



European Food Safety Authority

**PRELIMINARY MANAGEMENT PLAN OF THE
EUROPEAN FOOD SAFETY AUTHORITY FOR 2007**

**Document providing the predicted work of the Authority during 2007 both in
relation to its annual and multi- annual work programmes**

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EFSA PRELIMINARY MANAGEMENT PLAN 2007
(incorporating the Annual and Multi-Annual Work Programmes)

Foreword

1. EFSA is in a period of growth and consolidation. Since its inception in 2002 EFSA has put in place most of its main tasks and missions as determined by its Founding Regulation¹ and continues to build and consolidate. The EU food and feed safety policy environments have evolved since 2002. While food and feed safety are at the core of these policies more emphasis is being placed in the food area on diet and nutrition and their relation to health. As a Community Body EFSA has to reflect this policy environment while still following the legal responsibilities placed upon it.

2. Since EFSA was founded Community legislation has placed greater responsibilities and tasks at its door for example the extensive work EFSA is in the process of undertaking in relation to maximum residue levels of pesticides. These have also to be absorbed into EFSA's work programmes while at the same time the organisation develops and grows. New issues have also emerged which involve considerable resources to be assigned in order for EFSA to achieve its main objective of providing the scientific basis for Community measures, for example in relation to its tasks in the animal health sector on Avian Influenza.

3. At the same time there are still uncertainties about the next budgetary period 2007 – 2013 which could severely affect the work of the Authority while still in this critical phase of development. EFSA has taken a pragmatic approach to this challenge in this document by reducing its work in many areas.

¹ Official Journal L 031 , 01/02/2002 P 0001 - 0024

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4. The 2007 Annual Management Plan is based on the assumption that EFSA will be able to receive a budget of EUR 57.0 million, which is a substantial reduction from the original defined budget for 2007. Any greater reduction in the budgetary expectations for EFSA would result in EFSA not being able to deliver all of its legal responsibilities and mandate and would call into question aspects of the work foreseen under new or planned legislation, or all of the work needed for EFSA to support new initiatives as a result of the changing demands which may be placed on EFSA as EU food policy moves towards greater focus on nutrition.

I General Overview

EFSA's missions and overall work for 2007 (tasks that will be completed, new tasks, priorities)

5. EFSA will have faced significant management challenges in 2006: Scientific Committee and Panels will have been reconstituted, half of the places on the Management Board will have been reselected and a new Executive Director appointed. One of the challenges in 2007 will be to consolidate EFSA's new structure and foster its organization by ensuring effective management processes and controls and integrating quality assurance and internal control activities.
6. EFSA will operate within tight budgetary constraints while striving to deliver and further develop its mission, whilst continuing to improve its working practices. In this respect EFSA's management priority will be to continue the implementation of the Management Board's recommendations arising from Art. 61 evaluation expected to be issued in *June 2006*.
7. One of the challenges of 2007 will be to stabilize and round off the recruitment of staff at appropriate levels of competence to enable the Authority to meet its work load particularly in light of the possible budget restrictions. EFSA will therefore seek to prioritise the workload and recruitment of scientific and other staff whilst maximising the activities of EFSA in relation to its core missions of risk assessment and risk communication.

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8. In addition, particular attention will be paid to the retention of quality staff while offering them appropriate career perspectives, personal development and adequate training. The implementation of a staff appraisal system aimed at assessing the knowledge, competences and skills available within the Authority will at the same time enable the identification of any gaps present. The need for additional professional training combined with the development of existing and/or new competences will be addressed. The ultimate aim will be to have within the Authority sufficient knowledge, competences and skills to be able to meet its mission and objectives, based on the overall budget availability.

9. EFSA will continue to develop as a priority the scientific secretariat to support the EFSA Scientific Committee and Panels and to develop the Scientific Expert Services. In order to continue to improve the relevance and clarity of EFSA risk communications, the Authority will need to be able to continue to recruit communications professionals and notably editors to support further development of on- and off-line communications. EFSA's scientific excellence and independence will continue to be a top priority of the Authority during 2007.

10. During 2007 the Authority will continue through the work of the Advisory Forum to foster close collaborative relations with the national agencies and authorities in the enlarged Europe, in particular with the new accession member states Romania and Bulgaria. In 2007 the Advisory Forum will continue the focus on in-depth discussions on national and international approaches and priorities. The objective will be to engage more and more actively the national authorities in the work of EFSA.

11. In addition to EFSA's close cooperation with national food safety agencies, EFSA will further enhance its collaboration with other competent national organisations designated by the Member States under Article 36 of EFSA's founding Regulation. It is foreseen that where appropriate and desirable

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specific projects will be outsourced in 2007 to such competent organizations, building on the experience gathered in 2006. The financial resources for such activities will be seen as a matter of priority.

