

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

44 AFCWG – Highlights, follow-up actions, next steps & Crises Comms Exercise

Department: Communications
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Meeting dates: 14-15-16 October 2014

Kindly note that following a request from the Member States, the format of the minutes from EFSA's Advisory Forum Communications Working Group meetings will take the current form. This is in response to be more action-orientated, providing easy-to-read highlights, attributing roles and responsibilities to specific tasks as well as an analysis of lessons learned, enabling opportunities to improve and grow the network.

Should readers have any questions or wish to seek clarification, please contact:
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44AFCWG - Meeting Highlights

Top Significant Meeting Successes

Meeting Success	Factors That Supported Success
<p>Tailored training on Social Media</p>	<p>The training supported AFCWG members to build the same level of understanding of how to optimise the use of social media during a food crisis regardless of practical experience.</p> <p>The training succeeded in addressing and engaging a mixed audience of communications professionals who had different levels of social media knowledge as well as hands-on, crisis-related experience.</p> <p>Not later than 4 weeks after the date of 14th of October 2014 a report will be provided to EFSA on the trainer’s conclusions and recommendations, for optimal social media use by the Network.</p>
<p>EFSA 2014 training event: Collaborating for success in urgent response dialogue</p>	<p>The various training activities were planned and organised with support from four consultants from an external contractor and involved EFSA staff, Member State competent authorities and the European Commission.</p> <p>The use of a developing crisis scenario was appreciated by MS as it promoted cooperative thinking and allowed people to test the theoretical ability to respond to a situation and be ready to react in the event that that the scenario comes to life.</p> <p>A fully detailed report will be provided to EFSA and subsequently shared with the AFCWG members. The report will contain the contractors’ conclusions and recommendations regarding success in urgent response dialogue in times of food and feed safety crisis.</p>

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Meeting Success	Factors That Supported Success
<p>Key Country Issues/Comms focus</p>	<p>EFSA preparations to support MS in reporting back on key topics/organisational news that highlight the work being carried out in their countries.</p> <p>In particular, Astrid Bjerkas from Norway gave an update on the main findings and lessons learned following a request from the Norwegian Food Safety Authority to perform an assessment on organic and conventional food and food production. The Norwegian Food Safety Authority will use the opinion when giving advice to consumers and to industry.</p> <p>Stephen Humphreys from the UK gave an update on campylobacter levels on chicken. Discussions continue with the major retailers and processors on actions they could take to reduce campylobacter in the processing.</p> <p>FSA is carrying out a survey of campylobacter levels on chicken on sale; both meat and packaging.</p>

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Meeting Success	Factors That Supported Success
<p>EFSA’s updates on recent & forthcoming communication activities</p>	<p>The group has a strong interest in EFSA’s scientific risk assessment pipeline which is useful to develop more effective communication through their respective networks.</p> <p>EFSA highlighted the work being carried out on BPA and on Ebola virus together with ECDC.</p> <p>It was highlighted that coordination with Norway would be important as both the VKM and EFSA plan to publish a risk / benefit assessment on fish consumption before Christmas. Both organisations agreed to collaborate.</p>
<p>EFSA’s scientific updates</p>	<p>Following the interest expressed by the MS in the Scientific Committee’s work on Uncertainties, the Head of EFSA’s Scientific Committee and Emerging Risks Unit (SCER), presented the on-going work on the Guidance document on how to characterise, document and explain uncertainties in risk assessment.</p> <p>All participants were pleased to see that the Scientific Committee had identified the need to include risk communications in its forthcoming Opinion. Now that the group has been informed of this initiative, it will be more involved in more practical discussions in the future.</p> <p>An interesting update took also place regarding greater opportunities for participation in EFSA’s horizontal guidance documents (EFSA’s self-task mandates).</p>

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<p>EFSA Journal</p>	<p>The MS appreciated the update EFSA gave on the current status of the EFSA Journal as well as on-going initiatives. In the context of building trust particular emphasis was placed on the need to provide plain language summaries for some of EFSA's key scientific outputs.</p>
<p>MS communicator involvement in the development of scientific outputs</p>	<p>Interesting discussions took place regarding MS involvement in the development of scientific outputs which showed the difference of the remits of each of the organisations that represent the AFCWG Network.</p> <p>EFSA will follow up with Austria, Denmark and Germany (absent at the meeting) to establish their involvement in the risk assessment process in view of helping to shape the future role of the EFSA Journal.</p>
<p>Project Agora</p>	<p>An update was provided on EFSA's latest updates on the website revamp and next steps. Interesting discussions took place regarding target audiences, access to open data and archiving strategies (how MS deal with information that might be perceived as being older versus information that is still pertinent).</p>
<p>EFSA's approach to transparency</p>	<p>The Head of EFSA's Legal & Regulatory Affairs Unit (LRA) gave an update on EFSA's approach to transparency, including External report findings, response from Public Consultation and next steps.</p>

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Meeting Learnings

Meeting Shortcoming	Recommended Solutions
<p>Tailored training on Social Media – the session was too similar to that given in Autumn 2012, although it proved useful to many participants as there were many new faces, the value-add was not as it should have been for those who attended both sessions.</p>	<p>Better coordination with the trainer</p>
<p>Plenary session was too EFSA-centric - Due to the interactive nature of the training sessions on the morning of 14 October and the subsequent crisis simulation on 15-16 October, EFSA imparted a lot of information during the plenary session which resulted in less interaction than usual.</p>	<p>MS contributed to the discussions but better structured sessions could have been foreseen.</p>

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Actions

Actions	Accountable	Deadline
<p>EC/EFSA/MS Campaign on Zoonoses In light of recent feedback from DG SANCO, EFSA will keep the Network informed of a possible Zoonoses Campaign on campylobacter in the context of EXPO 2015.</p>	<p>EFSA</p>	<p>Asap</p>
<p>MS communicator involvement in the development of scientific outputs EFSA to follow up with Austria, Denmark and Germany (absent at the meeting) their involvement in the risk assessment process in view of shaping the future role of the EFSA Journal.</p>	<p>Austria, Denmark and Germany</p>	<p>Asap</p>
<p>Presentation of AFCWG member organisations The discussions on involvement in the risk assessment process highlighted the diversity of the group and several members requested the opportunity to become more familiar in detail with the work of the group members.</p>	<p>EFSA</p>	<p>From now onwards</p>