

Meeting:	MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE GOVERNING BOARD
Date:	3 October 2012
Time:	10.00 h – 17.00 h
Venue:	Inbisa A meeting room. Gran Vía 35, E-48009 Bilbao

FINAL MINUTES

1. *Adoption of the draft agenda (B/12/A3) – for adoption*

The Chair welcomed all members present, and excused the absence of the Bureau members who could not attend. **The Chair** informed that Item 12 would be removed from the agenda (as Mr Alvarez was not present). **Mr Engels** and **Mr György** raised the issues of the opinion poll and the Inter-institutional Working Group. **The Chair** informed that these items would be treated under item 3 “Director’s progress report”.

The Director informed that Mr Cockburn would attend the meeting on behalf of Mr Rial González, who would be on sick leave for a long period (from 6 to 12 months minimum). **The Director** also informed that this absence would have a significant impact not only on the Agency’s management team, but also at unit level and the necessary arrangements and readjustments were being studied. The Bureau would be duly informed.

On behalf of the Bureau, the Chair asked the Director to send the Bureau’s regards to Mr Rial Gonzalez.

CONCLUSION: The agenda was adopted.

2. *Draft minutes of the last Bureau meeting of 5 July 2012 (B/12/M2) – for adoption*

The Chair introduced the item and asked for comments on the draft minutes. **Mr Lūsis** remarked a typo in page 7.

CONCLUSION: The draft minutes were approved without any amendments.

3. *Director’s progress report, including update on seat agreement and older workers project (B/12/10) – for information*

The Director updated on the following issues not included on the report:

a) Building situation and seat agreement:

Contacts with regional and national authorities regarding seat agreement have continued. Latest meeting held with the Spanish Government (new Director of the INSHT) in Madrid. An agreement was reached to base the negotiations on the existing draft. Liaison with Diputación de Bizkaia also continued.

Regarding the building situation, continuous work has been done to prepare the ground for Director’s decision by end of the year. Objectives are to reduce the renting and other building related costs and gain better working conditions for Agency staff. These savings will help compensate a potential reduction of the Spanish government’s support.

b) Older workers project (presentation available [here](#)):

The Director informed about the need to amend the Progress Report in order to take into account the implications of the “Older workers project” and to correct some factual errors. This amended version will be available on the Extranet. **The Director** and **Ms Copsey** also updated on the outcome of the “Older workers” meeting held in Brussels on 19 September with participation of EU-OSHA focal points and members of the “Workplace Health Promotion” expert group. The meeting had been very useful. The current work focuses on the call for tender and the delegation agreement.

c) Staff turnover since July:

○ Leaving the Agency:

- Aisling O’Neill – Verification Officer – Temporary Agent - resignation (30/06/212)

- Thomas Lennerland – Web Editor – Contract Agent - resignation (31/08/2012)
- Cristina Comunian – Campaigns Manager – end of fixed term contract 30/09/2012)
- Gaizka Abarrategui – Financial Assistant – end of fixed term contract (15/10/2012)
- Joining the Agency:
 - Adrian Mark Suarez – Temporary Agent – Project Manager (16/09/2012)
- d) Visits to EU-OSHA since July and foreseen until end of year:
 - Road Safety Council, 06-Jul-12
 - Mutua Navarra, 25-Jul-12
 - EL & IT Forbundet - for energy, electrical engineering, telecommunications and IT workers - Norwegian trade unions, 10-Sep-12
 - Canadian representative of Climate Change and Health Office, 24-Sep-12
 - PREVENT, 28-Sep-12
 - Danish representatives of agriculture and food industry organizations, 09-Oct-12
 - Visit to EU-OSHA: Norwegian society of engineers – NITO, 19-Oct-12
 - Training session for Focal Points planned for 15 October
- e) Foreseen visits to MSs FOPs until the end of the year:
 - 19 September – Belgium (Brussels) Older Workers meeting
 - 26 September – Spain (Madrid) INSHT
 - 16 October – Austria (Vienna): Active Ageing Conference
 - 25 October – Hungary (Budapest), European Week event (+ meeting with National Network)
 - 7 November – Ireland (Dublin), + IOSH conference, Brenda accompanying (+ meeting with National Network)
 - 14-15 November – Malta Focal Point Meeting
 - 19 November – Denmark (Nyborg): Annual OSH conference (+ meeting with National Network)
 - 26 November – Austria (Vienna) Parliamentary hearing: 15 Jahre Arbeitsklima Index
 - 21 December – Germany (Stuttgart)
- f) Director's interventions in the European Parliament:
Employment and Social Affairs Committee on 10th July, Budget Committee on 12th July, Speech on Asbestos at the Employment and Social Affairs Committee on 18th September, and regular contacts with the European Parliament via our Brussels Liaison Office. **Ms O'Brien** also informed about the initiative by Mr Stephen Hughes regarding "European Depression Day"; second meeting of a group of policy experts and stakeholders¹ took place on 1st October.
- g) Inter institutional working group (IWG):
The **Director** informed that the topic would be treated at the next meeting of Heads of Agencies in Stockholm where the Secretariat General of the Commission would provide more information on the 'roadmap' which is being prepared on the implementation of the joint statement and common approach.
- h) Commission's comments on the Draft Annual Management Plan and Work Programme 2013 (including draft Budget 2013):
The Director also informed about the letter the Agency had just received from the Commission with the comments. The letter and the comments in annex were tabled and will be also available in the Extranet and tabled in December when the Board is invited to adopt the work programme and budget.

