

Meeting: **MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE GOVERNING BOARD**

Date: 28 March 2011

Time: 15.00 h – 19.00 h

Venue: “Inbisa A” Meeting room
European Agency for Safety and Health at Work
Gran Vía 35, E-48009 Bilbao

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD, 6/7 JUNE 2001

Present:

Ms Schweng (Chair), Mr Biosca de Sagastuy, Mr Clifton, Mr Remaesus, Mr Sapir, Mr Wilders, Mr Konkolewsky, Mr Pijuan, Ms Sedlatschek, Mr Smith and Mr Cockburn (Secretariat).

The meeting noted an apology received from Mr Fernández Sánchez.

Item 1: Adoption of the Draft Agenda (B/01/A1)

The agenda was adopted.

Item 2: Draft minutes of the meeting of 28 November 2000 (B/00/M4)

The minutes were agreed without comment.

Item 3: Director's report (B/01/01)

An update, including information on communication/contacts was tabled.

The Director introduced the papers, highlighting the following issues:

- Nomination of candidate country (CC) Focal Points (FP) and transfer of CC funding from the Commission
- The clear conclusions from the FP meeting of 28/29 May regarding the follow up to the evaluation of the Agency and the work programme 2002 discussion document
- Dissemination of European Week information material and the dedicated web site
- Attendance at the A+A conference in Dusseldorf
- The number of monthly user sessions on the Agency's web site has passed 100 000

The Director thanked Mr Biosca and Mr Remaesus for organising the workshop on "Quality at Work – a future strategy for safety and health at work", hosted by the Agency and added that the draft proceedings have been sent for consultation to the Commission and Swedish presidency.

A shortlist of candidates for the post of head of the working environment unit was circulated.

Responding to requests for clarification, the Director made the following comments:

- The renewal of staff contracts is normally for three to five years; shorter periods are given in special circumstances, for example at the request of the staff member.
- The Agency will inform the Bureau of the dates of meetings with the CCs

MINUTES

1. Adoption of the draft agenda (B/11/A1) – for adoption

The Chair welcomed all members present.

CONCLUSION: The agenda was adopted.

2. Draft minutes of the last meeting of 29 November 2010 (B/10/M4) – for approval

The Chair introduced the item and asked for comments on the draft minutes.

CONCLUSION: The draft minutes were approved without any comments or amendments.

3. Preparation of Board meeting – for discussion

The Chair reminded those who may have any conflict of interest with regards to the selection of the new director to leave the room when that item would be discussed. **The Chair** then introduced all the items of the Board meeting.

Item 3 Annual Activity Report: **The Director** reminded the Bureau that the Annual Activity Report is the Director's report. The Board is asked to adopt an analysis and assessment of the Annual Activity Report. The Director apologised that the Agency had not been able to submit the Activity Report in due time and suggested that the Board would be given two weeks to provide comments on the analysis and assessment.

Item 4 Annual Report: The Board is asked to adopt the Annual Report.

Item 8 Draft budget and establishment plan 2012: **The Director** reminded that in the last meeting the Board agreed to add in the staff policy plan an additional input for the OiRA, originally 6 temporary agents. This was not successful due to the Commission's policy of zero-budget-growth due to the current economic crisis. Next proposal was to ask for 2 temporary agents to be hired with the funds received from EEA-EFTA. After some months DG Budget also refused this proposal, but suggested to use contract agents and as a result EU-OSHA has currently two open competitions for Contract Agents (FGIII and FGIV) to support the work in PRU and CPU. A proposal to include an additional CA (FGII) was added to the staff policy plan 2012-2014, as administrative agent supporting helpdesk for the OiRA. DG Employment supported this request but DG Budget has opposed this proposal. **The Director** added that the additional Contract Agent would be hired without requesting additional resources for Title I (salaries) and said he would appreciate it if the Board supported the Annual Management Plan as well as the staff policy plan, and maybe add a remark highlighting the importance of the OiRA project. **Mr Alvarez** informed that there are still discussions between the different DGs on their reply to EU-OSHA on the Staff Policy Plan and announced that Mr Silva would brief the Board at the meeting with the latest information on the Commission's opinion on this.

The Chair suggested that the Board should have no problem in repeating its previous statement, supporting the provision of sufficient resources for the OiRA project.

Item 9 Revised version of the Governance paper: **Ms Bohm** considered that a mention of written procedures was missing, and considered that the paper could be of great help for new members. **Ms Bohm** suggested that this mention would be included as a footnote. **Ms Schweng** reminded that the paper was intended to be a presentation to the outside people about the governance of EU-OSHA, and not only an internal document and therefore there is no need to include all details. **Mr Bejer** accepted adding a sentence in this regard, but kindly requested that the Board accept the document with the provision that we include this sentence, if there are no substantial modifications.

