

**MINUTES OF THE 17TH MEETING OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD OF THE
EUROPEAN AGENCY FOR SAFETY AND HEALTH AT WORK.
BILBAO, 26-27 NOVEMBER 2002**

The **Chairperson** welcomed those present and

New members:

Mr. Ioannis Adamakis, (workers-Greece)

Mr. Pavlos Kyriakongonas (employers-Greece)

Mr. Tomás López Arias (workers-Spain)

Mr. Joao Manuel Teixeira da Veiga e Moura (government-Portugal) attending with Mr. Eduardo Leandro (alternate)

Ms. Luisa Benedettini (workers-Italy)

Mr. Antonios Christodoulou (government-Greece) attending with Ms. Matina Pissimissi (alternate)

Mr. José Costa Tavares (employers-Portugal)

Mr. Jean-Claude Bodard (workers-France)

Mr. Françoise Philips (workers-Belgium)

Other:

Mr. Brendan Sinnott, DG Employment representative on Budget and Financial issues

And noted apologies from:

Mr. Marc Boisnel (government-France) for whom Mr Robert Mounier-Vehier (Focal Point) attends as Observer

Mr. Paolo Onelli (government-Italy) for whom Ms. Rocca-Ercoli attends.

Ms. Christa Schweng (employers-Austria) for whom Mr. Brauner attends.

Mr. Françoise Engels (employers-Luxembourg) for whom Mr. Metzler attends.

Mr. Pere Teixidó (employers-Spain)

Mr. Thomas Holtmann (employers-Germany)

Mr. Paul Weber (government-Luxembourg)

Item 1 – Adoption of the draft agenda (A/02/A2)

The following documents were tabled:

A-02-18 Directors Progress Report Annexes 12345

A-02-18 Directors Progress Report – Update

A-02-19 Reform of Administrative Boards – FR, DE, ES, IT (was sent in English)

A-02-20 Annex – TC Evaluation – FR, DE, ES, IT (was sent in English)

A-02-21 Communication Strategy – FR, DE, ES, IT (was sent in English)

A-02-28 Project Sheet OSH Monitoring – All languages (was sent in English)

A-02-28 Amendment to Work Programme – All languages (was sent in English)

A-02-28 OSH Monitoring Workshop conclusions – All languages (was sent in English)

Main Policy Conclusions of the Management Board Meeting of 15.11.2002 on “Future Composition and Functioning of Quadripartite Management Board” (CEDEFOP paper – for information regarding item 7, Reform of administrative boards)

With these amendments the agenda was adopted.

Item 2 – Minutes of the last meeting, 27-28 February (A/02/M1)

There were no comments.

The Board adopted the minutes.

Item 3 – Action points arising out of the minutes (A/02/16)

The **Director** informed that it was decided at the last Board meeting that the Agency should make lists of members of Agency expert groups available. These had been made available via the Extranet.

The action points were agreed.

Item 4 – Election of new Chairperson and Bureau (A/02/17)

Ms Waltke proposed on behalf of the employers’ group Ms Schweng as vice-chair and herself as “may-also-attend” member of the Bureau.

Mr Sapir thanked Mr Lopes for taking over as chair in July and proposed on behalf of the workers’ group Mr Lopes as vice-chair and himself as “may-also-attend” member of the Bureau.

Mr Jansen proposed on behalf of the Commission Ms Alexopoulou as vice-chair and Mr Biosca as “may-also-attend” member of the Bureau.

Mr Remaeus proposed on behalf of the governments’ group himself as member of the Bureau and Ms Breindl as “may-also-attend” member of the Bureau.

The **Chairperson** proposed Mr Remaeus as new chairperson due to the rotation principle and the continuation of the Spanish Government representative (Mr Fernandez Sanchez) as the additional “may-also-take-part” member of the Bureau.