Ms Breindl had a comment on the Annex I to the EU delegation agreement with EU-OSHA for indirect centralised method of implementation", page 2, about the paragraph starting "SP7". It should be clear that it is not the contractor who defines policies and make recommendations, but the Commission and Board.

Following comments on the scope of the activity and to which extent the activity should also cover context issues, **the Director** clarified that OSH is the core of the activity but that experiences show that there is value in a holistic approach. **Mr Costas** added that a focus on OSH does not prevent looking at context factors.

CONCLUSION: The Director's Progress Report was noted with the above mentioned amendment.

4. Update on advisory groups, focal points and expert groups – for information

¹ More information at: <http://www.multivu.com/mnr/56613-european-depression-association>

Mr Smith informed about the outcomes of the last AGCP² meeting held 25 September. A summary of the issues discussed: communications update on completed actions in 2012, on-going and upcoming projects 2012 (Opinion poll, Networking OSH, Communication partnerships, Official campaign partners and National partners, Media partners, Communication platform, Campaigning toolkit), Preparation of the 2012-13 Good Practice Awards ceremony (April 2013 Irish Presidency), Preparation of HWC 2012-13 Summit (November 2013 Lithuanian Presidency).

Mr Cockburn informed about the next meeting of the PRAG³ to be held on 4-5 October. Items in the Agenda were: plans for the procurement of the Older Workers' project, ESENER update, update on OiRA, plans for next campaign ("HWC 2014-2015 on practical solutions for psychosocial risks"), and update on cooperation with Eurofound and Eurostat.

Concerning the focal points, reference was made to the previous item.

CONCLUSIONS: There were no comments from the Groups. This item was for information only.

5. *Update on EU OSH Strategy – for information*

Mr Constantinou informed that Mr Alvarez had been unable to attend the Bureau meeting and he had not had the opportunity to speak to him prior to the meeting. Therefore he would offer a brief update on the EU OSH strategy. The final draft of the evaluation had been received and circulated within the Directorate and comments were currently being provided before preparing a final document for inter-service consultation. It would be then discussed at the level of management in the Directorate General before going to the Cabinet for approval. The process was somewhat delayed and in view of this situation it would be decided if the current delay can be assumed or a change of priorities was needed. **Mr György** expressed his surprise and concern about the apparent low priority given to the issue by the Commission.

The Director expressed the intention that the Agency's draft Work Programme 2014 would be presented extraordinarily in the Board meeting in March 2013, instead of in December (as usual). This change in timetable is necessary to allow for the finalisation of the the Board's discussions on the strategy 2014-2020 - which have not taken place yet.

CONCLUSION: This item was for information only.

6. *Preparing the EU-OSHA Strategy (B/12/11) – for discussion*

The Chair invited the Director to introduce the item. **The Director** updated on the current situation of the preparation of the EU-OSHA strategy (presentation available [here](#)). The process is going according to plan; mission, vision and values were agreed in March 2012 and the objective is to have a draft of the future strategy for the next Board meeting in December. The Bureau was therefore invited to provide input on the three elements presented: a monitoring and evaluation framework, description of the strategic risks, and the themes and activities for the next strategy.

Mr György found it very difficult to contribute at the current stage without having any information on what the priorities will be under the new EU strategy. The Director clarified that the current discussion on the EU-OSHA strategy is more about the tools than about the OSH content and that this discussion can therefore go ahead.

Mr De Meester considered that the ex-ante assessments were an important tool but that they were lacking some options and proposed that "open text" fields could be added.

The **Bureau** requested to be more explicit on the follow up to monitoring and evaluation and to explore the possibilities of placing more emphasis on impact and quality issues.

Mr Bejer remarked that the Agency together with other agencies had explored the potential for using indicators to measure impact. The conclusion was that impact is most adequately assessed via an evaluative approach. It is important to keep in mind that the indicators are only one way of monitoring implementation of the strategy. In addition there will be narrative reporting and evaluations.

