

## Part 3. Participations in Multilateral Mechanisms: Precursors Incident Communication System (PICS); Projects Prism and Cohesion and related operations

Recommendation	Reference (source)
<p>Because many precursor seizures have an international dimension beyond the country in which the seizure occurred, any piece of information about the seizure is important as it could be the starting point of an investigation into the source of the chemical and the method of diversion. Governments are therefore encouraged to <b>share all potentially actionable information</b> through <b>PICS</b> or bilaterally, in the framework of <b>Project Prism and Project Cohesion</b>.</p>	(PRE/2016/P204)
<p>A) Projects Prism and Cohesion and related operations (including Operations Purple and Topaz which were merged to become Project Cohesion in 2006)</p>	
<p>INCB encourages all Governments to make use of the existing global cooperation mechanisms under <b>Project Prism and Project Cohesion</b> to <b>gather and exchange information</b> on new trafficking trends, on modi operandi and on the criminal organizations involved and how they operate, and to use that knowledge to develop specific risk profiles and conduct joint operations to prevent future diversions. INCB also reiterates its recommendations to all Governments to ensure that the contact details of their focal points for Project Prism and Project Cohesion are always up-to-date and that those focal points actively participate in the relevant operations under Project Prism and Project Cohesion and follow-up on the action identified.</p>	(PRE/2016/P44) (PRE/2015/P41) (AR/2015/R8) (PRE/2014/P73) (AR/2014/R13) (AR/2014/R13) (PRE/2013/P35) (PRE/2013/P150) (PRE/2011/P158) (PRE/2009/P103) (PRE/2008/P95) (AR/2006/R24) (PRE/2006/P126) (PRE/2003/P25)
<p>The Board encourages Governments to <b>conduct controlled deliveries and backtracking investigations</b> of shipments of precursors and to communicate the results of those efforts via the existing mechanisms of <b>Project Prism and Project Cohesion</b>.</p>	(PRE/2012/P80)
<p>INCB commends such efforts and encourages all Governments to <b>improve operational cooperation at all levels</b>. INCB also wishes to call on the Precursors Task Force members that are representatives of <b>relevant international and regional organizations, such INTERPOL, the World Customs Organization and the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission</b>, to re-engage their members in international precursor control activities under <b>Project Prism and Project Cohesion</b>.</p>	(PRE/2016/P202)
<p>The Board <b>welcomes the participation of Interpol and the World Customs Organization</b> as members of the task forces of <b>Project Prism and Project Cohesion</b>. The Board recommends that those organizations continue to support activities under Project Prism to address the problem of trafficking in <b>precursors of ATS</b> and that they provide backstopping for and actively participate in law enforcement operations under <b>Project Cohesion</b> to address the continuing problem of the smuggling of <b>acetic anhydride</b> into <b>Afghanistan</b>.</p>	(AR/2006/R39)

