO Strategic Direction–Southern Hub) and open source intelligence, ENFM developed a list of 236 Vessels of Interest (VOI), of which approximately 60 are suspected of being engaged in oil smuggling. The information produced on suspected oil smuggling activity are collated and shared with relevant law enforcement agencies regularly.

ENFM has also produced periodic summary reports on this particular activity that are shared more widely with MS – the latest of which was issued last February (ref. OHQ Oil Smuggling Report – Special Report 18/037). Information collected and analysed have been passed on to the appropriate law enforcement agencies, using the CIC to facilitate this information exchange.

In order to gather more information on Oil Smuggling and better understand traffickers' patterns of life, MS cooperation in providing submarines in associated support will be essential, due to their ability to collect Intelligence information and perform SIGINT operations on suspected vessels using an undetected posture for an extended period of time not only off the coast of Libya but also in specific areas such as the "Hurd Bunk" (close to Malta international waters).

It is evident, that to be more effective it will be necessary a change of the mandate allowing the possibility to conduct inspections aboard suspected vessels when/if the ships will be made available again to the Operation.

TRAINING AND MONITORING OF LIBYAN COASTGUARD AND NAVY

In October 2016, a first training module (Training package 1) was delivered to the Libyan personnel aboard an Italian and a Dutch Ship. Although this kind of training proved to be effective, it also attested to be very expensive and burdensome for those Navies who gave availability of their naval units.

Since the beginning of 2017 the training has been therefore successfully completed within Member States' training centres (Training Package 2), thus not requiring anymore the availability of naval assets.

Providing training to the LCG&N has been essential in enabling Libyans to take ownership of their territory (including the SAR area of responsibility) and actively fight against illicit activities in the area.

Training the LCG&N has demonstrated to be an important strand of the EU commitment to enhancing the overall stability and security in Libya, representing an important part of the EU comprehensive and integrated approach that encompasses various initiatives for which, at the moment, the unavailability of naval assets is manageable.

So far, ENFM has trained 355 personnel (222 Coast Guard and 133 Navy) since signing the Memorandum of Understanding in 2016, thirty-five of whom received their training during this reporting period.

With the help of EU member states, but also law enforcement agencies such as Europol, Interpol NCB Rome, ICC, and Frontex, ENFM thoroughly vets all prospective trainees to ensure that the individuals trained comply with our standards of integrity. A crosschecking mechanism has been designed with above mentioned partners in order to ensure that the selected candidates meet the

criteria set for their participation to the training, especially the absence of criminal record or suspicions of illegal activities.

In order to keep on the capacity building process, ENFM has planned for training courses for up to 200 LCG&N personnel in Greece, Croatia and Italy which will be completed by the end of 2019.

To note that, as part of the various training courses, LCG&N trainees receive training also on human rights and gender-related aspects with the support of UNHCR and UNODC.

EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

Established partnerships with a range of stakeholders have enabled valuable information exchange and cooperation.

Enhancing information exchange on migrant smuggling and trafficking with MS' law enforcement agencies and the Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) Agencies (primarily EUROPOL and Frontex) has been a key feature of ENFM, in accordance with article 2, paragraph 3 of the Council Decision nr. 778 of 2015.

Since the launch of the Operation an important network for information exchange has been set up, with the signature of various technical arrangements between ENFM and relevant stakeholders (EUROJUST, EUROPOL, Frontex, the Italian National Central bureau of INTERPOL, the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court and the Italian Prosecutor Office anti-mafia and counter terrorism). In addition, as recognized by the *Report to the European Parliament and national Parliaments on the proceedings of the Standing Committee on operational cooperation on internal security (COSI) for the period July 2017 - December 2018* (Council document nr. 7500/19), the establishment of the CIC brought tangible progress in enhancing operational cooperation between the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and Justice and Home Affairs actors.

Of particular note, the well-established Shared Awareness and De-confliction in the Mediterranean (SHADE MED) forum continues to provide a productive environment for interaction and dialogue between a range of civilian and military actors operating in the Mediterranean Sea.

1. Global context

Migration trends

A gradual but consistent decrease of migrant arrivals in Europe has been ongoing since the summer of 2017, with a significant reduction in the number of deaths deriving from attempts to cross the Central Mediterranean.

During the reporting period, CMR is the least used route through the Mediterranean Sea, with **4947** migrants smuggled during the reporting period. Compared to the same period of the previous year (1 December 2017 – 31 May 2018), this figure represents a reduction of **73%**.

Tunisia is the main country of origin of migrants (328) despite a reduction in numbers by 85% since the previous reporting period. The second largest number of migrants originates from Pakistan (14.8%) followed by Ivory Coast (11.0%), Comoros (2.5%), Algeria (0.5%), Cameroon (0.1%) and other nationalities (0.5%).

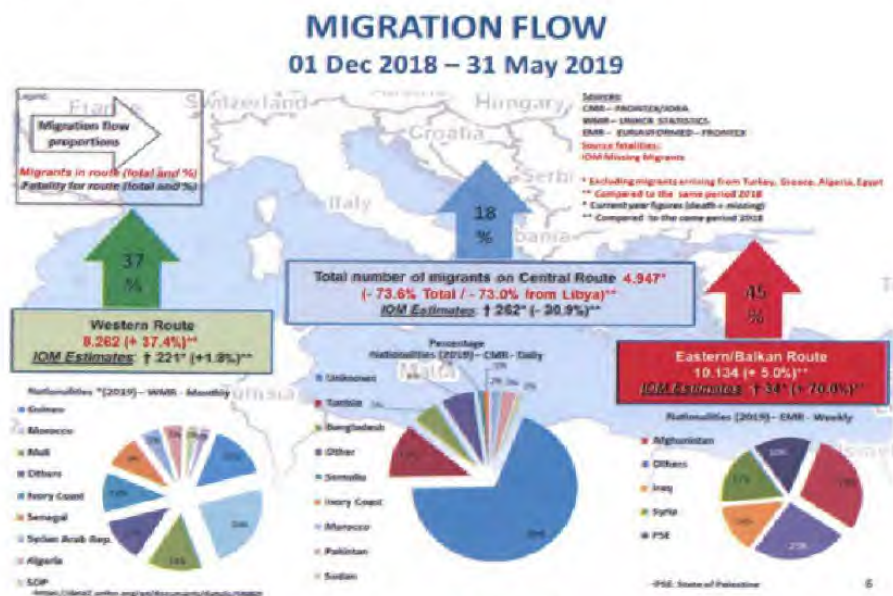


Figure 1: Migration Flow, Mediterranean Sea (01 December 2018 to 31 May 2019)

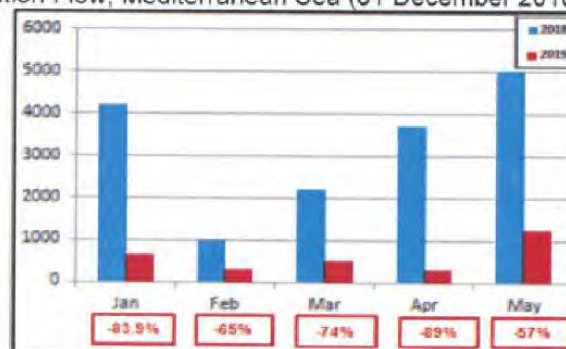


Figure 2: Migration Flow, Central Mediterranean route

Smuggling Business Model

The migratory flow from Libya to Europe keeps largely decreasing compared to the previous years, although the end of winter and positive change of weather conditions have led to a slight increase of events during the reporting period.