Mr Kempa reported on the main points concerning the Agency raised at the annual meeting of the Workers' group in September:

- Dissatisfaction with the campaigns model. The model should be revised to reach more people
- General campaigns are not as efficient as the sectoral ones
- Focal Points do not exist in some countries and the tripartite network is often not working

² AGCP: Advisory Group on Communication and Promotion

³ PRAG: Prevention and Research Advisory Group

- All products should be useful and therefore readapted to national contexts. Some products are too simple or basic
- As staff is decreasing in unions, they would prefer to focus on important specific projects
- OiRA should be mandatory to implemented
- EU-OSHA website is overloaded with information, which reduces its usability
- The work and purpose of EU-OSHA is unknown to important parts of the OSH community
- It is necessary to improve communication with social partners, especially when the Focal Point network is not working properly
- Reputation of Agency is in decline. It is considered inefficient and as producing complicated products available in English only.
- All products involving economic aspects of OSH are welcomed. ESENER, in particular, is well considered as a good tool that can be used for negotiations
- Publications are not used, campaigns are used mainly by institutions rather than end users
- EU-OSHA should think more on target groups for products/contents
- More resources are needed for Focal Points to adapt products to national level (with regards to national legislation, national practice, etc.)
- The Agency should produce fewer products of a higher quality

Mr De Meester agreed with some of the arguments raised but pointed out that stakeholders should also spend more time and resources in getting involved in campaigns, exploring and using the existing materials and products, etc. **Mr De Meester** remarked that the key element in the distribution model were Focal Points, and that for the future there should be established a set of minimum quality standards for Focal Points. **Mr Engels** agreed that it was the role of the social partners and Focal Points to communicate EU-OSHA's role, job, etc. **Mr György** and **Ms Breindl** agreed on the need to set up quality standards for Focal Point networks and also considered that the role of the social partners were to raise awareness. **Ms Breindl** pointed out that the Board cannot establish standards for, for example, focal point resources. **Mr Lūsis** considered that one model for Focal Point may not necessarily be good for all Member States, as they had different governmental structures.

The Director thanked the Bureau for their important feedback and remarked that the Bureau was the right forum for discussion. She assured that EU-OSHA would follow up on those issues.

Regarding the Focal Points, **the Director** stressed that she intended to visit some Focal Points in the near future to discuss at high level and at social partner level the issue of network cooperation at national level which is crucial for EU-OSHA's work. **The Director** also reminded that EU-OSHA often suffered from lack of communication and feedback from stakeholders and Member States.

Regarding the quality of products, **the Director** remarked that the development of a portfolio approach was being examined in order to be able to adapt the products to the needs of member states. The assessment of the quality depends a lot on the target groups. It may be worth to discuss this issue at the March seminar.

CONCLUSION:

1. The Bureau agreed that the groups would submit their comments on the ex-ante assessments in writing within a week (deadline 11/10/2012)
2. The indicators will be reviewed for the Board meeting on 3 December.

7. Revised campaign content paper (B/12/12) – for discussion

Mr Smith explained that the paper had been revised taking on board the comments from last Bureau meeting, particularly those regarding the need of being more balanced when addressing the negative and positive aspects of reorganisation and restructuring, possible negative effects of stress, more emphasis on workers' participation, etc.

Mr Engels considered that the document was more balanced than in June but it still had some negative elements, concerning the argument about the stress levels, the influence of re-organisation on the workers' psychosocial environment, etc.

Mr György said that the paper had successfully included the Bureau's comments but considered that it was still not balanced enough and asked if some figures or references could be provided on social costs of OSH for society.

Mr Lūsis agreed that the new version of the paper was much better than the previous one and asked if the psychosocial risk assessment was a separate module within the OiRA project or it was integrated.

Mr Cockburn said that the paper would be revised and answered to the remarks:

- references would be provided when possible for the statements
- the idea of the benefits of flexibility was addressed in section 1.1 *Organisational change and restructuring*, but it would be considered if it should be further reinforced
- data for “working conditions survey”, the figure is an early indication of a trend (effective increase of 5%)
- business case: the cost is detailed in point 2.2, with the figures available at the moment
- “MSEs” stands for micro and small enterprises
- Psychosocial module: it is available as a standard module among the different modules of the OiRA tool

CONCLUSION: The campaign content paper would be revised according to the comments by the Bureau.