Noting operational activities undertaken by <b>Interpol and the World Customs Organization</b> , such as <b>Project Novak and Operation Tamerlane</b> , respectively, which target heroin trafficking from <b>South-West Asia</b> and <b>Central Asia</b> , the Board recommends that those organizations, in their function as task force members of <b>Project Cohesion and Project Prism</b> , consider including activities against precursor trafficking in those and similar projects.	(AR/2005/R52)
The Board understands that such seizures [customs authorities in <b>New Zealand</b> seized over 1 million pharmaceutical preparations containing ephedrine or pseudoephedrine, which had been smuggled into the country from <b>Asia</b> ] continue to be made during 2004 and urges the authorities concerned to utilize the mechanisms established under <b>Project Prism</b> to initiate backtracking investigations into those cases in order to prevent further diversions from those sources.	(PRE/2004/P91)
The Board supports the emphasis of <b>Project Prism</b> on the need for regional operations to be launched and coordinated in order to counter specific approaches of traffickers. Licit international trade is also a source of the substances used in illicit drug manufacture. Governments need to identify mechanisms to ensure that those substances are not diverted from domestic distribution channels, while ensuring their availability for licit pharmaceutical uses.	(PRE/2005/P14) (PRE/2005/P138)
The Board therefore urges Governments to <b>establish</b> [networks of governmental focal points], which will enable the reporting of <b>real-time operational intelligence</b> and other information on the licit trade and traffic in precursors under the <b>international operations</b> .	(PRE/2004/P9)
Through the operational activities launched under <b>Project Prism</b> , which focuses on the precursors for amphetamine-type stimulants, such as <b>3,4-methylenedioxyphenyl-2-propanone (3,4-MDP-2-P)</b> , <b>1-phenyl-2-propanone (P-2-P)</b> and <b>safrole</b> , the Board trusts that participating Governments will put into place mechanisms to control and monitor the movement of those precursor chemicals and that more information will become available on patterns of licit trade in those substances.	(PRE/2003/P25)
All Governments in the <b>Americas</b> should be vigilant with regard to pseudoephedrine diversion and should support the regional initiatives proposed by the <b>Project Prism</b> Task Force.	(PRE/2005/P21)
<b>Europe</b> still remains a major illicit manufacturer of amphetamine and <b>MDMA</b> , and authorities of countries in the region are urged to make full use of the reporting mechanisms established under <b>Project Prism</b> to ensure that information on seizures is communicated as widely as possible.	(PRE/2006/P94) (PRE/2006/P135)
Traffickers have identified new methods and routes of diversion and Governments of <b>European countries</b> need to make additional efforts to locate and seize the precursors involved. It is expected that the region-specific operations planned under <b>Project Prism</b> will assist in those efforts.	(PRE/2005/P36)
The Board invites all Governments to support the <b>Government of Mexico</b> in its efforts against illicit methamphetamine manufacture, particularly through participation in activities under <b>Project Prism</b> .	(PRE/2009/P58)
The Board recommends to countries and territories in <b>Oceania</b> the launching of appropriate law enforcement activities under <b>Project Prism</b> to further identify smuggling activities.	(PRE/2006/P87)

<p>The Board remains concerned that little or no progress has been made in identifying all sources and routes used to divert acetic anhydride. At the same time, seizures of heroin have not declined, indicating that traffickers are still able to obtain the chemicals they require. Governments are therefore urged to provide their full support to international initiatives designed to address those issues, such as <b>Project Cohesion</b>.</p>	<p>(PRE/2006/P126)</p>
<p>The Board invites the <b>Project Cohesion</b> Task Force to continue to design specific activities to address the continuing problem of <b>acetic anhydride</b> being smuggled into <b>Afghanistan</b>.</p>	<p>(PRE/2006/P136)</p>
<p>The Board urges Governments concerned, in particular the Government of Afghanistan, to improve the information provided to the Board so that it is in accordance with article 12 of the 1988 Convention with regard to seizures, and to actively participate in and contribute to relevant time-limited anti-trafficking operations and activities under <b>Project Cohesion</b>.</p>	<p>(PRE/2010/P90)</p>
<p>The <b>Project Cohesion</b> Task Force is therefore advised to devise specific strategies and activities to counter the diversion of and trafficking in cocaine precursors. The Board requests all members of <b>Project Cohesion</b>, in particular those in the Americas, to actively assist the Task Force in launching such operational activities.</p>	<p>(PRE/2009/P111)</p>
<p>With regard to <b>Project Cohesion</b>, the Board calls on participating Governments to expand their activities under the project by considering the launch of activities targeting drug trafficking in the relevant regions [...]. The Board wishes to encourage the authorities of countries in the <b>Americas</b> to devise similar activities to address trafficking in <b>potassium permanganate</b>. In particular, the authorities of <b>Colombia</b> and its neighbouring countries should urgently launch investigations to identify the sources and routes from, or along which, the substance is being smuggled into areas where the illicit manufacture of cocaine takes place.</p>	<p>(AR/2006/R25) (PRE/2006/P107) (PRE/2006/P136)</p>
<p>The Board therefore recommends that the Task Force devise specific strategies and activities to counter the diversion of and trafficking in cocaine precursors without further delay. The Board requests all members of <b>Project Cohesion</b>, in particular countries of <b>Latin America</b>, to actively assist the Task Force in launching such operational activities.</p>	<p>(PRE/2009/P41)</p>
<p>The Board further calls on Governments of countries in the <b>Americas</b> and the regional members of the <b>Project Cohesion</b> Task Force to devise strategies to address the smuggling of <b>potassium permanganate</b> into cocaine-manufacturing areas of <b>South America</b>.</p>	<p>(PRE/2008/P40) (PRE/2008/P68) (PRE/2007/P90) ) (PRE/2006/P64)</p>
<p>The Board urges Governments in <b>South America</b> to strengthen controls over domestic distribution channels. The Board invites the Governments of countries in the <b>Americas</b> to take advantage of the experience acquired during <b>Project Cohesion</b> targeting acetic anhydride and to design similar strategies to combat the diversion of the chemicals used in the manufacture of <b>cocaine</b>.</p>	<p>(AR/2008/R34) (PRE/2008/P99)</p>
<p>The Board welcomes the action plan devised by the <b>Project Cohesion</b> Task Force to tackle the problem of trafficking in chemicals used for the illicit manufacture of cocaine in <b>South America</b>. The Board encourages all Governments concerned to support further initiatives in the implementation of that action plan.</p>	<p>(PRE/2010/P91)</p>
<p>The Board calls upon Governments of countries in <b>South America</b> to design strategies similar to those developed in</p>	<p>(AR/2009/R38)</p>