The increased activity and capabilities of the Libyan Coast Guard & Navy (LCG&N), their consolidated control of their area of responsibility (Figure 3) and the ongoing absence of NGO-vessels loitering in proximity of Libyan Territorial Waters (TTW), are significantly hampering the smugglers business model (SBM). As a matter of fact, the role played by the LCG&N achieved a twofold result: on one hand, it hampered the smugglers business through a deterrent effect, and with a notable impact on their illegal profits and on the other hand it discouraged migrants from using this route to reach Europe.

An increasing trend of smugglers shifting their activities from the western part of the Libyan coastline to the eastern part has been observed during the reporting period. Al Khums and Zuwarah are now the main departure points for the migrants. The majority of the reported departures were operated by inflatable rubber boats but there were a couple of single events which involved wooden boats or fiberglass boats.



Figure 3: Libyan area of responsibility

Since the beginning of Operation Sophia, six different Techniques, Tactics and Procedures (TTPs) for human smugglers in Libya have been observed (Figure 4). The TTPs used during this reporting period remain largely unchanged from the previous period, although there were some visible modifications to avoid interception prior to reaching Europe. However, there would need to be more evidence of use of these modifications before they could constitute a new confirmed TTP.

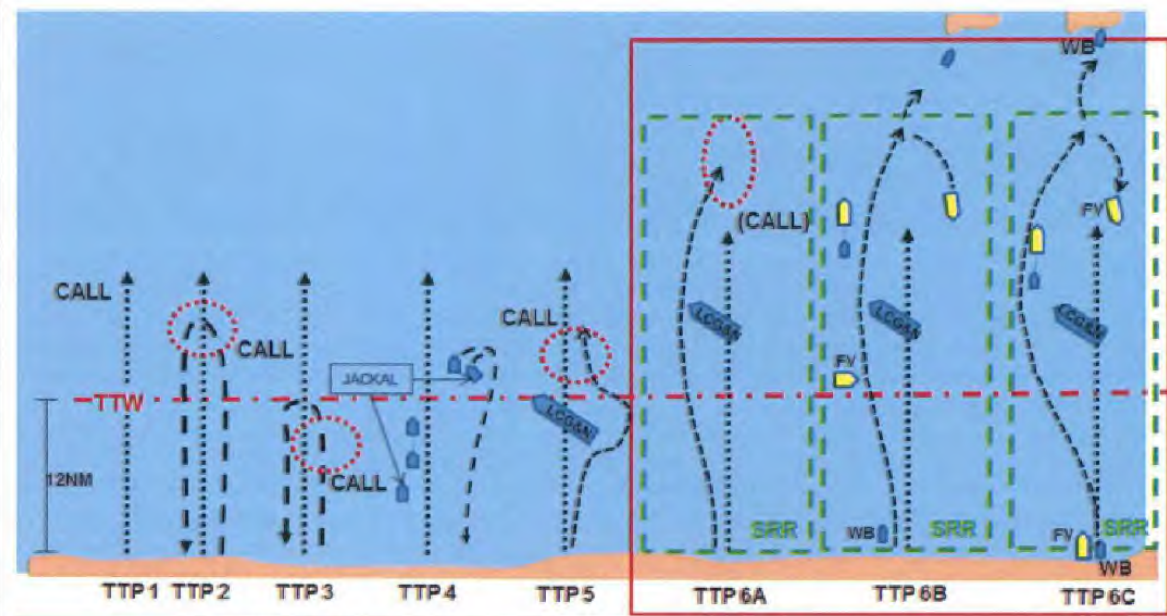


Figure 4: Human smugglers Techniques, Tactics and Procedures (TTPs)

The evolved TTP has increased the average distance that the migrants' boats cover prior to the interception, from 30 NM to 125 NM from the shoreline, although the analysis of most current events shows a new decrease of the distance where the migrants' boats have been intercepted to an average of 60 NM (Figure 5).

The dynamic response of the smugglers in modifying their TTPs to prevent interception is mainly due to the improved and coordinated activities and capabilities of the LCG&N.

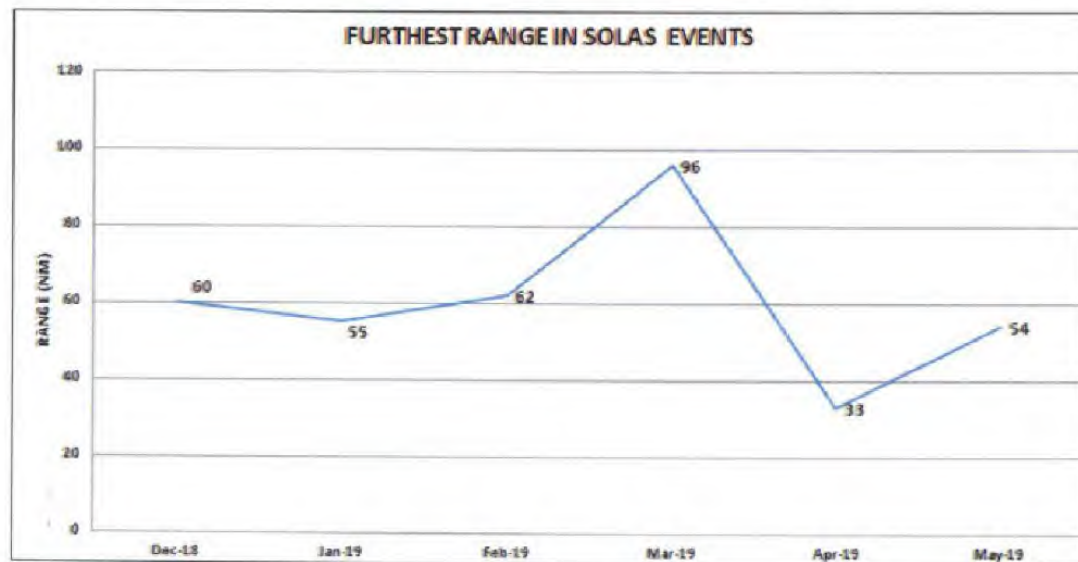


Figure 5: Average distance covered by migrants prior the interception

The transshipment of migrants from fishing vessels (FV) to smaller wooden boats is one method utilised to reach Europe and noted during the entire reporting period.

Human smugglers are apparently increasing their use of FV's due to the shelter provided for migrants by these vessels which ensures a covert transshipment and reduces the likelihood of interception by aerial assets thus preventing an intervention by the LCG&N within their area of responsibility.

Arms trafficking

ENFM has continuously monitored Vessels of Interest (VOI) under the Countering Illegal Arms Trafficking (CIAT) task. Of particular interest during the reporting period were three cases.

According to open source information on [REDACTED] 2018 Vessel [REDACTED] a Antigua and Barbuda flagged vessel delivered at the Libyan port of Al-Khums two containers loaded with weapons and ammunition from Turkish manufacturers. Part of the load was assessed to be blank weapons. After assessing the port situation and the movement of vessels to and from the [REDACTED] port it was evident that the vessel was operating in a 3-week routine route between Turkey and Libya.

A following event on [REDACTED] 2019, reported a ship carrying 80 military armored vehicles equipped with missile and mine protection systems from Turkey arrived at the Libyan port [REDACTED]. Even this activity it is possibly connected with [REDACTED]

Vessel [REDACTED] a Moldovan flagged vehicle delivered at [REDACTED] port a shipment of at least 30 armored vehicles which resemble with Turkish type BMC KIRPI II, according to open source information. The vessel left Turkish port of [REDACTED] on [REDACTED] and arrived late [REDACTED] in [REDACTED] port.

