

B/99/M1

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE
BOARD, 3 MARCH 1999**

Present

1. Mr. Wilders (Chairperson), Sr. Biosca de Sagastuy, M. Boisnel, Mr. Fonck, Sr. Martínez de la Gándara, M. Richard, Mr. Clifton, Mr. Konkolewsky, Mr. Riese, Sr. Pijuan and Ms. Copsey (Secretariat).

Apologies for absence

2. Apologies were received from Mr. Carlslund, for whom Mr. Fonck acted as alternate, and Dr. Asherson.

Item 1: Adoption of the Draft Agenda (B/99/1A)

3. The agenda was adopted as tabled.

Item 2: Draft minutes of the meeting of 16 November 1998 (B/98/ M4)

The draft minutes were AGREED.

Item 3: Action points arising from the minutes (B/99/1)

4. The Chairperson presented the action points arising from the November meeting.
5. Under Action Point 13, "Action taken" was amended to read "Confirmed that European Week will be carried out by the Agency for year 2000. Paper tabled at March Board meeting."
6. The Commission stated that since health and safety promotion activities fall under the remit of the Agency (Article 3c of the Regulation), it was proper that the Week be continued by the Agency. Regarding funding, the Commission clarified that the Commission will support the Agency proposal and has put the request to Parliament for the release from the reserve budget.

It was AGREED that the Board should be asked to make a provisional decision regarding European Week 2000, pending the decision on the budget.

7. Clarification was given that following the implementation of project sheets in the Work Programme 2000 there would be an undertaking to use these to provide project progress reports to the Board and Bureau (minute 14, point 6).

Item 4: Review of Agency' Goals: Preparation for discussion at June Bureau meeting (B/99/2)

8. The Director introduced the Proposal to hold a “brainstorming session” to review the Agency’s goals at the June Bureau meeting, in accordance with the Bureau’s decision. The Bureau were invited to provide the Agency with preliminary views about the format, content and planning of the meeting.
9. The Chairperson clarified that the proposal was to use the session to map out the Agency’s framework to show the long-term goals of the Agency. This could be used to see what has been achieved and what has still to be done. It could be used as a basis for drafting future work programmes.
10. The following points were made in the discussions on the aims and methodology of the exercise:
 - The aim should be to take a broad perspective and determine: The full picture of what information the Agency seeks to provide (subject matter/risk factors/levels of complexity, etc.); to whom (clients/user groups); in which manner (how/working procedures/tools); and what is the added value that the Agency provides.
 - Include decision making process/priority setting criteria/transparency of internal procedures.
 - Should the exercise focus on strategy and priority setting in the Agency, rather than goals as a statement of objectives is available in the founding Regulation?
 - While the discussion should be related to the Regulation, it should also allow for wider discussion and be kept separate from any evaluation of the Regulation.
 - As background for the meeting, the following are needed:
Report of the Preboard Seminar; Matrix of what information the Agency has collected to date/evaluation of what already achieved; initial statement of objectives drawn from the Regulation; list of risk factors.
 - Agency staff should be involved as much as possible.
 - Carry out an initial brainstorm at the Bureau in June.
 - Some preliminary views of the interest groups could be obtained now, e.g. on user needs and priorities.
 - Sufficient time is needed for consultation within interest groups.

Item 5: Information requests from the Commission - update (B/99/3)

Following discussion it was AGREED that the final sentence of Board information paper A/99/14 should be amended to read: “In all cases the FOPs should receive a copy of the answers sent to the Commission and the answer will be published in a suitable form on the Internet unless the rules of confidentiality prevent this.”

New item: Computer failures and Year 2000 (millenium bug) (B/99/5)

11. This paper was tabled on the day. The Director introduced the request from the Commission to the Agency to carry out some awareness raising activities on the health and safety implications of computer failures caused by systems which are unable to cope with the date change to 2000.
12. The Agency had proposed that; Links could be made from the Agency website to other available information on the Internet; and that an e-mail discussion forum be

created on the Agency's site. These activities would be additions to the Work Programme.

The proposals were AGREED.

Item 6: Agency Launch Campaign (B/99/4)

13. The following points were made in discussion:

- Ensure that the website is sufficiently developed to launch.
- Launch planned for second half of 1999.
- The planning should be led by the information specialists in each Focal Point. Care is needed to ensure that activities expected of Focal Points are realistic. Flexibility is needed to allow Member States to choose the timing and adapt activities to their own circumstances. For example: Member States may want to link the launch to another national activity to help get publicity; in some Member States it will not be realistic to get a Government Minister to an event or to get coverage in the national daily papers.
- Can the launch activities be targeted at the different groups such as safety representatives, labour inspectors, safety officers working for employer's rather than just having general promotional activities.

14. The Director confirmed that the video will focus on the Agency's new Internet site and how it can be used by different interest groups. The two key objectives are to inform national network partners and to carry out activities aimed at the specialist press. There will be flexibility and discussion with the Focal Points.

It was concluded that the Agency should take careful note of these comments when implementing the launch.

Item 7: Preparation for Administrative Board meeting, 4-5 March 1999

Nominations to Board

15. The Commission reported that there were still outstanding nominations from each interest group. The Secretary General of the Council had accepted the list for consideration but the outstanding nominations were needed by March 10th - 11th.

Project Management Sheets

16. The Chairperson introduced the background to this item:

17. The Agency required a more detailed project specification method was needed. It would be used to define and implement the general items described in the current Work Programme, and to produce project specification sheets for future Work Programmes. It should help to clarify who decides on what and at which phase.

18. The Director elaborated upon the Agency's proposal. It was envisaged that the project sheet would be used to define projects in an annex to the Work Programme. Following approval of the Work Programme, the second step would be more detailed project planning to set out the key steps or milestones in consultation with the Thematic Network Groups and Focal Points.

19. General points made in discussion were:

- Divide point 5, organisation, to show steps in the execution of the project and actors in the project.
- Use the origin section to specify where the proposal came from (e.g. a specific interest group, Agency or Commission).
- It is important to clearly show target groups and user needs.
- The availability of data should be assessed before finalising the project.
- In practise user needs could be determined by asking Focal Points to actively find out from the Social Partners which user groups are interested and what their needs are. Who takes the responsibility in this process should be recorded. This should be carried out before contracting takes place, and before the Board is asked to take its decision.
- The sheet should contain enough detail to give the Board a clear and accurate idea of the project and why it is proposed. There could be problems if there is only an outline specification when the project is agreed and the technical specification is only finalised at the implementation stage.
- The sheet could be reviewed after one year.
- The Board could give the Bureau a mandate for consultation to finalise the project sheet.

Proposals to implement the Work Programme 1999 (A/99/4a-c)

20. Project follow up to “Economic Impact” Report (Marketing/Procurement Strategy)

The following points were made in the discussion:

- There is sufficient overlap in the projects to merge them.
- It would be interesting to investigate the conditions required for the strategies/practices to be successfully applied.
- The Commission expressed serious doubts about these two projects as regards their added value and their potential interference with Single Market Legislation.

21. Changing World of Work

The Bureau opposed the approval of the projects. The main point raised in discussion was that the projects and their objectives were not clearly enough defined. The Director said the Agency would welcome specific requests for clarification of these projects.

Proposal for the “European Week of Safety and Health at Work - 2000” (A/99/5)

22. The main points made in discussion were that there is already activity and momentum for the Week in October from Spain, UK and Ireland, and that there needs to be some flexibility in the proposals.

Any other business

23. A request was made for the provision of an Italian interpretation service.

24. Clarification was requested on when expenses from the last meeting would be received by members.