



EFSA PROGRESS REPORT

As requested by the Board, I attach a written progress report on major and forthcoming issues since the last Board meeting.

Geoffrey Podger
Executive Director

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WORK PROGRESS AT EFSA

Science Department

1. The Register of Questions has been revised and does allow sorting by question number, question title, Panel/SC, date and status (in progress, adopted, published). The Register also has the options to (1) attach reports and other documents to any question and (2) allow for document submission from outside (under rules and conditions still to be defined).

2. The total number of opinions adopted has exceeded 100, thirty of which were adopted in 2003. Since the last Management Board Meeting on 22 June (until 27 August) 14 opinions have been adopted, including the Opinion of the NDA Panel on trans fatty acids; the opinion of the FEEDAP Panel on Monteban G100, the last of a series of 10 coccidiostats; and the opinion of the AFC Panel on jelly minicups. In addition, during this period EFSA published its scientific reports on the assessments of the geographical BSE risks for 7 countries.

3. The 1st Science Colloquium was held on 28-29 June. The subject was the scientific underpinning of currently applied procedures and principles for setting tolerable intake levels for dioxins and dioxin-like PCBs. The meeting was considered very successful based on actual output and responses received from participants. The results and final report of the Colloquium will be presented at the world congress on dioxins in Berlin on 7 September. The report will also be published as the first in a new series of EFSA Science Colloquia publications.

4. Follow-up to the MB approval of the appointment of 13 additional experts to 5 Panels. EFSA appointed the 13 additional scientific experts, approved by the Management Board at its 22 June 2004 meeting, to the following Panels: 3 experts were appointed to the AFC Panel 2 to the AHAW Panel, 2 to the FEEDAP Panel, 3 to the PPR Panel and 3 to the NDA Panel. One expert declined the invitation. With these new appointments the total number of EFSA's Scientific Panel members increased to 167. The names of the appointees can be found on the website at the following link:
http://www.efsa.eu.int/press_room/bg_documents/catindex_en.html

Current Staffing Levels

5. On 1st September 2004, the EFSA staff members numbered 102 of whom 80 are temporary agents, 1 is an EFSA fonctionnaire and 21 are auxiliary agents. With a further 2 interim staff, 7 national experts on secondment and 4 consultants the total number of persons working at EFSA in the beginning of September 2004 was 115.

Since the last Management Board meeting in June some 9 Temporary agents, 2 seconded National Experts and one consultant joined EFSA, or in total 12 new staff members. The

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breakdown of staff by geographical distribution is the following: Fourteen nationalities out of 25 are already represented and there has been a successful candidature from a further country.

	A	B	C	D	Total AX/AT	Fonctionnaires	END	Interims	Consultants	Total
AUT	1				1					1
BEL	12	12	12		36			2	4	42
CYP					0					0
CZE					0					0
DEU	9		1		10	1				11
DNK	2		2		4					4
ESP	7	1	2		10					10
EST					0					0
FIN	2				2					2
FRA	10		4		14		2			16
GBR	2	1	3		6		1			7
GRC			1		1		2			3
HUN		1			1					1
IRL	1		2		3					3
ITA	3	2	4		9					9
LTU					0					0
LUX					0					0
LVA					0					0
MLT					0					0
NLD	2				2		1			3
POL					0					0
PRT					0					0
SVK					0					0
SVN					0					0
SWE	1				1		1			2
Other	1				1					1
TOTAL	53	17	31		101	1	7	2	4	115

The ratio men/women amounts to 30% / 70% while the ratio men/women of A level posts reaches 39% / 61%. A new call of interest concerning posts for additional junior and senior scientific staff in the field of pesticides was launched early August 2004 (closing date 26/09/2004).