Oil smuggling

During the previous reporting period, [REDACTED] continued to publish daily sales of refined products to the four distribution companies on their official website. In a sample of the published sales it was noted that particular petrol stations, had quite a high demand for Petrol 95 when compared to other petrol stations; often exceeding the permissible daily quota. It is possible that certain fuel stations could be involved in the smuggling of fuel in large quantities. Furthermore, it is possible that these fuel stations (and others not yet identified) could be supplying fuel to the human smuggling business and contributing to their smuggling business model.

As part of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed with the UN Panel of Experts, further exchange of operational information was conducted on 21 May 2019. Of specific interest to the panel was an update on the most likely pumping stations used for oil smuggling and vessels used for bunkering activity. By comparing recent satellite images of the smuggling pumping stations it was confirmed that of the three previously identified pumping stations, the one located closest to [REDACTED] was active during the monitoring period and the other two were not operational. While no significant changes were observed at [REDACTED] which appears to be a facility of a permanent nature, the other two locations showed significant changes. [REDACTED] showed the most drastic change with all structures, including the perimeter wall, being removed.

Being a highly lucrative business, it is unlikely that these networks have stopped their illicit activities related to oil smuggling and therefore it is assessed that it is possible that these pumping stations have been moved elsewhere along the coast.

Libyan Coast Guard and Navy

The Libyan Coast Guard and Navy (LCG&N) has operated exclusively from bases in Western Libya. At sea, their activities cover only parts of their area of responsibility. The approximate effective area of the LCG&N is shown in Figure 6.

The LCG&N organization in Western Libya is divided into three operational sectors (the Western Sector, Tripoli Sector and the Central Sector, which cover the western part of the Gulf of Sirte, each with a HQ).

The Western Sector HQ is located in Zawiyah, the Tripoli Sector HQ is located in Tripoli and the Central Sector HQ is located in Misratah (Figure 6).

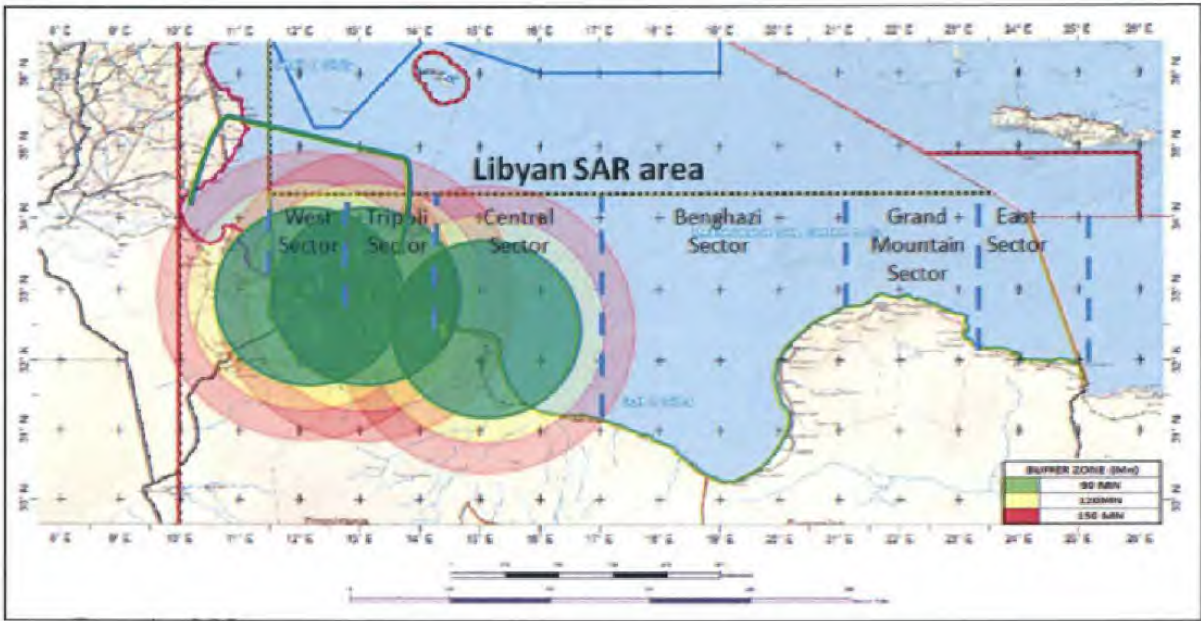


Figure 6: LCG&N operating areas organization

Within this area it can be assessed that the LCG&N continues to make sound operational progress in their ability to operate up to 130 NM off the western coastline, with sea states up to 3. In the reporting period and as shown in Figure 7a, the LCG&N managed to respond to over 50% of the total SOLAS events occurred in the CMR.

Figure 7b shows a clear increase of the LCG&N capacity to save human life at sea: a total of 2,256 migrants were rescued at sea by LCG&N assets, equating to a total of 52% of all migrants rescued.

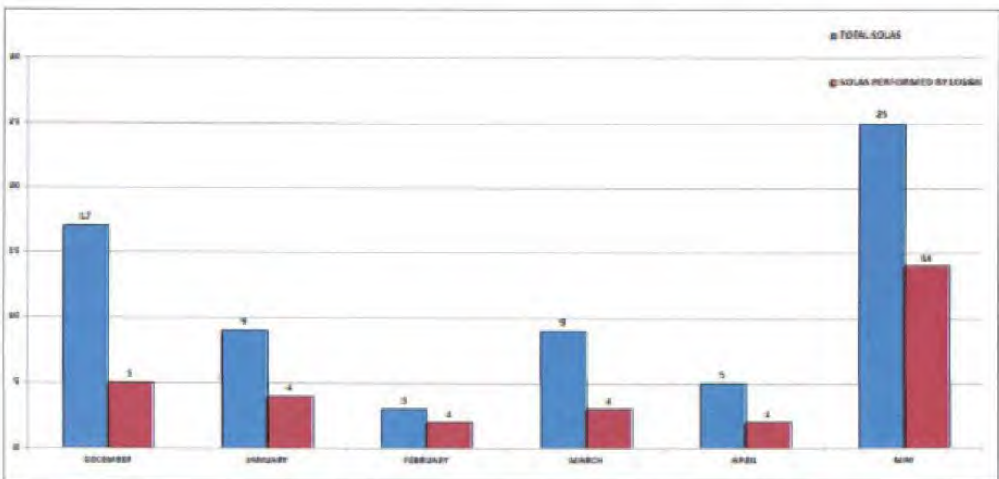


Figure 7.a: LCG&N contribution to SOLAS (in terms of events)