12. EFSA will continue the co-operation established with its institutional partners, the European Commission, European Parliament and Member States, to maintain the dialogue with risk managers on scientific matters and to continue discussions concerning the future development and work of the Authority as proposals are developed and in particular following the recommendations of the EFSA Review.
13. Relationships already forged with the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control will be enhanced to encourage work on joint initiatives and matters of joint interest and concern. EFSA will also continue to work with EMEA, the EEA, and other European Agencies on issues of common interest to ensure appropriate collaboration and exchanges.
14. As EFSA's work becomes more widely known it has started to gain a world wide reputation. EFSA has established regular, informal contacts with international and third country food and feed safety organizations, and this work will continue during 2007. EFSA will also seek in 2006 and 2007 to develop formalised frameworks to better manage the processes of exchanges and cooperation.
15. Furthermore, EFSA will build on already established integration activities through its PHARE and pre-accession aid projects, notably with Croatia and Turkey.
16. EFSA's Stakeholder activities are central to securing the legitimacy and overall acceptance of the Authority's work by civil society and is part of the

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Authority's responsibility within the Communities' policies on governance. If the Management Board continues to support the work of the Stakeholder Consultative Platform (reviewed in 2006) it would then be anticipated that this would continue to provide the core forum for EFSA's dialogue with interested parties in 2007. EFSA would also continue to build dialogue on a bilateral basis, through scientific colloquia and other forms of consultation.

17. The capacity of the provisional operational seat of EFSA (the DUS building) should accommodate the staff growth until mid 2007. In order to allow for future growth and pending completion of the Authority's final seat foreseen for the beginning of 2009, more space will be made available on the first floor of the Palazzo Ducale during 2007.

18. In relation to the final Seat, the construction company should have been selected by the end of 2006 by the municipality of Parma. It is therefore anticipated that works should start at the beginning of 2007 for a period of 24 months leading to the proposed reception of the building at the beginning of 2009.

II Overall Management Activities

19. The financial perspectives 2007 – 2013 as agreed by the Council in December 2005 would result in a freeze of the budget available to EFSA under Heading 3b at 2006 levels. If it remains at this level this would seriously affect the Authority's ability to provide the scientific basis for legislation in the area of food and feed safety, would impact on activities set out under the existing legal framework and call into question much of the work foreseen under new or planned legislation. The future allocation of resources during the financial perspectives may change and these will be carefully followed-up, but on the basis of initial soundings with the Commission for the budget 2007, a level of EUR 57.8 mio, seems possible. This figure would allow EFSA to further conduct its activities in a streamlined but appropriate manner.
20. In the context of the overall EFSA objectives for 2007, each department will have defined during 2006 its own priorities and described the key initiatives to meet them. Output and impact indicators will have also been established in order to measure both the quantitative and the qualitative results of their activities. 2007 will therefore be a period of consolidation and review of these activities.
21. EFSA will continue working with the Scientific Panels, Scientific Committee and other scientific expert working groups on issues at the forefront of science (e.g. developing and introducing new risk assessment approaches, development of a risk-benefit paradigm, and development of a European-wide food consumption database).

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22. Furthermore, EFSA will develop open and transparent mechanisms for networking closely with external scientific organisations at national and international level that are active in the field of investing in food safety science.

23. The EFSA Extranet which is designed to improve networking activities between EFSA and the Member States was launched officially in December 2005. The application will also be assessed to extend its functioning further to assist with the networking of other EFSA activities e.g. the Panels' experts and Management Board. In 2006 it is anticipated that this will be elaborated further by EFSA with the Advisory Forum and in the light of the report of the Forums' Working Group on the Input of National Authorities to the Work of EFSA's Scientific Committee and Panels. In particular further improvements are envisaged on to the system to enable greater sharing of data and information between EFSA's Scientific Committee and Panels via the Extranet.

24. Crisis procedures, updated in 2006, will be elaborated on by taking into account experience of:
 - a. an internal crisis exercise held 2006 or 2007
 - b. a joint exercise with the European Commission and Member States

25. Special emphasis in the year 2007 will be given to :
 - a. the decision making process in EFSA
 - b. the communications aspects of handling a crisis, and in particular co-ordination with the European Commission, Member States, other agencies (eg ECDC) and international organisations as appropriate and getting the right scientists involved in time
 - c. assuring the availability of all relevant data, literature etc. prior to developing scientific opinions and advice. This will be done by contacts to the national authorities and other sources in a pro-active and co-ordinated way.

