

January 2005

B/05/M1

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE
ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD, 20-21 JANUARY 2005**

Present:

Mr Lopes (Chairperson), Ms Degrand-Guillaud, Mr Lusi, Mr Remaesus, Ms Waltke, Mr Konkolewsky, Mr Paoli, Mr Smith and Mr Bejer (Secretariat).

The meeting noted apologies received from Mr Jansen, Mr Pinilla Garcia, Mr Sapir and Ms Schweng.

Item 1: Adoption of the Draft Agenda (B/05/A1)

The agenda was adopted.

Item 2: Draft minutes of the meeting of 23 November 2004 (B/04/M4)

The minutes were adopted.

Item 3: First discussion of Work Programme 2006 (B/05/01)

The Director introduced the item stressing the importance to know as soon as possible whether SLIC would work with the MSD theme in 2007 in order to fix the European Week theme for 2007. Today the Bureau was asked to discuss two project sheets: One on a European Week 2007 on MSDs and on a risk sector activity 2006-2007 on Catering, hotels and restaurants.

Mr Remaesus considered it to be most probable that MSD would be the SLIC-theme for 2007 though no final decision could be taken until the SLIC meeting in March. However, even if SLIC should decide not to work with MSDs in 2007, the theme would still be a good European Week theme.

Regarding the European Week project sheet on MSDs, **Mr Remaesus** asked for a change in the sentence “The costs for companies”, in order to make it clear that MSDs also have costs for workers.

Ms Waltke suggested that there should be a certain flexibility as regards the year for the week on MSDs. On the project sheet submitted on a European Week on MSDs, Ms Waltke reminded that the role of the European Week is to raise awareness on OSH-challenges and to provide good practice examples. The project sheet submitted to the Bureau puts too much emphasis on contextual analysis.

At the request from **Ms Waltke** the following changes were agreed for the project sheet on European Week, MSDs:

1. The word ‘epidemic’ should be avoided

2. The sentence, “Among the factors which” Should read, “Among the factors which can lead to MSD risks are:”.
3. The sentence “- the organization of work” would be changed to “- the organization of work when this has an impact on MSDs”.

On the project sheet on Catering, hotels and restaurants **Ms Waltke** made the following comments:

1. The balance in the project sheet should be changed. There should be less emphasis on ‘context analysis’ and more on the direct OSH issues.
2. As regards the user needs, the project should not be for policy makers primarily, but instead for social partners and workplaces. The purpose of the project is not to develop policy recommendations.

Mr Lopes made the following comments as regards the European Week on MSDs:

1. A new approach to the MSD week is needed as the campaign in the ‘old’ Member States will be a repetition of a former campaign while the campaign will be run for the first time in the new Member States. It has to be avoided that different approaches to the importance of MSDs develop.
2. Institutions in the health care sector should be among the target groups in order to raise awareness about the possible impact of work on the development of MSDs.
3. The data available on the costs of MSDs should be included.

The Director replied that the Agency would do its utmost to ensure that the European Week on MSDs does not develop into two different campaign concepts depending on whether it is a ‘new’ or ‘old’ Member State.

Regarding the project sheet on the risk sector activity, Catering, hotels and restaurants, **Mr Lopes** asked for a special emphasis on psycho-social issues, as these are major issues in the sector due to the contact with clients. Also the fact that many immigrants work in the sector should be reflected in the project as this creates special OSH-challenges, e.g. it may be necessary to go beyond the official 20 languages in the communication strategy. Furthermore, Mr Lopes asked how the project would deal with passive smoking.

Mr Paoli replied that the OSH problems in the sector vary a lot, and that the problems to be addressed will depend a lot on which group of workers is targeted.

Ms Degrand-Guillaud welcomed that MSD would be a European Week theme but suggested to put more emphasis on the experiences from the previous campaign.

Following a comment from **Ms Degrand-Guillaud**, the Director informed that the Agency would take note of the problem of non-declared work in the catering, hotels and restaurants sector and that this would be an issue to address in the communications strategy.