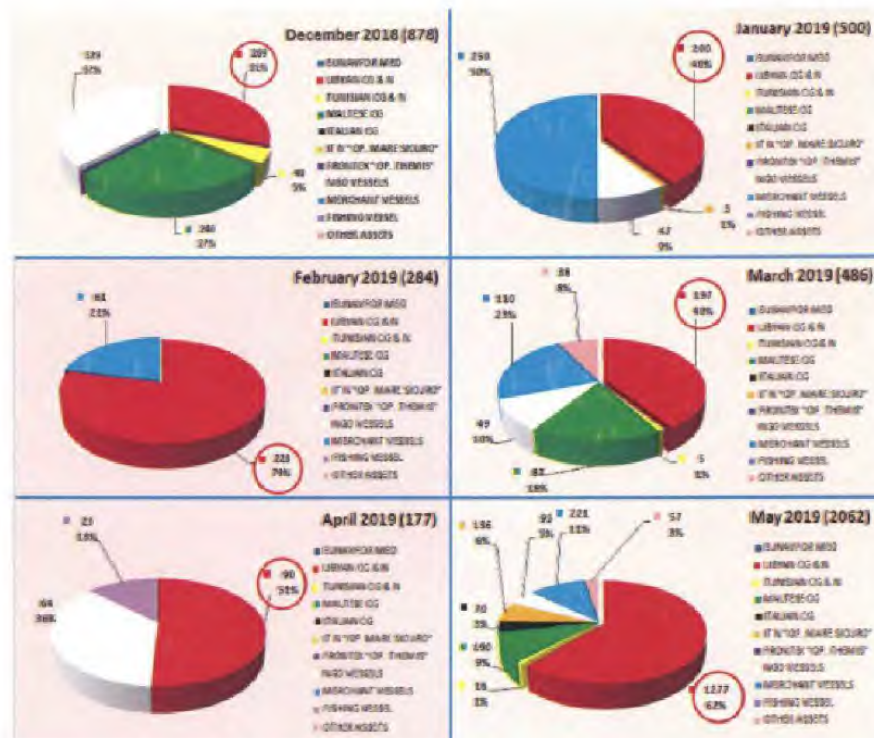


Figure 7.b: LCG&N contribution to SOLAS (in terms of migrants rescued)

From April 2019, notwithstanding the deteriorating security situation in Libya, the LCG&N has continued its operational capabilities at sea performing routine sorties and SAR operations, saving lives in 16 SOLAS events (still more than the 50% of the total SOLAS events of the period).

It is currently assessed, that LCG&N is capable of to perform multiple rescued activities simultaneously. Of note, on 23 May 2019, the LCG&N took over the coordination of three SOLAS events in a limited time frame rescuing 360 people in distress at sea.

Of particular note is the fact that during the reporting period, for the very first time, the LCG&N has continued its operational activities at sea performing routine sorties and SAR operations even during the Ramadan, showing a clear determination on achieving full ownership of their area of responsibility.

LCG&N assets

At present, LCG&N inventory counts a total of 30 naval assets.

PORT	CLASS	NAME	SERVICE
Tripoli	Hamlin	Al Kifah	LCG
Tripoli	Corubia	Fezzan	LCG
Tripoli	Corubia	Ubari	LCG
Tripoli	Vittoria C799	Vittoria	LCG
Tripoli	Coastal Tug	Al Salam	LCG
Tripoli	Bigliani	Ras Al Jaddar	LCG
Tripoli	Bigliani	Sabratha	LCG
Tripoli	Spasilac	Al Monkd	Libyan Navy
Tripoli	PB30-SV	Al Sadad	Libyan Navy
Tripoli	PS 700 Batral	IBN Haritha	Libyan Navy
Tripoli	PS 700 Batral	IBN Ouf	Libyan Navy
Tripoli	Combattente	Shafag	Libyan Navy
Tripoli	PB30-SV	Sidi Bilal	Libyan Navy
Misratah	Coastal Tug	Al Fam	LCG
Misratah	Coastal Tug	Al Magreb	LCG
Misratah	Coastal Tug	Cevahir Mustafa	LCG
Misratah	Coastal Tug	Farawah	LCG
Misratah	Damen Stan Patrol FCS 1605	Gamines	LCG
Misratah	Coastal Tug	Taghreft	LCG
Misratah	Coastal Tug	Zero One	LCG
Misratah	Bigliani	Zuwarah	LCG
Al Khums	Hosam	Hosam	LCG
Al Khums	Damen Stan Patrol FCS 1605	Lebda	LCG
Al Khums	Vittoria C799	P 106	LCG
Zliten	Rubber Boats (Klinger CL)	N/A	LCG
Al Zawiyah	Al Ankaa	Al Ankaa 1	LCG
Al Zawiyah	Al Ankaa	Al Ankaa 3	LCG
Al Zawiyah	Damen Stan Patrol FCS 1605	Talek/Talil	LCG
Al Zawiyah	Bigliani	Zawia	LCG
Zwara	Rubber Boats (Klinger CL)	N/A	LCG

Figure 8: LCG&N assets (last update at March 2019)

Figure 9 shows the number of sorties carried out by each vessel and reported by the LCG&N operation room during the reporting period. There is a broad spread across the fleet with PB FEZZAN being the current preferred.

2. Operational updates

Manning

In accordance with ENFM Operation Plan, there are 198 activated positions in the Operation Headquarters (OHQ) Crisis Establishment. Moreover, Parent Nation provided logistic and administrative support with a National Support Unit (NSU) of 14 units and a CTU C4 Group of 23 units.

The OHQ also maintains liaison with EUMS and EEAS/CPCC in Brussels, with European Border and Coast Guard Agency (EBCGA) in Catania, with UNSMIL in Tunis, with EUROPOL (in particular with the European Migrant Smuggling Centre) in the Hague, with NATO MARCOM in Northwood, with US AFRICOM and EUCOM in Stuttgart, and with EBCGA Headquarters in Warsaw.

The OHQ is manned at 82.8% with 164 staff member of whom 103 are supplied by host nation and 61 are provided by 24 European Member States.

Further to the temporary suspension of naval assets, the FHQ has been relocated ashore and, after a short transition at the OHQ premises in Rome, it has been established within the Italian Navy Fleet Command compound where it operates from the EU Maritime Component Command (EU MCC) facility.

Twenty-eight positions are activated for the FHQ Crisis Establishment (CE), two augmentees and one Liaison Officer (LNO). As of 31 May 2019, the FHQ is manned at 78.57% with 21 staff members. Among them, 9 are from Host Nation and 12 are provided by 7 European Member States.

The total number of personnel in ENFM, including air detachments and logistical elements, has reached 379 units from 24 nations (192 from Italy and 187 multinational). The 25th nation is considered a contributor to ENFM though limited to voluntary financial contributions to the LCG&N training program.

Asset flow

With regards to assets employed in the operation, the reporting period can be divided in two parts. From 1 December 2018 to 31 March 2019, ENFM employed a total of seven naval assets in direct support and 18 in associated support, plus eight flying assets. Since 1 April 2019 only flying assets were employed due to the PSC decision to temporarily suspend the use of naval assets.

However, since the security conditions in Libya have deteriorated, ENFM requested to keep ships in 14 Days Notice to Move (NTM) to enable an eventual EU maritime response if so required and sanctioned by the PSC. In the meantime without naval assets, an increase in flying hours for both, UAV and MPRA, was considered necessary. For this reason it was decided to call for the 14th Force Generation Conference, which was held on the 30 April 2019 in Brussels. The requirement of an increase in available ISR assets was not fully met by MSs and only one MPA with 50 hrs per month was made available to the Operation.

During the reporting period, until 31 March 2019, an average of two naval vessels was available per day for the mission. Furthermore, ENFM has had available an average of four to five MPRA. Additionally, one RPAS has been granted by Italy to the Operation in associated support during the whole reporting period.

Figure 10 shows the availability of naval assets through the reporting period. As already mentioned, as an outcome of the 14th Force Generation Conference, surface naval assets are held at 14 days NTM.

