



European Food Safety Authority

Minutes of the
Management Board Meeting
22 June 2004
Diamant Business Center, Brussels

Members of the Management Board present

- Angeliki Assimakopoulou
- Ernst Bobek
- Carlos Escribano Mora
- Peter Gaemelke
- Matthias Horst
- Deirdre Hutton
- Robert Madelin
- João Pedro Machado
- Pirkko Raunemaa
- Bart Sangster
- Stuart Slorach
- Roland Vaxelaire
- Patrick Wall

Staff of the European Food Safety Authority present

- Antoine Cuvillier
- Lucia De Luca
- Anne-Laure Gassin
- Herman Koeter
- Christine Majewski
- François Monnard
- Geoffrey Podger
- Lionel Rigaux
- Filomena Siravo
- Ingela Soderlund
- Anja Van Impe
- Katty Verhelst
- Victoria Villamar

1. Preliminary Formalities

Stuart Slorach opened the meeting by welcoming the Board members, the Authority's staff, those watching on the webstream and the live audience in the room. Apologies had been received from Giorgio Calabrese and Catherine Geslain-Laneelle.

The Chair updated the audience on the outcome of the confidential matters discussed during the closed session:

- The Chair, Stuart Slorach, and the two Vice-Chairs, Catherine Geslain-Laneelle and Deirdre Hutton, had been re-elected for a second two-year-term
- The 14 external experts, as proposed by the Executive Director for membership of one of the Panels, had been approved by the Board as reflecting the agreed selection process. The list would be published on the Authority's website upon acceptance of their nomination

- The Board had approved the proposal from the Executive Director on the temporary building and the rental pricing

2. Adoption of Agenda (Document MB 22.06.2004 - 1)

2.1 The agenda was adopted.

3. Adoption of draft minutes of the previous meeting and matter arising from the minutes (Document MB 22.06.2004-2)

- 3.1 The minutes of the Management Board meeting of 27 April were adopted, subject to the change made in the meeting in relation to the confirmation of the presence of some dignitaries from Parma and the Italian government.
- 3.2 The minutes of the meeting of 27 April would be published on the Authority's website.
- 3.3 The Executive Director updated the meeting on the annual report for 2003. The report, currently available in English and Italian, would also be available in French and German by July and would be published on the Authority's website.
- 3.4 The Executive Director informed the Board that some initial examination with regard to crisis scenarios would take place at the Advisory Forum of September. More substantial role-playing would follow at a subsequent meeting.
- 3.5 The Executive Director confirmed that the amendments to the draft budget 2005 had been adopted by written procedure.

4. Information and update from the Executive Director on the move of EFSA to Parma

- 4.1 The Executive Director reported on the following in relation to the Authority's move to Parma :
 - Following the approval of the temporary building and the rental pricing, the staff could gradually move between autumn 2004 and autumn 2005
 - Any new staff arriving at the Authority from outside Belgium would be based in Parma rather than in Brussels from the autumn onwards
 - Primary schooling would be available as of September 2004 in Italian, English and French; secondary schooling would be available as of September 2005 in those same languages
 - The staff has been engaged in a survey and the outcome was very enthusiastic. More than 90 per cent of the staff were willing to move to Parma; those who were not would not be able to do so for personal reasons and the Authority would help them in finding another position

- Although there is still a great deal to be done, the Executive Director was optimistic about the move and the good contacts with Parma and the Italian authorities