The Board elected the proposed Chairman and Bureau members

Item 5 – Director’s Progress Report (A/02/18)

The **Director** introduced the report on the activities of the Agency from March 2002 to November 2002 and tabled a brief update, including the following annexes:

- Overview of contacts between external sources and the Agency
- Agency publications
- List of attended external events
- List of Agency events and meetings

- Web statistics

The Director drew attention to the following issues:

Implementation of the work programme 2002 is in general progressing according to plans.

There are now Focal Points in place in all Candidate Countries, and web-sites are being set up. Also OSHA will establish a US Focal Point web-site.

Two highlights from the year 2002 have been the European Week on stress, which has been a success especially in terms of awareness raising, and the 2nd SME scheme. The Director mentioned that the experience from the 1st SME scheme had shown that one-year programmes put a very heavy administrative burden on the agency.

On request from **Mr Briscoe** the **Director** informed that the web-site statistics are generated by a standard Webtrends software and that underestimation of visitors is caused by missing data from some Focal Points. In the annual report however there should be a complete picture.

Mr Briscoe pointed to the fact that most downloaded documents are in English and asked in this context for the Directors reflections regarding use of Agency resources.

The **Director** remarked that there are some obvious reasons for the relative success of English documents. One of the reasons is that the US is a major user of the Agency web-site and another is that Agency reports, which are very popular as regards downloads only exist in English, except for those translated by the Italian Focal Point. However the Agency will analyse the issue and continue its discussions with the Focal Points on establishing national publishers following the Italian example.

On the request from **Mr Sapir** the **Director** informed that the agreement between the Agency and OSHA is about the organisation of information services related to the EU/US conference.

Mr Sapir asked how the SME evaluation would be carried out.

The **Director** remarked that a call for tender has been published at the Agency web-site. The evaluation will cover both the cost-efficiency of the Agency's administration of the scheme and the outcome and added value of the scheme. A contract with a Spanish consultancy has been agreed and the Focal Points will now be asked to nominate people to follow the evaluation. For any further information the Board was invited to contact Ms Murillo.

Mr Horst asked to the status of the 6th research framework programme and the integration of health and safety into the programme.

The **Director** informed that the Agency's work in this field had followed the lines of the resolution adopted by the Board one year ago. The Agency had had meetings with DG Employment, DG Information Society and DG Research to clarify the current situation. There was no specific safety and health chapter because the approach taken is to integrate safety and health into the other topics. The outcome was seen as generally positive regarding the number of areas where OSH applications would have some chance. Organisations, which want to apply will have from 17 December to mid-March to prepare applications. The Agency will take actively part in the dissemination of the information on the possibilities to apply for OSH related research projects. The Agency will prepare a special web feature on the OSH related research opportunities and will encourage networking between interested research organisations.

Mr Biosca commented that OSH would be more relevant in the 6th Framework research areas, such as SME research, Nanotechnologies and New Production Processes, Information Society Technologies and some elements of Public Health. He asked the Board to help

disseminating information about the possibilities for applying in the member states, to assure expressions of interest.

Taking into account the short time frame **Mr Remaeus** asked the Agency to inform research institutions about the funding possibilities.

On the request from **Ms Waltke** for future Progress Reports to be more directly linked to the Work Programme, the **Director** suggested to include as an annex a scoreboard on the progress of the different information projects.

The Board noted the report with no further comments.

Item 6 – Draft Work Programme (A/02/28)

The **Director** introduced the Work Programme and the amendment regarding a 3rd SME scheme and preparatory steps for a Risk Observatory. It was stressed that Project Sheet 1 (OSH monitoring) should be seen in the light of the conclusions from the OSH monitoring seminar agreed with the Danish presidency.

Ms Perimaki asked if mental problems would be within the scope of the project on disability.

The **Director** remarked that the disability project would be carried out within the general framework set for the Disability Year. However the Agency would take note of the comment.

Mr Draper wanted further information on the SLIC – Agency co-ordination.