NAME	NATIONALITY - TYPE	FROM	TO	SUPPORT
SAN MARCO	IT - Amphibious Transport Dock	01 DEC 18	31 DEC 18	<i>DIRECT</i>
RIZZO	IT - Frigate	31 DEC 18	31 MAY 19	<i>DIRECT ¹⁾</i>
AUGSBURG	DE - Frigate	01 DEC 18	06 FEB 19	<i>DIRECT</i>
EV JACOBET	FR - Frigate	01 DEC 18	12 DEC 18	<i>DIRECT</i>
EV JACOBET	FR - Frigate	12 FEB 19	13 MAR 19	<i>DIRECT</i>
REINA SOPHIA	ES - Frigate	01 DEC 18	15 FEB 19	<i>DIRECT</i>
RAYO	ES - OPV	17 MAR 19	31 MAY 19	<i>DIRECT ¹⁾</i>
ECHO	UK - Hydrographic Survey Ship	01 DEC 18	31 DEC 18	<i>ASSOCIATED</i>
TRIDENTE	PT - SUB	26 MAR 19	31 MAR 19	<i>ASSOCIATED</i>

Figure 10: ENFM naval assets availability

¹⁾ CHOP to national authority on 31 March 2019, 14 days notice to move (NTM) as of 1 April 2019

In addition, submarines in associated support are highly valuable for ISR operations, as they provide an important Signal Intelligence (SIGINT) capability, Third Party Targeting (TPT), and the possibility to observe illicit traffic without been detected. This unique capacity allows for proper collection of intelligence information and evidence with particular reference to the GIOS activity. The overall force flow for the period can be found at Figure 11.

Figure 11: ENFM Asset availability

Core task: Contributing to the disruption of the Smugglers Business Model

The Operation has continued to focus its efforts to identify and apprehend persons suspected of participating in migrant smuggling and human trafficking from Libya to Europe, as well as to enhance information exchange with MS' law enforcement agencies and the Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) Agencies (primarily EUROPOL and Frontex), in accordance with article 2, paragraph 3 of the Council Decision (778/2015).

During the reporting period ENFM relied on the achieved capabilities of the Crime Information Cell (CIC) within the FHQ, which has proved its importance as a link between actors, by providing valuable operational information exchange.

Supporting Task: Training and Monitoring of the Libyan Coast Guard and Navy**Training the Libyan Navy and Coastguard**

Training the LCG&N is an important strand of the EU commitment to enhancing the overall stability and security in Libya, representing an important part of the EU comprehensive and integrated approach that encompasses various initiatives.

The combined contribution of training and equipment provision has enabled a noteworthy improvement in the operational capabilities of the LCG&N over time. Training modules have been essential to enhance the capability of the LCG&N. The overall feedback on the completed courses of the Training Package 2 was very positive, and trainees responded well not only to the technical elements of training but also to the military behaviour and human rights elements. The quality of the trainees has been found acceptable and they have displayed an eagerness to learn and develop their skills.

The periodic meetings with LCG&N personnel are the main tool to obtain training feedback because they provide ENFM the possibility to assess LCG&N's overall capacity to operate at sea autonomously. At the same time, such meetings helped to establish and maintain a solid link, and develop the important personal and professional bond between ENFM and LCG&N personnel. However, due to the current situation on the ground in Tripoli members of the Libyan Committee of Experts were not authorised to leave the country, therefore coordination is done via email and telephone calls.

The LCG&N now have a functional range of up to 130 nautical miles from Tripoli. However, this capability is often subject to equipment availability, fuel, and a variety of other factors that can hamper their efforts to conduct activity at sea.

Since the commencement of training activity, ENFM has trained a total of 355 Libyan military personnel (222 from the Coast Guard and 133 from the Navy), thirty-five of whom received their training during the reporting period on the below courses:

- **“Basic Ship's Diver” course in Croatia:** delivered to five trainees at the Croatian Navy Training Centre in Split, from 12 November to 14 December 2018.
- **“Visit, Board, Search & Seizure (VBSS)” course in Greece:** delivered to 24 trainees by Greek national personnel hosted at the premises of NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre (NMIOTC) in Souda Bay, Crete Island, from 28 February to 15 March 2019.
- **“Basic Ship's Diver” course in Croatia:** delivered to six trainees at the Croatian Navy Training Centre in Split, from 25 February to 29 March 2019.

During the reporting period, the vetting process did not bar any candidates; however almost 50% of the candidates selected to attend the Basic Ship's Diver courses in Croatia were excluded due to non-compliance with medical fitness standards required by Croatian course providers.

Looking beyond this reporting period, courses have been aligned with some of the specific requests from LCG&N. In detail, the planned courses are as follows:

- **“Naval & Maritime Communication” course in Greece:** planned to be delivered to 21 trainees by Greek national personnel hosted at the premises at the NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre (NMIOTC) in Souda Bay, Crete Island, from 14 June to 26 July 2019.
- **“Visit, Board, Search & Seizure (VBSS)” course in Greece:** planned to be delivered to 49 trainees by Greek national personnel hosted at the premises of the NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre (NMIOTC) in Souda Bay, Crete Island, from 1 July to 19 July 2019.

- **“Basic Ship’s Diver” course in Croatia:** planned to be delivered to 10 trainees at the Croatian Navy Training Centre in Split, from 17 June to 19 July 2019.
- **“Advanced Ship’s Diver” course in Croatia:** planned to be delivered to up to 11 trainees at the Croatian Navy Training Centre in Split, from 26 August to 27 September 2019.

In addition to the above listed courses there are 6 additional training modules which will be achieved in Italy starting from September 2019 and for which coordination activities are ongoing. These courses will be delivered to up to 100 trainees and will last 4/5 weeks each (except the last one which is planned to be only 2 weeks long). In particular the courses will encompass:

- Deck Officer training;
- Electrical Maintainer training;
- Electronic Maintainer training;
- Mechanical Engineer training;
- Electrical Engineer training;
- GMDSS-MSA-VMRTC/SMART Operator training.

Monitoring Task

Monitoring of LCG&N remains a crucial element in the Capacity Building program, contributing to the empowerment of the LCG&N in securing and safeguarding their area of responsibility.

As per existing MoU on training between ENFM and LCG&N, the monitoring mechanism is based on three main activities:

- **Information Collection.** The main tool used by LCG&N Operations Room to exchange information is by phone call and online chat using the SMART¹ system. During the reporting period, the information exchange has remained below ideal levels because of a lack of detailed information related to pre-sailing and post-mission reports, showing margin for improvement.
- **Remote Monitoring.** Remote monitoring by ENFM assets, such as ships (until 31.03.2019), submarines, aircraft and Remotely Piloted Aerial Systems (RPAS), has been pivotal to the verification of the overall effectiveness of LCG&N operational activity at sea.
- **Periodic Meetings.** Periodic meetings between ENFM and LCG&N took place in Tripoli, Tunis and the OHQ in Rome. These meetings represent the opportunity for ENFM staff to carry out a direct assessment on the achieved level of capacity and capabilities. During the reporting period, two meetings took place: one in Rome during the 7th SHADE MED in January, while the second was between Deputy Commander and LCG&N delegations at margin of the closing ceremonies of the two training courses held in Split and Souda bay. At these events the Libyans reiterated the importance of ENFM and the benefit of the training provided, and thereby their desire to continue the engagement with the Operation.

In the reporting period, LCG&N has demonstrated continued improvement in their capacity to work at sea. The number of sorties has gradually increased from 3-4 up to 12-15 per week. Since December 2018, they have demonstrated ability to operate multiple assets at any given time, and reach the northern part of their area of responsibility.

From 1 December 2019, notwithstanding the deteriorated security situation in Libya, and according to the data gathered by ENFM, the LCG&N has intercepted and returned 2,141 migrants to Libya, which is the vast majority of all Libyan departing migrants with only 1,109 migrants in contrast arriving in Europe.