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the framework of **Project Cohesion**, in order to identify gaps in precursor control measures and the sources of precursors used in illicit drug manufacture.

The Board is willing to support initiatives being launched under the **Project Cohesion** by Governments in [**South America**] in cooperation with international organizations and looks forward to being informed of the results of those activities. (PRE/2007/P36)

Aware that the **Project Cohesion** Task Force is undertaking a number of complementary measures, including anti-smuggling activities in **Central Asia**, the Board stands ready to support those activities within the scope of its mandate. (PRE/2007/P35)

INCB welcomes the **vigilance and close cooperation** of Governments to prevent chemical diversion and encourages the timely exchange of all relevant documentation to enable the authorities of the countries concerned to investigate suspicious cases, diversions and attempted diversions. INCB wishes to acknowledge specifically the efforts made by the authorities of countries participating in **Operation Missing Links** to assist the authorities in countries **where conflicts and political instability** affect the ability of those authorities to effectively control the trade in precursors in their entire territory. (PRE/2016/P80)

The Board urges the Governments concerned to make full use of the mechanisms established under **Operation Topaz** (focussing on **precursors for heroin**), including the provision of technical support and training, to enhance existing law enforcement capacity, especially for customs authorities and border guards. (PRE/2004/P77)

As the countries reporting such seizures [in **acetic anhydride**] are participating in **Operation Topaz**, the Board urges the relevant authorities to fully utilize the mechanisms established under the operation to report seizures or interceptions and, where appropriate, to initiate backtracking investigations to identify the source of the seized substance. (PRE/2003/P119)

The Board wishes to remind all Governments, whether participating or not participating in [**Operation Topaz**], that the response to such notifications is of the utmost importance in order to prevent unnecessary delays to licit international trade and also to prevent diversions by traffickers. Every effort should be made to ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place for supplying timely responses to notifications while also being able to conduct appropriate background checks. (PRE/2001/P46)

The Board therefore requests the Steering Committee of **Operation Topaz** to work with participating countries to make a comprehensive evaluation of the role brokers are playing in the diversion and subsequent smuggling of **acetic anhydride**. (PRE/2004/P141)

The Board urges all law enforcement authorities effecting seizures or intercepting consignments of [**acetic anhydride**] to provide all available information as soon as possible to the central national authority of the respective country, should the country be participating in **Operation Topaz**. (PRE/2003/P122)

As specific case meetings will now be convened to coordinate investigations similar to the one referred to above (PRE/2003/P113)

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(including **Slovakia, Turkey and Serbia and Montenegro**), under **Operation Topaz**, the Board urges the Governments concerned to fully utilize those forums to address the diversion and smuggling of **acetic anhydride**.

