



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MIGRATION AND HOME AFFAIRS

Directorate B: Borders, Interoperability and Innovation
The Director

Brussels
HOME.B1

Ms Özlem Demirel
Member of Parliament
Bât. ALTIERO SPINELLI
02G351
Wiertzstraat 60
B-1047 Brussels

Subject: Blocking real-time position display for Frontex assets.

Dear Honourable Member of the European Parliament,

As follow up to the Commission's holding reply on question P-2306/2020, please find below the details of the reply obtained from the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex):

Questions and replies:

- 1. What are the call signs for marine and air assets used by EU Member States to take part in Frontex missions in the Mediterranean at present, and what aircraft of its own does Frontex deploy there (e.g. in connection with Frontex Aerial Surveillance Services (FASS))**

EU Member States support Frontex mandate in the Mediterranean by deploying their own national maritime and aerial assets. The call signs of the currently deployed Member States assets are considered as sensitive operational information and thus cannot be made available here.

Frontex is using a set of assets among the ones available within the FASS II FWC (Frontex/OP/932/2018/JL/MS). The FWC details are commercially confidential, contain personal data and sensitive operational information.

- 2. For what assets with what call signs has Frontex requested that real-time position display be blocked, and to what extent does this also apply to privately chartered FASS aircraft, whose call signs were presumably not known to Frontex on conclusion of the contract concerned?**

Sometimes due to tactical reasons for missions, law enforcement assets are not made visible. Making them visible might, especially if combined with other information, disclose sensitive operational information and thus undermine the operational objectives. In line with the above stated, it is the Service Provider's internal policy no to disclose the position of the assets.

3. To what on-line service providers was the request made to block real-time position display, and what providers have acted on that request?

There are various internet-based service providers that show real-time commercial aircraft flight tracking information on a map. This kind of websites aggregate data from multiple sources, mostly from crowdsourced information gathering by volunteers with ADS-B (Automatic dependent surveillance–broadcast) receivers, with limited or uncertain reliability. These websites are not dependent on any air traffic control authority in Europe.

It's relevant to point out that Frontex made no request on this matter, as mentioned in the previous answer.

The European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) is an independent body of the Commission, funded in Regulation (EU) 2019/1896¹. Hence, the enclosed reply, transmitted by the Commission, is under the sole responsibility of Frontex.

Yours faithfully,

(e-signed)

Matthias OEL

Enclosure: FRONTEX letter – reference: SAM/IFC/MICU/4462/2020

¹ Regulation (EU) 2019/1896 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 November 2019 on the European Border and Coast Guard and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1052/2013 and (EU) 2016/1624, OJ L 295, 13.11.2019, p.1.