Item 10 Revised mandates for Expert Groups and for a new Advisory Group structure: **Ms Smith** would like to know what the changes were, with regards to the previous versions. **Mr Riese** considered that the expert groups seemed quite large, and asked if they are really functional and if they have always been that big.

Mr Kempa said that there was the feeling that the Board was not enough informed about the rumours on possible changes regarding the Board and Bureau. Regarding the new unit PRU (Prevention and Research Unit), he also expressed his concerns about the role of the Agency in research and pointed out the importance of avoiding overlaps with Eurofound.

Ms Breindl would also like to know about the role of the Agency in research, and if this was referring to something more than ESENER.

Mr Rial-González explained that the expert groups are useful for the Agency's work not just through meetings, but also by providing expert input to the Agency's work in selected areas, and being consulted on final drafts. The reason for revised mandates for the expert groups is the need to align the topics of the groups to the issues proposed in the 2012 Annual Management Plan.

As for the new advisory group structure, the request for revising the advisory groups came from Bureau and Board, who in our last meeting in Luxembourg in November 2010, expressed the need to reduce the advisory groups, due to the merge of the Working Environment Information Unit (WEIU) and the Risk Observatory Unit (ROU) into a single new unit (PRU). Therefore, following the Board's recommendation, there is this proposal

of having two Advisory Groups in the Agency: one for Communication, Campaigning and Promotion, as it was, and one for the Prevention and Research Unit, covering all aspects previously covered by ROU and WEIU.

Regarding Eurofound, **Mr Rial-González** explained that there are certainly cross references between the respective works and publications, but these are synergies and not overlaps. There is a good communication and cooperation between both agencies. As specified in the memorandum of understanding, we take part in each other's Boards and Advisory Groups, we have had excellent cooperation with our respective enterprise surveys, and there have already been contacts between Mr Takala and the new Director of Eurofound.

Regarding the rumours and ideas about the composition and role of the Board and Bureau mentioned by Mr Kempa, **Mr Takala** reminded that these are issues dealt with by the Inter-institutional Working Group where agencies have no seat.

Regarding the role of the research activities in the Agency's AMP, **Mr Rial-González** explained that EU-OSHA does not carry out primary research (as this is best carried out by the Member State institutes), but it is in the regulation of the Agency that it should collect, and analyse technical, scientific and economic information on research into safety at work, to provide an European overview. The only source of primary research EU-OSHA has is ESENER.

Item 13 Introduction to evaluation procedures (presentation by IPSOS MORI): **Mr Bejer** explained that there are two exercises on-going, carried out by two different companies: Evaluation of the mid-term strategy 2009-13 by IES (Institute for Employment Studies) and another one to help EU-OSHA with methodological support in developing its evaluation activities, by Ipsos MORI.

Regarding this last exercise, the interest groups of the Board will be asked to provide their views about where the Agency is now as regards evaluation activities, what are the Agency's capacities, shortcomings, etc. In order to do so, there will be short sessions in the interest groups with the representatives of Ipsos MORI, without Agency staff. A short questionnaire with five questions has been prepared as a guide for the moderator and to direct the debate.

Mr De Meester suggested that it would be helpful for the Board if a short overview of the current evaluation system would be presented at the Board meeting.

4. Inception report on mid-term evaluation (B/11/01) – for approval

Mr Bejer introduced the item [\[see presentation\]](#). The Bureau, as steering group for this exercise, was kindly asked to comment and agree on the inception report carried out by IES on their evaluation of the mid-term evaluation of the Agency's strategy 2009-13. Next steps would be: discussion on findings before finalisation of report, in September; Final report will be ready in October; and the presentation of a first draft of the new EU-OSHA Strategy to the Board and initiation of discussions in November. **The Chair** invited the Bureau for comments.

Mr Kempa raised questions about the role of the Focal Points. He also proposed to carry out audits of how the resources are spent and how focal points perform. He also asked about the role of Media Consulta. The importance of tri-partism was also raised. **Ms Böhm** suggested mentioning concrete tools or activities carried out under this strategy (maintenance campaign, ESENER, OiRA, etc...).

Mr De Meester expressed his concern about the added value of the exercise, and suggested that the document could be more precise. He was not sure the effectiveness could be measured by means of interviews. For the sake of the consistency, he asked if it is the role of the Agency to check all the national strategies. He proposed to have more precise information on who are the interviewees in every country, more in-depth work in the methodology.

Mr Takala remarked the important role the focal points play for the Agency; he reminded that there are differences among the different member states, and the fact that some focal points are part of the Board.

Regarding the role of Media Consulta, **Mr Smith** explained the limitations EU-OSHA has to implement the work program, working under heavy financial regulations and strong constraints of staff resources, and the need to set up calls for tenders to get providers meeting all the criteria and requirements. Otherwise the Agency will be criticised by the auditors. The current arrangement allows EU-OSHA to organise, with very little resources and staff, activities in all Member States promoting the campaign. Part of the contract, after every workshop, includes evaluating the event and getting feedback on it.