5. The Executive Director– General update on developments (Document MB 22.06.2004 - 3)

- 5.1 The Executive Director informed the Board on the meeting with the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), leading to opportunities for future co-operation especially in the event of a food scare or a food crisis. In addition to a visit from the FDA, the Authority had welcomed a delegation from the US Department of Agriculture.
- 5.2 The Executive Director updated the meeting on the main issues discussed in the Advisory Forum of 8 June in Budapest:
- An extranet would be developed by the WG on IT for a trial period of 12 months at the Authority's cost. This IT tool would require the involvement of national authorities in defining the specifications for the extranet and testing the extranet features. The extranet is needed and would be of particular relevance in terms of being able to communicate rapidly in a crisis situation
 - The national authorities expressed concern over the different approach between the Authority and the Commission on methylmercury. It was noted that the forthcoming planning exercise concerning urgent incidents and crises should streamline the procedure and bring about closer co-operation with the member states and the Commission
 - The new Member States are ready to participate in the Advisory Forum even though there might be resource challenges. The new Member States have been invited to let the Authority know if there was anything that could be done To facilitate their participation
- 5.3 The Deputy Executive Director updated the meeting on the initiatives to include involvement of the stakeholders in the Authority's processes:
- The Panel on additives and products or substances used in animal feed (FEEDAP) had invited national competent authorities and stakeholders including consumer and industry associations and their members to meet with the Panel in an open public session in the context of its 10th plenary meeting from 5 to 7 May in Barcelona.
 - The Panel on genetically modified organisms (GMO) had invited interested parties to consult before the final adoption of the guidance document on GM plants. On 25 May 2004, a stakeholder consultation was held to discuss the comments received. The outcome of this consultation would be taken into account during the final adoption of the guidance document.
 - Reports of both meetings would be shared and would be part of the minutes as an annex and available on the Authority's website. Although both Panels had a different approach in the meetings, they were opportunities for the Panels to listen to the stakeholders. This sort of

meetings would be considered for other Panels as well when appropriate to meet with the stakeholders.

- 5.4 The Authority was organising its first colloquium and had invited experts in the field to participate in an interactive exchange of expert views regarding methodologies and principles for setting tolerable intake levels for dioxins, furans and dioxin-like PCBs. The meeting would take place on 28-29 June 2004 in Brussels. The Authority accepted 65 valued and appropriate experts in the area from EU member states, the US, industry representatives, amongst others.
- 5.5 The Advisory Forum had decided in early in 2004 to make its work more publicly known to the stakeholders by organising an event between 8-10 November in Berlin (Bundesinstitut für Risikobewertung (BfR)). The event would last one day, starting late in the morning on the first day and followed by a half day. A separate one-day-stakeholder event would take place right after the Forum event. Both Board Members and the national authorities were welcome to attend as well, if they wish. The Secretariat would provide the Board with details on both events and members would also be asked at this time to let the Authority know about their attendance to the forum and/or the stakeholder event.

6. Preparation for EFSA review including a discussion on the EFSA image assessment report (Document MB 22.06.2004-4 & Annex 4-I)

- 6.1 The Executive Director introduced the meeting on the Authority's activity in the area of assessing the current image and performance of the Authority in order to outline a clear vision for the future. The Authority's Management Team and Frederic Paeps, from the consultancy agency FPA, developed a work programme which consisted in the first phase of an internal assessment and ideas. 21 interviews were conducted with the Authority's key stakeholders and other interested parties. This was a small sample and not intended as a substitute for the formal 2005 review. The immediate response to the report would need to concentrate on improvements or developments which could be undertaken within the legal constraints of the existing Regulation.
- 6.2 The Executive Director noted that the Paeps Report contained comments from the Commission expressing concerns about EFSA's ability to meet legal deadlines. This was a future concern not one based on past practise.
- 6.3 The Board agreed that the Paeps Report was a useful exercise but not a substitute for the 2005 review. The terms of reference for the 2005 review would need to be agreed by the Board in line with the Regulation and in collaboration with the Commission..
- 6.4 The Board agreed that the 2005 evaluation exercise should be considered as an opportunity to identify areas for improvements such as the extent to which the Authority had contributed to the improvement of food safety, to the restoring of consumer confidence and to the Authority's establishment as an independent center of scientific independence.

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- 6.5 An interim report detailing the progress of the work should be available in October 2005 and the final report for consideration by the Board in January 2006. The recommendations made by the Board would be made public and would be forwarded to the European Parliament and Council in April 2006.
- 6.6 The Executive Director informed the Board that the Authority would prepare a paper on performance indicators in the work programme which could be used a basis for discussion in the next Board meeting.