¹ The Service-oriented infrastructure for Maritime Traffic (SMART) system is a civilian maritime activities tracking tool developed by the Italian Navy. The tool's embedded chat is used by LCG&N Operations Room for external communication exchange.

ENFM submitted a plan to the PSC outlining proposals for multi-day monitoring ashore (more details in the EUNAVFORMED Op. Sophia letter to the Chairman of the EU Military Committee, dated 28 March 2019 (IT-EU OHQ/812/2019/CG) about monitoring activities ashore in Libya.). In accordance with this plan, ENFM personnel will conduct bi-monthly monitoring visits of up to four days each in the Tripoli area. The visiting teams will conduct their activities in coordination with Libyan authorities and with the logistical and security support of EUBAM Libya. Initially the monitoring will be focused on the operational rooms in the Tripoli area (the Joint Operational Room in Medina and the Libyan Navy Operation Centre in Abu Sitta Naval Base). Future monitoring activity, depending on the security situation ashore, is intended to be expanded to the areas of Misurata and Al-Khoms.

On 3 April 2019 the OPCDR presented the aforementioned plan to the PSC. The EUMC was subsequently tasked to provide Military Advice on the matter. The Military Advice (ref. document EEAS(2019) 392 REV 3, dated 17 April 2019.) was finalized on 17 April 2019. The PSC approved the plan on 30 April 2019.

However, it is important to underline that any monitoring activity ashore will be conditional to the improvement of the overall security situation in Libya, which at the moment does not allow any ENFM personnel to enter the country. In addition, as already highlighted, ENFM personnel will have to conduct the activity within the logistical and security framework of EUBAM which, at the moment, was forced to redeploy in Tunis due to the clashes in the Tripoli area and the subsequent reduced security conditions in Libya.

Furthermore, a key requisite for this activity are the relevant privileges and immunities for ENFM staff. In that regard, OPCDR has requested the EEAS to seek agreement from the Libyan authorities to grant ENFM personnel employed in Libya the same status that is already granted to EUBAM personnel.

Supporting Task: Countering Illegal Arms Trafficking (CIAT)

ENFM continues to be the only international actor among maritime partners to implement the UN arms embargo on the high seas off the coast of Libya in line with UNSCR 2434 (2018), thereby contributing to situational awareness and to maritime security in the Central Mediterranean.

During the reporting period, a total of 190 hailings and 5 friendly approaches have been conducted.

Actionable maritime intelligence on individual vessel and cargo movements towards the AOO remains essential. ENFM has built up a network for exchange of information and intelligence that is providing useful results and is recognized at international level.

With reference to the CIAT task, the temporary suspension of the deployment of naval assets prevented ENFM to carry out potential kinetic actions such as boarding, visits and searches on vessels suspected of arms trafficking. CIAT activity was therefore less effective, making it difficult for the Operation to obtain concrete effects toward the illegal arms trafficking toward Libya. This is also heavily impacting the deterrent effect that ENFM has achieved in the high seas.

In order to partially mitigate the negative impact deriving from the lack of naval assets available, the use of air assets capable of long range and endurance has been essential to build a clear maritime picture and gather intelligence for the CIC, which continues to be a link between ENFM and law enforcement actors, MS judicial authorities and the international community.

Supporting Task: Gathering information on Oil Smuggling (GIOS)

In relation to the GIOS task, ENFM does not currently have the authority to conduct any activity such as inspections of vessels designated by the UN in accordance with UNSCRs 2146 (2014) and 2441 (2018).

The main tools for delivery of this activity were information collection capabilities such as satellite imagery (EU SATCEN), MPRAs electro-optical imagery, RPAs full motion video/imagery and submarines.

ENFM continued to conduct surveillance activities and information gathering on illegal trafficking, including information on crude oil, its derivatives and other illegal exports, thereby contributing to situational awareness and to maritime security in the Central Mediterranean. This had commenced with the observation of Pattern of Life (PoL) and recording of relevant information. Since then, ENFM has also conducted studies into the production and distribution mechanisms of oil and its refined products, thus gaining a better understanding of this process at source.

The main area of concern for oil smuggling and illicit activities continue to be in the vicinity of Gulf of Sirte and to the north of Zawiyah and in particular, the coast between Zuwarah and Abu Khammash. These sites and smuggling activities originating from them have been confirmed through satellite imagery during this reporting period (Figure 12).

In February 2019 ENFM's second Oil Smuggling report was released covering the period May – December 2018. This work has further enhanced our situational awareness and understanding of PoL at sea, and the distribution mechanisms from oil factories to the distribution points. All the information gathered has been shared with EUMS, law enforcement agencies (EUROPOL and INTERPOL), and judicial partners (EUROJUST).



Enhanced information exchange

The exchange of information continues to be of significant value and reiterates the partnership amongst key organizations that are combating the smuggling business model. ENFM interaction with UN agencies has been proactive and useful, especially in consolidating a common understanding of those key factors and phenomena affecting the region where ENFM operates.

Thanks to this kind of activity, ENFM has been able to establish a strong cooperation also with the shipping industry (International Chamber of Shipping, International Maritime Organization and the Italian Shipowner's Association CONFITARMA), which has developed into a regular dialogue to enhance mutual knowledge and understanding as well as a fruitful exchange of relevant information. The cooperation between ENFM and the Italian Prosecutor Office anti-mafia and



Italian Prosecutor Office anti-mafia and counter terrorism (DNA) has proved to be essential to achieve a better understanding of smugglers' business model and allowing a more effective prosecution as well, thanks to a joint analysis of data provided by military intelligence and judicial activity.

The OPCDR has been actively engaging with relevant EU, regional and international organisations in support of ENFM's mandate implementation. During the reporting period, attention has been paid to keep and enhance the already good relationship with the EU Justice and

Home Affairs agencies (EUROPOL, EUROJUST, FRONTEX) the international agencies such as INTERPOL, INTERPOL NCB, ICC, and the UN agencies and offices such as IOM, UNHCR, OHCHR.

The set-up of a position as "ENFM advice expert" in FRONTEX HQ at the beginning of 2019 has facilitated the information flow between the FRONTEX and ENFM.

Furthermore, relationship with the NATO Strategic Direction South Hub has been established on a more permanent base with the aim of exchange information of common interest in the area.

During the reporting period, a "Working Arrangement" was signed on 21 December 2018 with European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (EUROPOL), aimed to achieve effective exchange on the humanitarian crisis as well as the identification and analysis of organised crime groups, particularly those operating immigrant smuggling, human trafficking and illegal trafficking including in arms, ammunitions, explosives and on crude oil and other illegal exports that are contrary to UNSCR 2146 (2014) and UNSCR 2362 (2017).

Moreover, on 22 February 2019, a procedural agreement was signed by ENFM and the UN Panel of Experts (PoE) on Libya. The finalised agreement concerns information exchange between the two parties, with particular regard to oil smuggling activities.

Crime Information Cell

In the last six months, the Crime Information Cell (CIC) continued operating in compliance with its mandate, facilitating the flow of information on criminal activities in the Central Mediterranean Sea by collecting and processing information, including personal data², in order to reconstruct the *modus operandi* of the related criminal organizations.

In addition to sharing collected data, monitoring of boats in transit led to recommendations to start further investigations at sea, such as Friendly Approach or Hailing and Query against suspicious vessels.

The CIC has provided, very often, suggestions to the National Police Authorities (NPAs) of those countries located outside the Operation area. This will allow NPAs to carry out inspections at VOI upon arrival at the ports of destination.