The Board urges all Governments to launch intelligence-driven investigations into diversion attempts and stopped shipments, focusing on identifying those responsible as well as the sources of the finances utilized. In particular, the mechanisms and procedures established under **Operation Purple** should be extended to provide guidelines and best practices for those types of investigation and, where required, technical assistance should be provided, as with **Operation Topaz**.

(PRE/2004/P126)

The Board trusts that the revised procedures identified during the combined meeting of the **Operation Purple** and **Operation Topaz** steering committees held in **Mexico City** in October 2005 will assist in identifying the sources of the potassium permanganate seized.

(PRE/2005/P140)

In 2004, the Government of **Turkey** reported 14 individual seizures [of acetic anhydride], 4 with valuable information on the methods and routes being used by traffickers operating between **Europe** and **West Asia**. Other Governments carrying out seizures of acetic anhydride are urged to make use of the information-sharing mechanisms established under **Operation Topaz** to disseminate such information.

(PRE/2005/P68)

In view of the results of **Operation Dice**, the Board again calls on all Governments to strengthen controls over domestic trade in acetic anhydride and to ensure that the substance traded nationally is used only for legitimate purposes.

(PRE/2008/P76)

The Board also wishes to encourage countries in the region (of **Afghanistan**) intercepting consignments or effecting seizures of acetic anhydride to make use of the task force established under **Operation Topaz** by the Governments of **Germany, the United Kingdom** and the **United States** to assist with investigations where international assistance may be required.

(PRE/2003/P58)

The Board reiterates the need for Governments to apply fully the standard operating procedures of **Operation Purple** which require the competent authorities not only to ensure the physical tracking of each shipment of **potassium permanganate** from the point of manufacture to its ultimate end-use, but also to ensure that investigations into interceptions, seizures and stopped shipments are carried out.

(PRE/2002/P77)

## B) Precursors Incident Communication System (PICS)

The Board encourages all Governments to **register PICS** focal points for their **relevant national authorities** involved in precursor control, such as national regulatory, law enforcement, customs and drug control agencies, and to actively use the system to communicate all incidents involving precursor chemicals with a view to **enhancing intelligence-sharing**.

(AR/2012/R15)

Governments are encouraged to make full use of this secure online system (**PICS**) to **facilitate communication and**

(PRE/2014/P35)

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**operational cooperation** on precursor incidents.

INCB commends all **PICS** users that **share information** on individual precursor incidents with **sufficient operational detail** to allow the users of other countries involved in an **incident to initiate requisite follow-up investigations** with a view to not only bring to justice those behind the specific incident in question but also to deny traffickers access to chemicals using similar modi operandi in the future.

(PRE/2016/P46) (PRE/2015/P47)  
(PRE/2014/P79) (PRE/2014/P143)  
(PRE/2012/P151) (PRE/2013/P85)

INCB welcomes the measures to address new developments in precursor trafficking taken by Governments at the national level. However, INCB also wishes to highlight once again the **importance of the early sharing of information** about emerging chemicals and new trends in precursor trafficking at the global level and encourages all Governments to make better use of **PICS** and the form D for this purpose.

(PRE/2016/P169) (PRE/2013/P85)

INCB commends those Governments that provided information about non-scheduled substances on form D and encourages them to consider making better use of **PICS** for the early sharing of such information worldwide. This applies in particular to the **Netherlands** (accounting for more than 30 per cent of all incidents in 2015 and 2016) and other **European countries**, which thus **provided a starting point for follow-up and operational cooperation**, and **helped to raise awareness of new developments**.

(PRE/2016/P96) (PRE/2016/P117)  
(PRE/2013/P76)

As those countries (**Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Namibia and Zimbabwe**) are currently not registered to use **PICS**, the Board encourages the Governments of those countries to **register their relevant law enforcement and regulatory agencies with PICS** and to provide confirmation of incidents occurring on their territory without delay.

(PRE/2013/P53)

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