The **Director** informed that SLIC representatives had been in Bilbao to discuss the planned construction campaign. It was however important to remember that while the SLIC campaign would be a labour inspection campaign, the European Week would have a much broader scope and participation.

Ms Breindl asked to the differences between the project sheet 1 and 11, and asked if there was any overlap.

The **Director** explained that the objective of the OSH monitoring project is to collect information on existing OSH monitoring systems in order to identify possible ways forward as regards monitoring at the European level. The Risk Observatory on the other hand has its background in the new Community Health and Safety Strategy and is a strategic tool for the future. The Risk Observatory must take advantage of the work already done, including activities related to OSH monitoring and should be more than simply an observer. Strategies and good practice solutions to new problems should form an integrated part.

Mr Sapir, speaking on behalf of the workers' group, made 4 general comments:

1. The work programme was good, but due care should be taken not to spread activities too much. This could create problems as regards up-dating of information. However, as the work programme sets out the objectives and topics to be worked with in the medium run, it should be possible to focus activities.
2. On one hand the level of worker involvement in the work programme activities is low, but worker participation on the other hand is crucial. Therefore worker participation should be higher.
3. More emphasis should be put on accumulation of knowledge, e.g. the gender dimension should run through all projects.
4. It is important, that European Week topics are defined in a broad sense.

Mr Sapir made the following specific comments regarding the different projects:

1. As regards the OSH monitoring project sheet the workers' group recognized the need to further the understanding of national systems, but that does not mean that an evaluation is necessary. Also synergy with other actors' activities would be important.
2. Regarding the project sheet on CSR the workers' group wanted clear criteria and network consolidation of selected good examples.
3. Regarding the EW on construction a broad definition of the sector and topic was requested.
4. Finally concerning the SME scheme, it was stressed that support should be given to projects where there is transferability of experiences.

Ms Waltke, speaking on behalf of the employers' group, expressed the following general viewpoints:

1. Support for the viewpoint expressed by the workers that care should be taken not to spread activities too much. Furthermore the risk concept applied by the Agency is too broad and inclusive and leads to a banalisation of the concept.
2. Regarding the risk groups approach the employers felt that there should be better prioritisation with regard to the different groups.
3. In general, the EW themes should be focused and not too broad for the European Weeks to have an impact. Furthermore the European Week themes would also have to be seen in the light of enlargement.
4. As regards the chapter on networking in the work programme sufficient focus should be on those actually delivering information and on OSH-practitioners.

Ms Waltke also put forward the following specific comments:

1. Regarding the EW on construction it was requested that focus should be on specific risks and that the Agency should cooperate with the social partners.
2. OSH Monitoring projects sheet: More reflection is necessary as regards project objectives and the limits to the project. Employers have doubts about the usefulness and feasibility of focusing on an evaluation of national preventive infrastructures. Also the comparability of data across countries can be very limited. The project should look into OSH monitoring methods and as such could serve as preparatory element for the OSH risk observatory. Employers therefore want the project to be refocused and the project sheet to be adapted in consequence.
3. Risk Observatory: A key element is credibility and therefore credible sources are needed. The Observatory should use all credible existing national and international sources. Another key element is planning. The 1st year could be used for exploring existing methodology used by other observatories.
4. CSR project: The objective of the project should be to show how individual companies integrate OSH into their CSR policies. It should focus on individual companies' experiences and good practices.

Mr Remaeus, speaking on behalf of the government group, made the following general comments:

1. The opinion expressed by the other two interest groups regarding the scope of the work programme was supported.

2. Care should also be taken not to broaden the risk group concept too much.
3. There were some worries regarding how much it was realistic to demand from the Focal Points, especially in the light of enlargement.
4. It was asked if it was wise to define activities 4 years in advance of their implementation.

