

Minutes



European Food Safety Authority

Minutes
Management Board Meeting
21 January 2003
10.00 – 17.30 Centre Borschette, Brussels

Members of the Management Board present

- Angeliki Assimakopoulou
- Giorgio Calabrese
- Robert Coleman
- Peter Gaemelke
- Catherine Geslain-Lanéelle
- Matthias Horst
- Deirdre Hutton
- João Pedro Machado
- Pirkko Raunemaa
- Bart Sangster
- Stuart Slorach
- Roland Vaxelaire

Staff of the European Food Safety Authority Implementation Team present

- Jochen Brodersen
- Antoine Cuvillier
- Christine Majewski
- Andy Stimpson
- Anja Van Impe
- Katty Verhelst
- Peter Wagstaffe

Administrative Matters

The Authority's secretariat tabled the resume of the candidate for accounting officer. In line with the New Financial Regulation of the Authority it is now the responsibility of the Board to make this appointment.

It was decided that the interview and appointment of the candidate will be put on the agenda of the Board meeting of 19/20 March. In the meantime, the candidate will continue working according to the Memorandum of Understanding with the Centre de Traduction with whom he has an employment contract.

Preliminary Formalities

Stuart Slorach opened the meeting by welcoming the Board members and the webstreaming audience. Apologies were received from Ernst Bobek, Carlos Escrivano Mora, Geoffrey Podger and Patrick Wall.

No declarations of interest regarding the agenda for this meeting have been made.

MB 21.01.2003 – adopted

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1. Adoption of Agenda

Due to Geoffrey Podger's absence, agenda item point 3 was deleted.

The agenda was adopted, including items added under Any Other Business.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting and matter arising from the minutes (Document MB 11.12.2002 - version 3 Draft Minutes)

The minutes of the Management Board meeting of 11 December 2002 were adopted. This document will be published on the Authority's website. A draft letter to the Greek Presidency was distributed for discussion under Any Other Business. The Board members decided that, at the end of each Management Board meeting, the members would consider which information should be released to the press immediately after the meeting and for publication on the website.

3. Presentation to the Management Board by Geoffrey Podger, Executive Director (from 1 February 2003).

This agenda item was cancelled due to Geoffrey Podger's absence.

4. Draft Decision concerning the terms and conditions for internal investigations in relation to the prevention of fraud, corruption and any illegal activity detrimental to the Communities' interests - Document MB 11.12.2002 – 7 Rev 1 (Discussion and vote)

Antoine Cuvillier introduced this item concerning the draft Decision which had been revised from the previous meeting of 11 December. All EU institutions and agencies are asked to adopt the framework decision on prevention of fraud, corruption and illegal activities.

The Board adopted the draft decision, having amended the document as discussed in the meeting.

5. Draft Procedural Rules for the Advisory Forum (Document MB 21.01.2003 – 2) (Discussion and vote)

Christine Majewski introduced the matter by explaining the articles in document MB 21.01.2003 - 2. The first Advisory Forum should take place in Brussels on 6 and 7 March 2003.

The draft procedural rules for the Advisory Forum were adopted with amendments by the Board. The Board shall amend these rules before 1 July 2003 by a majority of its members. Following a discrepancy, the French version of the text needs to be aligned according to the French version of Regulation 178/2002.

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6. Budget

a) Budget 2002 carry-over (Document MB 21.01.2002 – 3) (Discussion and Vote)

Jochen Brodersen introduced this item by detailing the content of the credits to be carried over in Title II and Title III from budget 2002 to 2003. The Management Board approved the principle to carry over credits.

b) Budget 2003 – (for information only)

Jochen Brodersen introduced this matter. Since the European Parliament voted in its plenary that 50% of the Authority's budget will be held in reserve awaiting a decision from the Council on the permanent seat of the Authority, the secretariat, in co-operation with the Commission, is in the process of drafting a note to the European Parliament to explain once more that the Authority cannot implement its work programme if the money in the reserve is not released.

In addition, the Chair will send a letter to the Greek Presidency urging it to make a speedy decision in terms of the Authority's seat.

7. Preliminary discussion on content of report of EFSA activities in 2002

In line with Regulation 178/2002 and the New Financial Regulation the Management Board shall adopt the general report on the Authority's activities for the previous year before the end of March.

