

SUMMARY

Until recently, the method of the Dutch police organization for handling environmental criminality was very split up, in terms of approach and management, and had little balance in establishing priorities and consistency. The Members of Parliament have sent a letter to the House of Representatives on March 25, 2004 (number 22 343) in which they point out how, in their view, the environmental task of the Police and the Public Prosecution Service should be organized. The main theme of the letter is that per January 2005 The Netherlands should have 25 regional and 6 inter-regional environment teams.

Later on in the same year the Functional office ('Functioneel Parket') of the public prosecutor has to be organized centrally for the approach of environmental criminality, operated by 4 enforcement units.

January 2005 has already passed and the urgent wish of the before mentioned letter has been carried out. To the members of the House of Representatives the promise was made, in that same letter, that by 2007 the implementation of the environmental task of the Police and the Public Prosecution service was to be evaluated. In this evaluation the central issues will be the efficiency and the effectivity of the newly formed regional and interregional environment police teams and the centralization of environmental tasks in the Functional Office of the Public prosecutor.

Previously to an official evaluation in 2007, DHV BV has done a statement of affairs, on request of the Research and Documentation Centre (WODC), a department of the Ministry of Justice. The central question during the research was:

What is the progress of the new organization, and is this progress going according to the assumptions and starting points, such as they were phrased in the letter of March 25, 2004 to the House of Representatives?

To answer this question several investigation methods have been used, starting with a literature study. Several sources have been analyzed to outline the scope in which the current practice can be viewed. Central issues of this scope are the letter of March 25, 2004 to the House of Representatives and the referential frame of the police environmental task for the regional and the inter-regional teams. The theoretical policy, which was the result of this action, has subsequently been tested in real terms by interviewing the team chefs of the regional and inter-regional environment teams. The Functional office of the public prosecutor has also been interviewed, all following a structured questionnaire. There also have been interviews with key figures within the new organization since a successful approach of the environmental criminality depends strongly on a fluent cooperation between several parties. The cooperation theme has been lifted out during these four group interviews.

The research showed that the new organization of the police environmental task is on track, but that still several bottlenecks occur. One of the most important bottlenecks is that it is unknown how many qualified cases there are for the regional and inter-regional environment teams. The number of strong environmental delinquencies that are carried out and have been picked up is rather small, for which the new organization was mainly started in the first place. Other important issues are the police entrepreneurship (environmental cases should be searched), the cooperation between the governmental network and the criminal prosecution network and the high-tech characterization (data-mining, information data, pattern analyses etc).