



Emergency EUNIS Board meeting 2, 15th April 2016, 13.30 – 14.30

Minutes

Present (Board members): John Murphy (President), Ilkka Siissalo (Vice-President), Raimund Vogl (Treasurer), Michele Mennielli (Secretary), Ramon Grau Sala, Lígia Ribeiro, Tomasz Szmuc, Bas Cordewener.

In attendance: Jean-François Desnos (Executive Secretary), Anna Pacholak (President Assistant)

Apologies: Mikael Berglund, Valérie Le Strat, Malte Dreyer, Yiannis Salmatzidis.

The Treasurer, Raimund Vogl briefed the Board on the latest developments on the fraudulent activity on the EUNIS account. From February 2013 until March 2016 a number of illegal bank transfers were recorded on the EUNIS account. Funds were transferred from the EUNIS account to the bank account of Mr. Harald Spiegl. Initial estimates have indicated that the approximate amount taken from the account to be circa €70k.

The Treasurer had been unable to get bank statements from Mr. Spiegl and had requested that the bank sent him the most recent statements. Mr Vogl found on closer examination into the bank account statements a number of fraudulent transactions.

A former President, Kristal Sarlin was contacted in Finland by the Treasurer as she had copies of older statement from the Nordea Bank which is a Finnish bank. Such statements are sent to Kristel Sarlin on monthly basis. Any remaining or missing statements from the period were supplied by the bank. The Treasurer acted immediately in cancelling all online access to the account for Mr. Spiegl. As a pre-caution the EUNIS credit card accounts were also suspended.

The illegal transfers were detected by The Treasurer on reviewing the statements. The manner in which the fraud was transacted is that Mr. Spiegl named many EUNIS Board members as claiming expenses but supplied his own bank account and IBAN number for payments. They were described as reimbursements for the EUNIS Board members. Mr. Spiegl processed the transactions over the Internet. The passwords and credentials to the EUNIS account had been passed to him by the former Treasurer Hans-Dieter Weckmann.

The Treasurer contacted Mr Hans-Dieter Weckmann (the previous Treasurer) about the discrepancies on the account. Mr. Weckmann confronted Mr. Spiegl and after a conversation Mr. Spiegl confessed that he had moved the money to his account. Mr. Spiegl sent a proposal of how we would pay the money back within 4 years if the EUNIS Board did not report the crime to the police. The statement is in German and the Board members received a copy of it. The Treasurer contacted a solicitor in Germany to obtain some initial direction. The company operates internationally and is ready to act on behalf of EUNIS. The fee is estimated at €10k and this fee would be added to the amount owed to EUNIS by Mr. Spiegl. The Treasurer made copies of bank statements for all the Board members. The full extent of the fraud is still unknown and the Treasurer hopes to have a more accurate figure in the coming weeks.

The Board discussed the financial fraud in the EUNIS accounts and on how to follow up on this issue and to identify the next steps to be taken. Current and past Board members will be made aware of legal responsibility for this situation in particular the past Treasurers and past Presidents. All Board members were invited to comment by the President.

The Board discussed two options in depth. The President invited all members to contribute. The two options presented were:

1. Seek advice from a German solicitor. Request that Harald Spiegl sign a legal agreement to pay back the money to EUNIS between now and 2020. It was pointed out that it may not be necessary under German law to report the fraud.
2. The President to seek legal advice on Monday in Dublin and will report the fraud to the relevant authorities next week in the correct district(s) if advised to do so.

There was a consensus at the Board for option 2. The absent Board members will be asked to express their preference of 1 or 2 by e-mail. A formal record of the meeting will be circulated among the Board.

The President and the Board considered the situation as a very complex one as the fraud was committed in Germany, EUNIS is a French non-profit organisation and the bank is located in Finland. The Board agreed that legal advice is necessary on how to proceed. The initial follow on action is expected to be undertaken by the President on Monday April 18th 2016.

Some Board members stated they want to officially inform the institutions they represent in EUNIS that a fraud had taken place and the EUNIS Board were taking appropriate actions. The Board agreed the communication plan should be worked out on how to deal with this issue and to protect reputation of EUNIS. The information on the fraud and the follow on actions will be reported to the General Assembly in June 2016 to ensure transparency with the membership.