It was agreed that considering that 2002 was the start-up year for the Authority, the report on the activities will be rather limited. The report should also state the difficulties that the Authority faces in the light of the lack of decision on the permanent seat and the budget reserve.

The Management Board requested the Secretariat to draft a report on the Authority's activities in 2002, to be distributed to the Board members prior to the meeting of 19/20 March. The draft report will be discussed in that meeting.

8. Information from the secretariat concerning deadlines for the Authority's work during 2003 (MB 21.01.2003 – 4 tabled)

The Board members appreciated the document prepared by the Secretariat and decided that Stuart Slorach is to consult Geoffrey Podger regarding items for the next Board meeting's agenda.

9. Information from the secretariat concerning the calls for expressions of interest

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Call for expressions of interest in membership of the Scientific Committee or a Scientific Panel of the European Food Safety Authority (Document tabled – Publication in the Official Journal of the European Communities – 21.1.2003 – C14 A/1)

Peter Wagstaffe introduced the matter by thanking the various people and parties involved from the EFSA Implementation Team in organising the call, both in terms of content and logistics. The call was published on 21 January and will close for the receipt of applications on 14 March. The Executive Director will propose a list with names for adoption by the Management Board in its meeting of 29 April 2003.

Stuart Slorach will consult with Geoffrey Podger on the selection procedure and the evaluation criteria. This information will be transmitted to the Board members prior to the next meeting and made subject to an exchange of views. It was suggested that the Board's Vice-Chairs are closely involved in the development of the evaluation criteria.

Call for expression of interest for certain scientific and technical support for the European Food Safety Authority

Christine Majewski introduced this subject by detailing the five lots of service requirements that are part of this call. On the basis of the financial and technical capacities of the applicants, the Authority will make a selection to put the applicant on a list. When there is a need for a service, the Authority can award a contract to a company or organisation on the list.

Call for expression of interest for building up the FLAVIS database and compiling information for the safety evaluation of flavouring substances used or intended for use in or on foodstuffs in the framework of Commission Regulation 1565/2000

Peter Wagstaffe explained that the objective of this call is to select a contractor to continue the work performed in SCOOP to build up and maintain the FLAVIS database which compiles information for the scientific evaluation of chemically defined flavouring substances according to Regulation EC/1565/2000 as well as to prepare data sheets which summarise this information, including a pre-evaluation.

All calls for expressions of interest are published on www.efsa.eu.int. In order for the Board to be kept aware of ongoing calls, the Secretariat is to send the information to the Management Board members prior to publication.

10. Any Other Business

- Deirdre Hutton tabled a document on webstreaming alternatives. In view of the importance the Board places on transparency, it was felt unfortunate that the current webstreaming is not available to all people due to (1) the format currently used and (2) the lack of information on the Authority's website.

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Christine Majewski assured the Board that the webstreaming is under constant review in order to identify areas for improvement. Up until now, the Commission provided the webstreaming services free of charge. If the secretariat were to consider other ways of conveying the streams, there would be a need for additional technical equipment and human resources which is currently not an option for the Authority. The Technical Team will investigate and see if there are any improvements that can be implemented. Improvements regarding the information on the Authority's website will be made.

- A letter of invitation had been received from Patrick Wall for the Board to hold a meeting in Ireland during the Irish Presidency in the first half of 2004. The Board members appreciated the initiative and the matter will be further discussed during the next meeting, particularly in relation to the practical and economic aspects of doing this. Robert Coleman suggested a visit to the Food and Veterinary Office in Grange if Ireland should host a Board meeting.
- Giorgio Calabrese asked if Geoffrey Podger would be available to represent the Authority at the ASSOCARNI, (the association representing the Italian meat industry) conference, on 7 March in Rome. Stuart Slorach will discuss this with Geoffrey Podger.
- The Board agreed on the text of a letter the Chair would send to the Greek Prime Minister concerning the need for a decision on the permanent seat for the Authority. In addition, the letter would point out that the European Parliament has frozen part of the Authority's budget 2003. Stuart Slorach and Geoffrey Podger will intensify their contacts with the appropriate MEPs in order to try to unfreeze the reserve of the budget.

Stuart Slorach closed the meeting by thanking the Authority's Implementation Team for the preparatory work, the interpreters, the team responsible for the web streaming and all the members of the Board.