Regarding the information projects the governments had the following comments:

1. OSH monitoring: The governments doubt that an evaluation of preventive infrastructures will be possible.
2. Risk Observatory: The Agency must not duplicate the work done by the Dublin Foundation or EUROSTAT.
3. CSR: Care should be taken when selecting examples.

Mr Jansen informed that the Commission had no comments.

The **Director** reflected on the comments from the 4 groups and suggested that it should be indicated in the work programme that the plans after 2004 are preliminary. Regarding the worries about the level of ambition and the scope of the work programme, the Director remarked that the work programme is based on an estimation of what the Agency can do with the resources available. The question of taking into account the enlargement had been intensively discussed during the Planning Seminar in September.

The **Director** suggested that the Bureau receive a redrafted version for comments of the Work Programme with the amendments discussed at the Bureau meeting the evening before, and that the Board could adopt the Work Programme with the amendments on that basis. Among the major amendments were:

1. In the project sheet on OSH Monitoring a clear link would be established to the Risk Observatory and the objective would be redrafted to focus on development of a methodology for OSH monitoring.
2. The CSR project sheet would be amended in order to specify the procedure for the selection of good practice examples.

With these amendments the Board adopted the Work Programme as amended by the amendment regarding a 3rd SME scheme and preparatory steps for a Risk Observatory.

Item 7 – Reform of Administrative Boards (A/02/19)

One extra document was tabled:

- Main Policy Conclusions of the Management Board Meeting of 15.11.2002 on “Future Composition and Functioning of Quadripartite Management Board”

At the request from the **Chairperson Mr Bodin** explained that there had been no written document as a result of the discussions in the Board of the Dublin Foundation on the draft resolution because there had been questions regarding certain parts of the text.

Mr Briscoe asked to the timetable of the work with the resolution.

Mr Jansen informed that the amendment to the regulations of the 3 agencies would be prepared between January and March so that the Council could adopt the amendments before the end of 2003. Therefore the Commission wants to know the opinion of the Boards of the 3 agencies before the end of 2002 in order to include this opinion in the preparation of the amendments.

Mr Sapir stressed that the position of the social partners was crucial. The presented draft resolution was acceptable to the workers' group and the workers' group supported to give the chairperson the mandate to finish the document with the chairpersons from the other 2 boards on the basis of the principles mentioned in the draft resolution. It was important to take into account specific requirements regarding the individual agencies, but there should be a common set of principles.

Ms Waltke expressed the employers' groups' support to the principles in the draft resolution while stressing that the principles call for tripartite national representation and that they call for the co-ordinators' role to be officially recognised. The employers wanted some minor text changes. These were to underline that there would be *at least one board meeting a year* – instead of *one board meeting a year*. It should also be clarified that the Bureau prepares decision for the Board, and that the Bureau oversees the implementation of Board decisions. The Employers also supported to mandate the Chairperson to finish the text with the other chairpersons on the basis of the principles expressed in the draft resolution.

Mr Remaeus referred the discussions in the governments' group. According to the governments it would be difficult to justify a board with 80 members for an Agency with 45 employees. At the same time it is important that all member states are represented in the board. The government supported to mandate the chairperson to finish the document with other two chairpersons on the basis of the principles expressed in the draft resolution. In the draft resolution the governments propose to delete the brackets specifying the number of Bureau members and also the sentence about a government co-ordinator.

Mr Jansen informed that the Commission abstained on this item, because the Commission would later have to draft a proposal on the basis of the resolution.

The Board agreed to the principles in the draft resolution and mandated the chairperson to finish the draft resolution together with the other 2 chairpersons taking into account the comments made about the text of the draft resolution.

Item 8 – Topic Centers (A/02/20)

The **Director** explained that this item included two decisions. A decision on the possible financial models the Agency can use from 2004 on and a decision on the extension of the Topic Centre agreements for another year. Regarding the first issue the Director reminded the Board about the decision taken by written procedure earlier this year, which had given the Agency the option to continue in 2003 with the subvention model.