Item 4: First discussion of Rolling Work Programme 2006-2009 (B/05/02)

The Director introduced the item, informing that the Bureau was now invited to agree a list of options for European Week 2009 activities and priority group 2009-2010 activities.

On the proposal from **Mr Remaeus**, it was agreed not to include new activities as regards European Week and priority groups in the rolling work programme at this moment.

Mr Lusis mentioned that the issue of self-employed may become an important issue in the coming years. At the same time, Mr Lusis suggested to include the new Member States closely in decisions on future activities as their experiences may lead to a different result as regards priorities.

Item 5: Tri-partism in the Agency's network (B/05/03)

The Director commented that following the November Board meeting the Agency had considered how tri-partism could be strengthened at the different levels. The outcome was the document submitted to the Bureau. However, now it would be for the Bureau and later for the Board to agree and define which role tri-partism should play. The Director informed that the Board interest group meeting in connection with the Advisory Committee would cost around EUR 40.000.

Mr Lopes informed that the workers' group had not had the possibility to discuss the document but it was considered to be a good discussion document. Mr Lopes gave a few preliminary remarks clarifying that in the opinion of the workers' group, the challenge to strengthen tri-partism is not isolated to the operational level though this is the major concern. Also issues regarding tri-partite participation in seminars, conferences, etc. organized by the Agency should be addressed.

Ms Waltke welcomed the document. The proposed Advisory Groups is a good step, especially if they will give the possibility to discuss products before they are finalized. Regarding the national level, the proposed amendment to the Agency Regulation will give a clearer legal framework for tri-partism. It would however, be necessary to recognize that the lack of tri-partism at the national level cannot be solved from Bilbao.

Mr Remaeus considered that the document gave a good basis for discussion. The Advisory Groups may be a good way to promote tri-partism and furthermore may a method to keep expert groups and 'political' groups separated. However, the proposal to include Board Members in national focal point networks would have to be considered carefully due to the workload implications for Board Members. Finally, Mr Reameus requested that future discussions on tri-partism be concrete and not general statements about (the lack of) tri-partism at the national level.

Ms Degrand-Guillaud commented that having three separate interest group meetings would not be tri-partism as this would not involve any dialogue between the groups. Furthermore, it should be considered to use examples of well-functioning tri-partite focal point networks to inspire other focal points.

The Director commented that the Agency is a network organization working with 25 different national contexts and the challenges following from this. Following the comment from Ms Degrand-Guillaud it should be considered on the thematic day 28 February to present positive national experiences with tri-partism. Also, the next evaluation in 2006 should include a special focus on the national level of the Agency network.

Item 6: Preparation of Board discussion in March on Rules of Procedure (B/05/04)

The Director informed that the issue is how to proceed with the new rules of procedure. The idea would be that the Board discusses the rules in March and agrees in principle. Then, when the amendment of the Agency Regulation has been adopted, the Commission will be formally asked to give its opinion on the proposed rules of procedure and having received an opinion from the Commission, the Board can adopt the rules by written procedure.

The Bureau agreed the proposed procedure.

In addition the following changes were agreed to the draft:

At the request from **Ms Waltke**:

1. Meetings should be convoked not less than 21 days in advance of the meeting (article 5 (4) and 14(3))
2. Article 18 (1) should be changed so the quorum for the Bureau is reached when one member of each interest group (not including the Commission) is present.

At the request from **Ms Degrand-Guillaud**:

1. The words “absolute” should be deleted from article 4 (2) so that only a majority of the governments (not an absolute majority) is required to vote in favour.
2. As a consequence article 8 (1) should be changed so that the quorum is reached when half of the Board Members are present.

At the request from **Mr Lopes**:

1. Article 24 (1) should be deleted as there is no reason why the meetings of the Board and Bureau should always be held in Bilbao.
2. The title of article 25 should be changed to “Access to information”.

Finally, it was discussed to delete article 4 (3). However, it was decided to leave it to the Board to discuss whether there is a need for a list of decisions to be taken in accordance with article 4 (3).

Item 7: Any Other Business

There were no items.