The use of ENFM air assets to perform hailing/query photographic surveillance/reconnaissance, while enhancing information exchange with MS Law Enforcement authorities through the CIC, has been extremely important in order to mitigate the absence of the naval assets in the CIAT task.

Following the 27 March 2019 PSC decision and the consequent temporary suspension of naval assets, the CIC was relocated on 26 April 2019 to the EU Maritime Component Command (EU MCC) located ashore within the Italian Navy Fleet Command (CINCPNAV) headquarters in Santa Rosa (Rome).

The new location of CIC within CINCPNAV premises granted the FHQ and the CIC full access to all relevant data provided by the communication, command and control and information sharing systems of the Italian Navy.

Observatory on Migrant Smuggling and Human Trafficking

Following the publication of the first report on the "First European Observatory on Migrant Smuggling and Human Trafficking", cooperation with the Italian National Anti-Mafia and Counterterrorism Prosecutor's Office (Direzione Nazionale Antimafia, DNA) has further developed during this reporting period by supplementing the existing database with relevant information.

With reference to the above work, a second report will be delivered in the next months, aiming at further implementing the information exchange including visibility on the prosecutions' outcomes when relevant to EUNAVFOR MED.

² The processing of personal data in this context is carried out in accordance with the law of the flag State of the ship on which the CIC is located and, as regards the staff of the agencies of the European Union, in accordance with the applicable legal framework.

4. Support to Operations

Intelligence

During the last six months, the need of information gathering with focusing on the CORE task has maintained a high level. As a consequence, links with EU MSs remain an essential part to building actionable intelligence within ENFM.

The current VOI List contains at the moment 236 vessels that are possibly involved in illicit activities. Acquired information from the FHQ assets operating in the AOO, MS military sources, NATO sources and received information from the law enforcement agencies are fundamental for building a consistent VOI List. Weekly and monthly Intelligence Summaries (INTSUM), Intelligence Reports and Special Reports are produced on a regular basis by ENFM.

In this reporting period, 24 Requests for Information (RFIs) were submitted and 62 replies received a ratio in line with standard INTEL practices in international environment. Responses were predominantly provided by EU Member States, but the Operation also exchanged products with NATO/ MARCOM, FRONTEX, EUROPOL and the US. During the reporting period EU SATCEN provided 20 products in response to requests from ENFM related to core task, CIAT and GIOS.

All products were provided in the requested time and the analysis has increased ENFM's situational awareness.

Communication and Information System

The Communication and Information System (CIS) infrastructure at the OHQ and FHQ is well organised. In April 2019, CJ6 established new CIS infrastructure in Italian Navy Fleet Command (CINCNV) headquarters in Santa Rosa (Rome) for the FHQ deployment. The CIS architecture for ENFM is well sustained. The OHQ internal process for the Classified Mission Network (CMN) MED accreditation is finished; OHQ is now waiting for the final approval by the Italian National Security Authority.

Logistic Support

Established logistic infrastructure in the Joint Operating Area (JOA) is well sustained. The Forward Logistic Base (FLB) in IT Naval Base Augusta, the Forward Logistic Site (FLS) in IT Air Base Pantelleria and the Forward Operating Base (FOB) in IT Air Base Sigonella all effectively support the operation. The FLB, FLS and FOB are situated within the JOA and are included in ENFM's Command and Control (C2) architecture. The FLB and FOB constitute the main operational logistics hubs for the operation. Greece provides additional valuable logistic sites at the FLS Souda and FOB Souda, both in Crete.

Medical Support

Up until the temporary suspension of naval assets, the medical planning to ensure the continuum of care within ENFM's large AOO was challenging due to a limited allocation of medical capabilities, such as Role 2 surgical and dedicated rotary wing assets. Therefore, medical doctrinal timelines (10-1-2 rule) could not be met in parts of the AOO, which increased the health risk in cases of severe injury or illness.

Role 1 Support to ENFM contingent is responsibility of Member States. It was mostly effective and based on medically trained personnel, being assigned to every maritime platform and Forward Operational Base (FOB) or provided by the Host Nation in the OHQ.

Since 1 April 2019, there have been reductions of manning in FHQ Medical branch (no Medical ACOS and PECC officer). Due to the lack of FHQ medical personnel, OHQ CJ Med coordinated medical issues directly with FOBs Role 1.

Legal

As stated in the EU Council decision (CFSP) 2015/778, the Operation remains in Phase 2A (conduct of operations on the high seas).

Despite the temporary suspension of naval assets, as a consequence of PSC conclusions of 27 March 2019, it is important to highlight that the mandate of ENFM has not changed. Indeed, the Operation's end-state remains: "the business model of smugglers and traffickers is disrupted and numbers of illegal migrants reduced to a level manageable without the presence of EUNAVFOR MED".

In relation to gathering information on oil smuggling, ENFM does not currently have the authority to conduct inspections of vessels designated by the UN, in accordance with UNSCRs 2146 (2014) and 2441 (2018). Therefore the temporary suspension of surface naval assets has had no significant impact on this task.

On the 30 April 2019 PSC approved ENFM's plan for multi-day monitoring ashore in Libya. From a legal point of view, it is worth recalling the following: Annex F to the MoU between EUNAVFOR MED and the LCG&N defines the general guidelines of the monitoring mechanism for the LCG&N and provides the legal basis allowing a more continuous presence in Libya of EUNAVFOR MED staff members to perform monitoring activities.

Since the mentioned Annex F does not contain any provision on the status (i.e. privileges and immunities) of EUNAVFOR MED personnel in Libya, the OPCDR requested that the EEAS should ask the Libyan authorities grant EUNAVFOR MED monitoring teams deployed in Libya a status equivalent to EUBAM personnel (i.e. a status equivalent to administrative and technical staff in accordance with Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of April 18, 1961).

Financial support

The current available funds in the amount of 4.6 Million €, approved by the ATHENA Special Committee (SC) on 16 April 2019 (Budget n°74/2019), are assessed to be sufficient to cover all costs in order to run the operation until end of September 2019.

Concerning the training of LCG&N funds provided on a voluntary basis by MS are in the amount of 2.7 Million €. So far 63% of these funds have been spent. In order to complete all the planned training course for 2019, remaining funds are assessed not to be sufficient and estimated additional 120.000 € are currently required.

Gender Branch and Human Rights

ENFM Operation Sophia is deeply committed and involved in integrating human rights and gender considerations into the Operation. Operation Commander has started different initiatives aimed at improving internal and external engagements in accordance with EU comprehensive approach on human rights and gender issues. The OPCDR intent is to advance the UN principle of gender mainstreaming to promote gender equality.

Operation continues to put the intense effort into promoting gender mainstreaming in all areas and levels, including high level seminars and courses within Sophia Operation.

According to the ENFM Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) each unit joining the mission ENFM Operation SOPHIA receives the following training modules on human rights and gender issues:

- SOP 13100 - "The treatment on board of persons rescued at sea";
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- SOP 00230 - "Sexual Exploitation and Abuse".

The content of these is intended to enhance understanding of basic needs, (e.g. food, water, clothes, and toilets), gender awareness, treatment of injured people, and safeguarding of vulnerable persons (including women and children).

In the training domain the "gender mainstreaming" is already part of the syllabus provided to different audiences, internal (to the ENFM staff) and external (to the LCG&N).

On the internal dimension, apart from the Induction Training and Work-Up Staff Training, the latest briefing was on the Spanish frigate "Reina Sophia" and in Catania, on the Spanish patrol vessel "Rayo" on 18-19 March 2019.