Ms Sedlatschek introduced the second issue, the extension of the Topic Centre agreements referring to the evaluation meeting and the recommendations agreed at that meeting.

Mr Jansen reminded the requirements for using the grant model, which include the obligation to publish a call for proposals.

The Board agreed to give the Agency the option to use the subvention model also from 2004 on providing that the model is in line with the legal provisions and to extend the Topic Centre agreements for another 12 months.

Item 9 – Communications Strategy (A/02/21)

Mr Smith introduced the strategy and gave the background to the current document, which included the Agency evaluation, a survey of user communication needs and in depth consultation with the Focal Points.

Ms Perimaki asked how the Agency would take into account the fact that many EU citizens do not speak English.

Mr Smith remarked that the language issue is very important for the Agency and that in its first five years of operation it has taken a number of steps to improve access to Agency information. These include Fact Sheets, which are translated into all 11 official EU languages providing non-English speakers with summaries of Agency reports. Furthermore campaign material is published in all languages and the new Agency web-site offers an 11-language interface as well as access to online translation tools to help overcome the language problem. However, Agency resources do not permit translation into 11 languages of all Agency products.

Mr Sapir commented that account should be taken of enlargement, that the translation issue is important and the categorisation of users in the strategy needed amendment. He also suggested that the Agency could collaborate with workers' organisations to test new products before disseminating them to a broader audience.

Ms Waltke welcomed the systematic and pragmatic approach described in the strategy. The request for a rewording of the categories was supported. It must be noted that "social partners" only refers to employer and trade union organisations and not NGOs. There are other categories where the wording was unclear and needs to be revised.

Mr Remaeus commented that the Government Group welcomed and liked the paper. He expressed government concern over two minor problems related to annual communications plans and the distribution of material. In the first case it was important that these were developed by the Agency and its focal point networks on an equal strength basis. Regarding distribution, he commented that social partners sometimes had better dissemination channels than government bodies and that the Agency should make full use of them.

The strategy was approved subject to the rewording of categories of actors.

Item 10 – Budget matter / Financial matters (A/02/22a-d)

This item contained four sub-items:

- Budget 2003 and supplementary and amended budget 2002: **Mr Gribomont** presented the draft budget 2003 and the supplementary and amended budget 2002.

The Board adopted the draft budget 2003 and approved the supplementary and amended budget 2002 as presented in document A/02/22a.

- Assistant Account Manager: **Mr Gribomont** introduced the item.

The Board approved the suggested decision in document A/02/22b.

- Budgetary transfers: **Mr Gribomont** explained the background to this decision item.

The Board approved the transfers suggested in document A/02/22c.

- Financial Regulation: **Mr Gribomont** gave a status and informed about the background to the suggested actions.

The Board approved the suggested actions in document A/02/22d.

The Board was also informed by **Mr Gribomont** about the situation regarding the contract between the Agency on the owner of Gran Via 33. This information included information about the increase in rent and the improvements of the building to be carried out.

Item 11 – Meeting Dates (A/02/23)

There were no comments.

The Board approved the suggested meeting dates for 2003.

Item 12 – Any other business

Mr Sapir made the following general points on behalf of the workers' group:

- the language versions of the meeting documents had in some cases arrived late, which for some members had made it difficult to prepare the Board meeting,
- the workshops during the closing event of the European Week had been held in English without translation, which could create problems for non-English speakers, and
- some members had found it difficult to use the Extranet, OSHANET, and therefore had spent un-proportionate resources on finding the documents.

Mr Sapir stressed that these general points had been reinforced because of a relatively high number of new members for this meeting in the workers' group. It was also recognised that the documents had been available in due time in English.

Ms Waltke supported the point made about the Extranet as a communications tool and asked also for more consequent use of page numbers and a more coherent naming of documents.