IT

6. Experimental Extranet Update

The Advisory Forum experimental Extranet was made available on July 20 to all members of the Advisory Forum including the Communication and IT Working Group (<http://afnetwork.efsa.eu.int/portal/efsa.pt>) Extranet users were attached to specialized user communities such as the Advisory Forum community, the Communication and IT Working group communities, and the Emerging Risk community (users interested in discussing and coordinating responses to emerging risks). So far, about 90% of the IT Working Group members and 50% of the Communication Working Group members have been regular users of the experimental Extranet. These users have utilized the experimental extranet for:

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- publishing/downloading documents, such as project plans, meeting minutes and presentations
- discussing meeting agenda and project documents
- responding to online surveys such as the videoconference equipment survey

Towards the end of year, EFSA's IT unit plans to:

- Continue collecting and implementing user requirements.
- Organize an Extranet information workshop (determine the type of information available on the Extranet and a classification)
- Organize 4/5 Web conferences to discuss/train users to specific Extranet features
- Complete the public procurement of an Extranet product and services (estimated value: 600 K€ for the next 2 years).
- Launch the Advisory Forum Extranet (end December/beginning January)

7. Video Conference

As part of its mandate, EFSA is establishing a videoconferencing capability between National Agencies, EFSA and the Commission. A recent Extranet survey shows that about 20 National Agencies do not own videoconference equipment have otherwise no plan to own this kind of equipment in the short term.

Communication

8. The Annual Report is now available in English, French, German and Italian and is posted on the EFSA website at:http://www.efsa.eu.int/press_room/an_report/catindex_en.html. To date, over 600 copies have been distributed by EFSA, in addition to the Board members, to the Advisory Forum, the Scientific Committee and Panels as well as key contacts in the European Commission, European Parliament, media and stakeholders.

There are to date 2324 subscribers to EFSA's newsletter (via the website) and 2771 subscribers to EFSA highlights (ie notification of placement of new content on the website). The July/August edition will be published on the EFSA website next week.

EFSA organised a press briefing to present the opinion of the NDA panel concerning trans fatty acids. This was held on Wednesday 1 September.

The 3rd issue of the EFSA Newsletter was published and placed on the website at the end of August.

Forthcoming EFSA events:

Crisis scenario exercise

9. EFSA and its Advisory Forum will undertake a crisis scenario exercise at their meeting in Rome on 30 September this year. The exercise is intended to help prepare

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EFSA, the Advisory Forum - and via these - European risk assessors in dealing with urgent incidents and crises and in particular to specify the different roles of the key players in a crisis. The secretariat has therefore developed some scenarios which include incidents/crises that could happen somewhere in the Union and also a list of questions for consideration. This exercise is the first step in the preparation for the larger crisis exercise we plan to undertake jointly with the Commission next year. The exercise will be prepared in close collaboration with the Commission and by taking into account the Commission's General Crisis Management Plan and EFSA's 'In house procedures for handling a crisis' - plan, both available on the Internet. The exercise in Rome is meant to have an informal character; the members of the Advisory Forum have been asked to bring the crisis handling experts from their organisations with them.

Advisory Forum Event

10. On 8-9 November 2004, the Advisory Forum will organise its first public event, hosted by the Bundesinstitut für Risikobewertung (German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment) in Berlin. In holding this event, the Advisory Forum aims to engage in a broader public debate regarding future perspectives in risk assessment; open up its work to a wider audience; and more generally, to exchange views with interested parties. This programme will be particularly relevant to those having an interest in food safety, risk assessment and EU institutional affairs.

It has three different sections:

- a) Future perspectives in risk assessment: key challenges and opportunities
- b) Enhancing dialogue and exchange of views on risk assessment approaches in Europe: the role of EFSA's Advisory Forum.
- c) Evaluating risks and benefits: a new challenge for risk assessors.

The complete programme, all the logistical details and the registration form for the Advisory Forum event will be published on EFSA's website, end August/early September.

Stakeholder event

11. Immediately following the Advisory Forum event, EFSA will be holding a meeting by invitation only with its stakeholders to look at issues regarding the Authority's future development and stakeholder involvement. This event follows EFSA's policy to involve stakeholders more in the work of EFSA and responds to EFSA's engagement agreed by the Management Board (April 2004) regarding follow up actions to EFSA's Ostend Colloque which took place in October 2003. The main aim of this event is to give stakeholders the opportunity to comment on progress so far and make proposals for our future development e.g. regarding stakeholder consultation.