

September 2005

B/05/M3

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE
ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD, 18 MAY 2005**

Present:

Mr Lusis, Mr Remaeus, Ms Degrand-Guillaud, Mr Cerfeda, Ms Schweng, Ms Waltke, Mr Konkolewsky, Mr Paoli, Mr Smith, Mr Blanch, Mr Rial-González (for item 6) and Mr Bejer (Secretariat).

The meeting noted apologies received from Mr Jansen, Mr Pinilla Garcia and Mr Lopes. In the absence of Mr Lopes, Ms Schweng chaired the meeting.

Item 1: Adoption of the revised Draft Agenda (B/05/A3)

A revised draft agenda was tabled in order to include the item, Vacancy notice of post as Agency Director.

The revised agenda was adopted.

Item 2: Draft minutes of the meeting of 28 February 2005 (B/05/M2)

The minutes were adopted.

Item 3: Director's Progress Report (B/05/05)

The Director introduced the report highlighting the following issues:

- The draft work programme 2006 has been finalized and sent to the Advisory Committee for consultation
- The PHARE programme has been extended to December 2006
- The launch of the European Week was successful, and the Director thanked the Commission for its constructive cooperation
- The Agency has received the offers for the Topic Centre contracts and is now in the selection process

At the request from Mr Remaeus, the Director informed:

- Regarding the EU-US conference: There is a tri-partite involvement on the US side in the conference preparation
- Regarding the follow-up activities to the European Week 2004: The Agency participates in some meetings, but there is no financial involvement from the Agency's side. The Bureau will be asked before the Agency agrees to any financial involvement.

Also at the request from Mr Remaeus, Ms Degrand-Guillaud informed that the 7th framework programme on research includes a stronger occupational safety and health dimension than previous programmes. Furthermore, there are still possibilities to impact on the details of the programme.

Ms Waltke, while expressing her agreement not to involve the Agency financially in the follow-up activities to the European Week 2004 before asking the Bureau, stated that the Agency role in the process is unclear. The responsibility to implement the declaration signed in Bilbao November 2004 must be on those who signed the declaration.

The Director replied, that the Agency would distribute the minutes from the meeting with the signatories of the declaration in order to give the Bureau a chance to follow more closely what the Agency does in this area. Furthermore, the Agency role in the follow-up to the declaration is very much the result of a request from the signatories. The activities the Agency does in relation to construction (such as updates of the website) are activities which would have been done anyway.

Following a request for clarification on the cooperation with the SLIC enforcement working group in the context of the Risk Observatory from Ms Waltke and Mr Remaeus, the Director informed that this contact followed the agreement to use information gathered by national labour inspectorates via their visits to companies. As not all focal points are labour inspectorates, it is necessary to establish complementary information sources for the Risk Observatory. Furthermore, the Agency has on several occasions been asked to limit the workload for the focal points. However, Mr Remaeus stressed the importance of using the focal point network as much as possible for the supply of data.

The Director clarified that the 'report on OSH priorities' mentioned on page 6 deals with OSH *research* priorities. The wording in the Progress Report will be changed to make this clear.

Mr Cerfedda commented on the need to support improvements in Romania. It was agreed that the Agency informs the Bureau about the findings during its foreseen visit to Romania.

Item 4: Tripartism in the Agency's networks (B/05/06)

The Director introduced the item and reminded about the background in the discussions during the Thematic Event and the Board meeting in February/March. There were two elements to be discussed: The Advisory Groups and the Basic Requirements document.

Advisory Groups

The concept as described in the documents prepared was welcomed. However, a discussion took place on the best moment to involve the Advisory Groups in the assessment of the activities carried out.

Ms Waltke and Ms Schweng stressed the importance that members of the Advisory Groups feel they have an impact on the Agency outputs.

The Director stressed that it is important to remember that the work programme is not carried out by the Agency alone, but in close collaboration with its network. The organizational structure for the implementation of the work programme is already

complex, and care should be taken when considering adding more groups to the operational process.

Mr Cerfeda commented that the Advisory Groups should not be seen as steering groups. Their role must be strategic.

It was agreed that the Advisory Groups should have access to the draft products without being explicitly consulted in order not to mix the strategic and the operational responsibilities in the management of the Agency. Furthermore, the involvement of the groups should be ongoing. With this understanding it was agreed not to change the draft mandates.

Basic Requirements

Ms Schweng requested an amendment to requirement 14,i. The network should not be involved in the daily work of the focal points, but be involved on a regular basis. Furthermore, the Agency should revise the document to avoid repetitions.

Following a request from Mr Lusi it was agreed to replace the concepts ‘focal point information network’, ‘focal point expert network’ and ‘focal point network’ with one concept: ‘focal point network’.

On the basis of a comment from Mr Lusi and Mr Remaues, it was decided to replace ‘focal point host organisation’ with ‘Member State’ in requirement 1. The Director explained that the relation between the focal point and the national institution providing resources to the focal point is important.

Mr Lusi requested clarification on the meaning of requirements 14a, 20 and 21-28.

The Director provided the following information:

- The information the focal point should disseminate is information such as the European Week material. The focal points play an important role in disseminating Agency information at the national level.
- Requirement 20 refers to the annual work plans agreed between the Agency and the focal points on the tasks the focal points shall carry out throughout the year.
- As regards requirements 21-28 the Agency will specify who is responsible for the different tasks.

Ms Degrand-Guillaud commented that the document is very long and asked if it could be made shorter. Furthermore, Ms Degrand-Guillaud informed that in the final version of the amendment of the Agency Regulation there will probably be a requirement that the Agency and the focal points make an agreement every year on the tasks to be carried out. These agreements will replace the previous concept of work plans.

The Director replied that the basic requirement document is very long as both the focal points and the Agency felt that there was a need to be very explicit on the mutual expectations. Making the document shorter would therefore involve the risk of losing the current precision in the document, which is important for the daily management of the network. As regards the new concept of ‘agreements’ between the Agency and the focal points, the Agency will take note of that and make the necessary preparations for its implementation.

Item 5: Vacancy notice of post as Agency Director (B/05/07)

The Director informed that the chair of the Board had been asked by the Commission to seek the Board's approval of the draft vacancy notice. However, as the Commission had given a very short deadline it was suggested that the Bureau expressed its opinion on how to deal with the Commission request.

The Bureau agreed the following:

- The Commission should as soon as possible clarify whether it was necessary to seek the Board's approval as the documents from the Commissions indicated that it may not be necessary, and if an approval was necessary until when the deadline could be postponed (the original deadline was 20 May).
- If the Board was to be asked for its opinion, the request to the Board should be accompanied by a letter from the Chair explaining that the Bureau appreciated the involvement of the Board and that the Bureau could recommend the draft vacancy notice.

(Comment from secretariat: The Commission informed the Agency the following morning that it was necessary to seek the Board's approval and a written procedure was initiated).

Item 6: European Week 2005 and Enlargement Action Plan

Mr Smith informed about the launch of the European Week and Mr Rial-González informed about the implementation of the Enlargement Action Plan. The presentations are available here:
<http://extranet.osha.eu.int/livelink/livelink.exe?func=ll&objId=452798&objAction=browse&sort=name>

Item 7: Any other business

Ms Degrand-Guillaud presented the Brussels Antenna's work in 2004 and its plans for 2005. The Power Point presentation is available here:

<http://extranet.osha.eu.int/livelink/livelink.exe?func=ll&objId=452798&objAction=browse&sort=name>

At the request from Mr Remaeus, Mr Smith informed that the Good Practice Jury Award meeting in September will begin when the Bureau meeting finishes.