8. Internal Audit Service audit on procurement – for discussion

Ms Murillo introduced the item (powerpoint presentation available [here](#)) and explained that the IAS report (focused on procurement and contract management) had just been received; only 7 recommendations (5 important and 2 very important; none critical) were included. The report showed no major issues on management of procurement, and its main concern was focused on the decentralised financial management; while the model was not criticised. It suggested the need to include a Coordination function and to better document and harmonise the internal procedures re procurement and contract management. An action plan is under development to ensure the necessary follow up on the IAs recommendations.

All recommendations but one from previous audits had been closed. The only open recommendation is the one related to the website strategy. A first draft of this strategy was submitted and discussed at the last advisory group on communication.

Mr Constantinou stated that the Governing Board had the task of understanding the work and objectives of the IAS, as well as their suggestions and their importance, and follow up on them.

CONCLUSION: The Bureau noted the Agency’s plan on follow-up to the audit on procurement

9. Board and Bureau meetings 2013 (B/12/13) – for adoption

The Bureau members requested some time to check the agendas with the absent colleagues.

CONCLUSIONS: The Bureau will be provided with the dates of relevant meetings (SLIC, ACSH, etc.) and invited to submit their availability for the meetings in 2013 via “doodle”.

10. Demonstration of OSHwiki – for information

Ms Smith introduced the background of the OSHwiki within the general EU-OSHA website strategy. In 2011 the Internal Audit Service reported on the Agency’s website and the external communication and one of the recommendations included the development of a new online strategy. In 2011 and 2012 the Agency has undertaken a number of steps to prepare for a new online strategy – including external assessments of the usability and information architecture of the current site. A draft framework for a new online strategy was discussed with the AGCP at its recent meeting. In the new online strategy navigation of the website will be structured around five main areas of activity of the new EU-OSHA strategy, Networking Knowledge Development and Dissemination being one of them and in which the OSHwiki will be the main activity as it offers a sustainable way of providing information at the same time as supporting multilingualism.

Ms Palmer offered a demonstration of the current situation of the OSHwiki. A power point presentation is available [here](#).

Mr Kempa reminded that it is important that the Board members and social partners have the power to supervise the tool, and asked if it would be possible to have the password to access the tool at that stage.

Mr Engels expressed his concern about the control of the authors and the risk of turning it into a commercial platform for some companies.

Ms Breindl reminded that the OSHwiki was not one of the Government Group’s priorities.

Ms Constantinou expressed his concern that the articles may not be based on scientific data but on political opinions.

Ms Palmer informed that an editorial committee would be created to oversee the future development of the OSHwiki. EU-OSHA would approve the authors in terms of the organisations, and those would have to follow agreed principles (evidence based referenced content, etc.) and the editorial committee would be very attentive to any sensitive content, statements not referenced, statements not based on evidence, etc. and the content could be blocked. On request the Agency would provide logins for the wiki.

COMMENTS: This item was for information only.

11. OiRA Steering Committee Mandate (B/12/14) – for adoption

Mr Smith informed about the need to revise the OiRA mandate to reflect the current stage in the development of the OiRA project. Basically, the change is that the Dutch government would no longer participate actively in the steering committee for strategic/economic reasons. At the same time the interest groups were asked to appoint alternates to the committee.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. The Coordinators of the Board were kindly requested to nominate an alternate from each group for the OiRA steering group.
2. The revised OiRA steering committee mandate was adopted.

12. Collaboration with ENP countries – for discussion

This item was deleted from the Agenda.

13. Any Other Business

The Director informed about the invitation to Eurofound and EU-OSHA to the meeting of the management in DG Employment –following previous visit by Mr Koos Richelle to Bilbao and Dublin early in 2012- to present their contributions to the EU Strategy.

Director's appraisal working group:

Mr Lūsīs enquired about the status of the working group to be established by the Bureau (with no participation of EU-OSHA) to review the form and set of criteria for the Director's appraisal. **Ms Breindl** reminded that it was agreed that the coordinators would nominate representatives, but up to date no further steps had been taken. **Ms Murillo** offered to provide the Bureau with some bullet points and suggestions for the working group to proceed.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. Ms Murillo will send a memo to the Chair for the working group to proceed.
2. Each of the interest groups' coordinators (including the Commission) will nominate a representative for the working group.

The Chair thanked the present and closed the meeting.

...  ...

Present:

Chairperson: Gertrud BREINDL (Governments' representative)

Commission: Costas CONSTANTINO

Workers: Károly GYÖRGY
Viktor KEMPA

Employers: François ENGELS
Kris DE MEESTER

Governments: Renārs LŪSIS

EU-OSHA: Christa Sedlatschek, Andrew Smith, Françoise Murillo, William Cockburn, Jesper Bejer, Brenda O'Brien, Marta de Prado, Kate Palmer, Sarah Copsey