The **Director** remarked that he had taken note of the comments. However the Board should be aware that the translation issue is difficult to solve. For this Board meeting some documents had arrived late in language versions because it had not been possible to finish the documents in due time. Regarding the Extranet, the Agency will prepare a survey among the Board users of the Extranet to improve its user-friendliness. The Board members were also invited to communicate any problem with the Extranet and any suggestion for improvement to Ms Adib at the Agency. Finally the Director reminded the Board, that on request Board members can receive meeting documents in printed versions in case of major problems with the Extranet download.

For the next Board meeting documents will be communicated by e-mail, the Extranet and on special request in print.

The **Director** informed the Board about Bureau discussions on the topic for the pre-Board seminar. The Bureau had discussed "enlargement" as the Topic. The idea was to ask the Candidate Countries to reflect on the new Community Health and Safety Strategy and on the Agency's work and the work programme. The day before the seminar there would be a meeting with tri-partite Focal Point delegations from the Candidate Countries.

The **Director** finished by thanking Mr Lopes for his excellent work. The **Director** also welcomed Mr Remaeus as new Chairperson.

The Chairperson closed the meeting by thanking the Board and all Agency staff for their co-operation during the last 5 months.

Annex 1 – Attendance list

Ms	Celia	ALEXOPOULOU
Mr	Ioannis	ADAMAKI
Dr	Janet L.	ASHERSON
Mr.	Tom	BEEGAN

Dr.ssa	Luisa	BENEDETTINI
Mr	Sven	BERGSTRÖM
Mr	José Ramón	BIOSCA DE SAGASTUY
M.	Jean-Claude	BODARD
Mr	Raymond-Pierre	BODIN
Mr	Mr Robert	MOUNIER-VEHIER
Dr	Heinrich	BRAUNER
Dr	Gertrud	BREINDL
Mr	Tony	BRISCOE
Mr	Antonios	CHRISTODOULOU
Mr	José	COSTA TAVARES
Dr	Mel	DRAPER
Mr.	Leodegario	FERNANDEZ SANCHEZ
Mr	Antoine	GIARDIN
Mr	Franco	GIUSTI
Mr	Alexander	HEIDER
Mr	Marc	HESELMANS
Mr	Andreas	HORST
Mr	Mikko	HURMALAINEN
Ms.	Lone	JACOBSEN
Dr	Eric	JANNERFELDT
Mr	Bernhard	JANSEN
Mr	Jens	JENSEN
Mr	J.J.H.	KONING
Mr	Tapio	KUIKKO
Mr	Pavlos	KYRIAKONGONAS
Eng.º	Eduardo	LEANDRO
Dr	Patrick	LEVY
Dr.	Tomás	LOPEZ ARIAS
Mr	Luis Filipe	NASCIMENTO LOPES
Mr.	Anders Just	PEDERSEN
Mr	André	PELEGRIN
Ms	Raili	PERIMÄKI DIETRICH
Mr.	François	PHILIPS
Ms	Matina	PISSIMISSI
Dr	Bertil	REMAEUS
Dott.s	Giovanna	ROCCA-ERCOLI

Mr	Marc	SAPIR
Mr	H.C.V.	SCHRAMA
Ms	Marina	SCHRÖDER
Mr.	Brendan	SINNOTT
Dr.	João Manuel	TEIXEIRA DA VEIGA E MOURA
Mr	Owen	TUDOR
Ms	Natascha	WALTKE

Annex 2 – Action Points

ACTION POINT	AGENDA ITEM	WHAT	WHEN	WHO
1	5	Annex to Progress Report with scoreboard on progress of information projects	For next Progress Report	Agency.
2	5	Agency to inform research institutions about funding possibilities within 6 th framework program	Asap.	Agency
3	12	Meeting documents to be communicated by e-mail, Extranet and on request in print.	Immediately.	Agency.
4	12	Board members to communicate to the Agency if they want meeting documents in print.	Ongoing.	Board members.
5	12	Survey among Board OSHANET users.	Spring 2003.	Agency.