7. Animal welfare (Document MB 22.06.2004-5)

- 7.1 Following the request from the Management Board in its meeting of 27 April to develop a policy on risk assessment methods on animal testing, the secretariat had prepared a document on the subject generally outlining that the Authority's current animal welfare considerations were routinely part of its many tasks and activities. However, apart from the development of opinions on questions related to food producing animals, the approach was more reactive than proactive. In particular in the area of investment in food science a pro-active approach seemed desirable and feasible. While recognizing that animal testing cannot be eliminated at present, the Authority could make every effort to stimulate, and participate in, the development of new food and feed assessment approaches that would minimize the use of experimental animals and would reduce to the extent possible the level of suffering of those animals that are still needed today.
- 7.2 The Board took note of the issues addressed in the document.
- 7.3 The Board agreed and supported a pro-active animal welfare policy and approach as laid out in the document, subject to the amendments expressed in the meeting.
- 7.4 The Authority would develop a follow-up document detailing the various steps that could be embarked on. The Panels would probably need around 6 months to reflect on the issue in order to ensure a sound and science-based policy.

8. Transfers of appropriations within 2004 Budget (Document MB 22.06.2004 – 6 + Annexes I & II)

- 8.1 The Executive Director introduced the item by explaining that a transfer of appropriations within the budget was needed in order to enable the transfer of people from Brussels to Parma and in order to be able to spend money on the temporary building. Further transfers during the year may be needed.
- 8.2 The Board noted the transfer of appropriations.

9. Supplementary and Amending Budget 2004 (Document MB 22.06.2004-7 + Annex I)

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- 9.1 The Board formally adopted the supplementary and amending budget (SAB) for an amount equivalent to the positive balance earmarked by the Commission (DG SANCO). Upon its adoption, the Commission would be informed about this decision on the Supplementary and Amending Budget.

10. Proposed amendment to the comments of Article 115 of the Budget (Document MB 22.06.2004-8)

- 10.1 The Executive Director updated the meeting on the availability of an out-of-office number to be used in the event of an emergency. The Board was asked to amend the Budget line to enable such payments to be made. Following a query raised by the Commission the Executive Director confirmed that not all those originally proposed for overtime could be remunerated under this proposed change. The staff concerned would need to be informed.
- 10.2 In order to provide a budget line to allow the on-call staff to be remunerated, the Board adopted the proposal under the provision that the appropriate information regarding reimbursement would be communicated to the staff.

11. For information: Final Financial Annual Report for 2003

- 11.1 This agenda item would need to be postponed to a future Board meeting since the Court of Auditors had not provided their comments yet.

12. For adoption: Revision of the Rules of Procedure (Document MB 22.06.2004– 9)

- 12.1 At the Board meeting of 27 April, the Board agreed that a more flexible method of adopting documents by written procedure was needed, considering the limited number of Board meetings and the quantity of documents that need to be adopted. Following a proposal by the Executive Director, the Board accepted the change to article 12 to the Rules of Procedure to enable this to be done.
- 12.2 At the Board meeting of 10 March 2004, the Board indicated its intention to discuss the quorum requirement set out in article 81 of its Rules of Procedure. Following a discussion in the Board, the secretariat would need to prepare a document for the Board meeting of 14 September taking into account the possibility of telephone links and videoconferencing. Also different types of situation, such as in time of a food crisis, should be envisaged. The Board is invited to provide input to the secretariat on the matter.
- 12.3 The current Rules of Procedure state in article 14 that “the minutes shall be published in all Community languages on the Authority’s website”. Given that there are now 20 official Community languages, the Executive Director explained that the Authority like other EU Agencies could not live up to these expectations and that it would be advisable to change the wording in

¹ A quorum of at least two thirds of all the members of the Board (i.e. 10) shall be physically present in order for the meeting to be valid

article 14. Following a significant debate on the issue, the Board agreed to change the text to “the minutes shall be published on the Authority’s website”.

13. Report from the 9 March Away Day (Document MB 22.06.2004-10)

- 13.1 In view of the lack of more time, the Board postponed a discussion on the actions to be taken in relation to the proposals following the Board’s Away Day on 9 March. The item would be put on the agenda of 14 September. The need was for a paper illustrating progress made.

14. Confirmation of 2005 meeting dates (Document MB 22.06.2004-11)

- 14.1 The Authority is requested to check on the availability of the Board members to replace 18 January by 19 January 2005.
- 14.2 The Authority would provide the Board with the timing and venue of the meetings scheduled in 2005.

The Chair closed the meeting by thanking the members of the Board, the audience, the Authority's staff for the preparatory work, the interpreters, and the team responsible for the web streaming.