Ms Breindl asked to mention this information in the Board meeting.

Regarding the lack of specificity of description of methodology, **Mr Bejer** said that we had shared the same concern, and that the issue had been discussed with IES. It was clear from the discussions with the IES that

there will not, for example, be made conclusions on effectiveness alone on the basis of interviews. However, to keep the document to a reasonable length the Agency had not asked IES to fill in more details at this stage. The interviews are thought to be a complement to other information already available from surveys, etc. Furthermore, the evaluator is expected to make his/her own analysis before getting to a conclusion on the evaluation questions. As for the interviewees, **Mr Bejer** suggested cooperating with the Bureau to establish a set of criteria to select the interviewees, always bearing in mind the principle of independence in the evaluation exercise. Regarding the comment from Ms Böhm **Mr Bejer** confirmed that the use of case studies was in fact foreseen. At the moment two case studies were defined: ESENER and the campaign. OiRA would, however, not be suitable for inclusion in an ex-post evaluation. **Mr Bejer** informed that the idea of looking at national strategies is not to control these, but rather to look at whether the Agency's objectives are consistent with the national objectives.

Mr De Meester asked if there was a possibility of sending concrete suggestions to be included in the report.

Mr Bejer suggested that the sentence "a set of criteria must be agreed between Agency and contractor" would be included in the inception report and confirmed that concrete proposals could be included if sent before the end of the week.

CONCLUSION: EU-OSHA will prepare a proposal with criteria to select the interviewees and circulate among the Bureau asking for comments.

CONCLUSION: The Bureau adopted the inception report with the above amendment.

5. Update on the Director's recruitment, by the Commission – for information

The Chair invited Mr Alvarez to introduce the item. **Mr Alvarez** informed that Mr Silva would give an update at the Board meeting with the latest news on the process. As preliminary information, **Mr Alvarez** commented that the pre-selection step had been finalised and the next step would be the interviews with the pre-selected candidates with the Commission Consultative Committee for high level appointments. These are expected to be held at the beginning of May. Later on, there will take place the interviews of the pre-selected candidates with the Commissioners in charge of Employment and in charge of HR. On the basis of these interviews, the Commission will formally adopt the short list to be sent to the Agency. **Mr Alvarez** acknowledged that the deadlines for the Agency to prepare the extraordinary Board meeting were extremely tight.

Ms Böhm asked when the extraordinary Board meeting could be expected to happen. **Mr Takala** confirmed that definitely it will not be in May, but in June.

6. Selection of new Director (B/11/02) – for discussion¹

Mr Takala introduced the item and proposed to follow the same procedure of the previous exercise, regarding voting.

Mr Bejer asked if there was a need for separate rooms and interpretation for the groups to deliberate. It was agreed to hire only one meeting room, big enough to fit all the Board members.

Ms Smith asked about the required quorum in the Board meeting for the results to be valid. **Mr Bejer** said that this was not defined in neither the founding regulation of the Agency, nor in the rules of procedure. However, provided that the defined decision rule is absolute majority, it could be assumed that the quorum is the presence of more than half the Board members.

CONCLUSION: EU-OSHA will check with the Commission about the legal and correct procedure regarding the required quorum for deciding at the Board.

7. Any other business

Ms Schweng asked for an update on the seat agreement and the removal to the new building. **Ms Murillo** informed that there was an agreement of a text for a seat agreement. Regarding the building offered by the Basque Government, there is a need to get an agreement so that the Basque Government carries out all the refurbishment works, and find a way so that the Agency can pay for it. Otherwise, the Agency should ask for extra funds from Commission and start the construction works on its own (launching calls for tenders etc.) which would not be feasible with the limited resources available. **Mr Alvarez** considered convenient that, given the importance of this issue, the Bureau was informed regularly.

Dates for following Bureau meeting: second Bureau meeting was foreseen to be linked to the extraordinary Board meeting around June, therefore, in order to avoid travelling twice, it was proposed to keep the date open, until the final date for the extraordinary Board meeting was decided. **Ms Schweng** asked if there existed the possibility of holding the meeting in Brussels, **Mr Bejer** confirmed that this possibility will be considered.

¹ Mr de Meester left the room for this item.

Mr Takala shared his future plans with the Bureau.

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Present:	Chairperson:	Christa SCHWENG (Employers representative)
	Commission:	F. Jesús ÁLVAREZ (European Commission representative)
	Workers:	Lucka BÖHM (Workers representative) Viktor KEMPA (Workers representative)
	Employers:	Kris DE MEESTER (Employers representative) Rebekah SMITH (Employers representative, BUSINESSEUROPE)
	Governments:	Ulrich RIESE (Government representative) Gertrud BREINDL (Government representative) Tatjana PETRICEK (Government representative)
	EU-OSHA:	Jukka Takala, Andrew Smith, Eusebio Rial González, Françoise Murillo, Jesper Bejer, Brenda O'Brien, Marta de Prado