On the external dimension, with regard to the training to the LCG&N, several courses were conducted, which have seen module on human rights and gender-related aspects. In particular:

- During Basic Ship's Divers Course in the Croatian Navy Naval Training Centre, Split (Croatia 12 November -7 December 2018);
- During Basic Ship's Divers Course in the Croatian Navy Naval Training Centre, Split (Croatia 25 February – 30 March 2019);
- During Vessel Boarding Search and Seizure Course (VBSS) in the NATO Base, Souda (Greece 28 February – 15 March 2019).

It is worth of note that, considering the importance of the matter, the experience gained during the Operation over the past years and the multiple initiatives undertaken, a Gender Branch was established in the OHQ on 15 January 2019. This has the aim of promoting an integrated perspective within the Operation. The establishment of the new branch did not require additional staff or incur additional costs.

On the occasion of the International Women's Day on 8 March 2019, an internal questionnaire was circulated to collect feedback about gender equality. The responses were analysed and the outcome brought to the attention of the Command Group.

An online EU gender advisor course is available for OHQ/FHQ staff, focused in particular on vulnerable people and smugglers/traffickers.

The OHQ personnel receive, on a monthly basis, dedicated presentations on the topic of human rights and gender issues in order to back-brief and enhance operational activity in relation to gender-mainstreaming and human rights, for internal and external audiences.

On 28 March 2019 a dedicated lecture about ENFM best practices in relation to gender was delivered by OHQ staff to the Italian Army Academy in Turin.

Outreach Activities

- Cooperation within the EU and with International Organisations

ENFM, particularly through the OPCDR, maintains an impactful outreach program, engaging with relevant international and regional, civilian and military and third party states to further improve the sharing of key mission related information and maintain support for the operation.

The OPCDR continues regular interaction with Brussels to support the PSC and CEUMC through provision of timely updates and reflections on operational activity. During the reporting period, the OPCDR also had positive engagements in the US; with the United Nations, Department of State and Department of Defence, and the US Coastguard.

Also of significance is the continued interaction with EUROPOL, FRONTEX, INTERPOL, IOM, the Italian Prosecutor Authorities, the International Chamber of Shipping, UN Panel of Experts and the NATO Allied Maritime Command (MARCOM).

NATO cooperation remains a particular focus. The Operation is in contact with the new NATO Strategic Direction South (NSDS Hub) in Naples - a recently born centre for information-sharing with regular visit and exchange of unclassified information.

- Shared Awareness and De-confliction in the Mediterranean (SHADE MED)

The SHADE MED forum continues to be a key element to enhance interaction and develop synergies in the overall framework of operations in the Mediterranean between civilian and military actors who share common interests in the Central Mediterranean Area.

The 7th SHADE MED Conference held in January 2019 provided a suitable forum to further engagements and interactions with a number of regional partners. This notably moved forward the relationship with the International Shipping Community who was well represented and took an active part in the proceedings with a member of the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) co-chairing a cooperative Working Group aimed at developing a more coordinated approach to operating in the Central Mediterranean.

Like all previous conferences, this conference proved to be a relevant tool to support the information communication strategy as well as reinforcing the EU comprehensive through active engagement of all involved actors in the Mediterranean Sea. Likewise the event allowed ENFM to maintain its excellent relationships with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

The event saw the participation of 189 external guests, representing 121 organisations from more than 30 nations. Keynote speakers hailed from varied and diverse organisations such as EUROJUST, the INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER of SHIPPING, EUROPOL, UNSMIL, EUBAM Libya, IOM and the UNHCR. By bringing their experience and vision to the table, they provided a detailed and in-depth view of challenges and synergies in the fight against traffickers and smugglers. Operational updates from ENFM, NATO Operation Sea Guardian, the Italian Operation "Mare Sicuro" and the Italian Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre contributed to raising common situational awareness of activities performed in the Central Mediterranean.

Key Challenges

Libyan security situation

The increasingly complex security situation in Libya has the potential to increase migrant flows as living and security conditions ashore deteriorate. The IOM estimate that around 325.000 people could take to the sea if conditions in Libya compelled them to do so. In addition, although we did not see any decline in operational capacity from the LCG&N over the reporting period - even despite Ramadan, - it is possible that they could be required to focus more on internal stability than human trafficking and smuggling. If this was to occur, it is likely that handling these threats would outstrip the LCG&N capacity and an immediate intervention by the European Community would be required in response off the coast.

5. Conclusion

EUNAVFOR MED operation SOPHIA is a crisis management operation and an integral part of the EU wider effort to contribute to stability in Libya. Sophia has contributed in a wider sense to a Safe and Secure Environment and, as such, ENFM has continued to carry out its tasks reassessing its role as a consolidated Maritime Security Provider in the Central Mediterranean Sea.

Operation Sophia operated in line with the EU integrated approach fostering civilian and military cooperation within EU institutions (FRONTEX, EUROPOL, EUBAM Libya, EULPC – European Union Liaison and Planning Cell for Libya) and other actors (United Nations, member States, law

Enforcement and Judicial Agencies, Interpol), enabling sharing of information and establishing partnerships with a range of stakeholders.

LCG&N capability to operate at sea within the declared Libyan SAR area has been significantly improved by the support, training and enhanced monitoring from EUNAVFOR MED combined with MS bilateral initiatives, such as the provision of equipment. LCG&N is now, *de facto*, capable of efficiently tracking and interdicting 60% of reported human trafficking in the coastal region as well as within the Western part of the Libyan SAR zone.

This achieved result combined with a significant decrease of the migratory flow from the Central Mediterranean Route, has made the execution of the core task manageable even without the availability of naval assets, provided that the following conditions are met:

- The lack of naval assets is limited in time, in order not to undermine the naval dimension of the Operation, the credibility achieved to date and to avoid reputational damage to the EU;
- The LCG&N continue to efficiently operate within their area of responsibility, with an enduring capacity to react to the departures of migrants off the coast of Libya;
- The irregular migration departures from Libya structurally changed and the migration flows will not have a sudden increase.

Despite the achieved successes, implementation of the UN Arms Embargo has been significantly halted since 1 April by the new political guidance and, in the long term, regarding the execution of this task, the temporary suspension of the deployment of naval assets may undermine the credibility of the Operation and its ability to efficiently cooperate with the numerous international partners.

As said, in order to mitigate the negative impact deriving from the lack of naval assets available, the use of aerial assets capable of long range and endurance has been essential to build a clear maritime picture and gather intelligence for the CIC, which has continued to be a link between ENFM and law enforcement actors, MS judicial authorities and the international community (with particular reference to EU Law Enforcement Agencies and the Shipping Community). This way of operating can clearly have only a temporary mitigating nature. To obtain full effectiveness in the execution of the UN Security Council Resolution and, at the same time, to avoid the aforementioned loss of credibility on the part of the Operation and more generally of the European Institutions, it is necessary to return to employing naval assets.

Due to the deteriorating security and living conditions in Libya there are increasing risks in the Central Mediterranean Area. The situation in the country is likely to remain volatile for some time and with over 300,000 people in Northern Libya who could embark on the dangerous journey through the Mediterranean, should conditions compel them to do so, the possibility of a new humanitarian crisis, with a significant increase of migration towards Europe cannot be ruled out. This particular condition, connected to the possible amplified threats related to terrorism and foreign fighters trying to reach the European coasts, makes ENFM even more essential in the future in order for the European Union to contribute significantly to regional security and Libyan stability.