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- d. on-call procedures and the EFSA 24 hours and 7 days accessibility for urgent matters.
 - e. provision to EFSA staff of an updated manual for crisis situations
 - f. developing further the collaboration on handling crises with international and third country organisations
- 26 As a part of its general objectives for 2007, EFSA will focus on continuing the implementation of the Management Board recommendations issued in mid 2006 which will contribute to improve the governance of EFSA. These recommendations will be implemented at each department level and coordinated by the Management Team and office of the Executive Director.
27. EFSA's IT department will ensure that in 2007 three scientific data collection applications will be produced. It will furthermore work towards automating and optimizing the process of organizing scientific meetings and reimbursing experts.
28. In order to improve efficiency, an Intranet presenting targeted and customizable information for EFSA staff will be rolled out.
29. Videoconferencing capabilities developed and implemented in 2005 and 2006 will be further improved and extended so that EFSA staff can establish videoconferences with third parties. This is considered of great importance in order to not lose time in a crisis or emergency situation and to avoid too much time spend on travels.
30. EFSA will continue to integrate quality assurance and quality control activities in 2007. EFSA regards these as essential in order to integrate all organizational functions and to focus on meeting EFSA's organizational objectives.
31. The forward Audit Plan (2006–2008) approved in February 2006, will be updated based on the audit risk assessment performed in December 2006. The

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processes governing the preparation of EFSA scientific outputs and those of the risk communication activities will be the main areas to be audited in 2007.

32. The audit on the implementation of the 24 Internal Controls Standards will continue in 2007 as the baseline requirements should be met for most standards in 2006, but additional requirements for full coverage of all standards need to be implemented. The main output indicators will be the number of recommendations issued and the annual audit opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the management processes and controls in place within the Authority.
33. EFSA will develop further its activities in relation to quality management by implementing a Quality Management System to promote a culture of continuous improvement and to ensure consistency with common methodologies.
34. In order to achieve this, the Quality Management will provide a number of mechanisms to implement the principle of continuous improvement in a structured and systematic way and provide guidance to the processes and procedure owners in EFSA.

III Scientific Activities

Introduction

35. In 2007, the Authority will continue to carry out its activities within its four main scientific work themes:

- General questions
- Authorisations
- Monitoring and assessing specific biological risk factors
- Investing in food safety science

In case of substantial budget restrictions, EFSA will consult with its partners (Commission, European Parliament, Member States and Stakeholders) to identify core activities and select work areas which will be delayed or put on hold.

36. The main developments foreseen in each of the four work themes are presented in the following sections. These cover the work of the nine Scientific Panels, the Scientific Committee and the Scientific Expert Working Groups that are managed by specific units in EFSA's Science Division.

37. It is also anticipated that the recommendations from the Article 61 Evaluation will focus on further improvements in the management, organisation and prioritisation of the work of the Scientific Panels and Committee during 2007.

38. In 2007, EFSA will also make further steps to improve its procedures for the handling of incoming questions. An important aim is to achieve a more balanced distribution of the work over the Scientific Panels and Committee, the Scientific Expert Working Groups and EFSA's own scientific staff. In addition, adequate working procedures will be put in place that will allow EFSA to

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develop further its cooperation on scientific matters with national food authorities and with the scientific organisations identified in the Article 36 network.

General Questions

Providing scientific opinions, guidance and advice in response to questions from the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Member States or by the Authority itself

39. The AHAW Panel will continue to provide scientific opinions related to the implementation of the EU legislation related to animal health and welfare in 2007. Particular emphasis will be on risk assessment of exotic diseases into EU, disease endemic to the EU, and animal welfare.
40. In the area of the AFC Panel, guidelines have to be developed for the recycling of plastics, for substances for use in active and intelligent food contact materials, and for submission of dossiers for food enzymes.
41. The NDA Panel foresees questions for the assessment of allergen derivatives for labelling purposes, and for the assessment of dietary foods (e.g. infant formula). In addition, the NDA Panel will continue its work to advise on dietary intakes of macro- and micronutrients for reference populations. Finally, assessment activities are expected concerning forthcoming legislation on nutrition and health claims made on foods.
42. In the area of the CONTAM Panel, an in-depth evaluation of available information on exposure and potential health effects of contaminants for animals and/or humans will be made.

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43. In 2007, the PPR Panel will continue issuing scientific opinions related to the risk assessment of pesticides addressing issues identified during the peer review of the risk assessment of active substances of pesticides. A particular task of the PPR Panel will be to continue developing guidelines or revisions of existing guidelines relating to the risk assessment of pesticides.

44. The BIOHAZ Panel is expecting requests for scientific opinions related to the implementation of the regulation on: antimicrobial treatments for decontamination of foods of animal origin including fish, on visual inspection in slaughterhouses and game handling establishments, on food borne zoonoses and food microbiology, on Animal-By-products and on BSE/TSE

45. EFSA has been requested to develop guidance in the area of the safety assessment of genetically modified animals and to provide support to the European Commission for the Codex Task Force on this topic. On its own initiative, the GMO Panel will develop guidance on nutritionally enhanced genetically modified plants and will address issues related to the environmental risk assessment of GMO s.

46. The FEEDAP Panel will continue developing guidelines for the assessment of the different categories of feed additives, particularly flavouring compounds.

47. The main work of the Plant Health (PLH) Panel newly established in May/June 2006 shall comprise the provision of scientific opinions related to risk assessment of organisms harmful to plant or plant products. Plant health represents a new domain; the PLH Panel shall be fully operational in 2007. One of its first major tasks will be the development of pest risk assessments in the EU.

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Authorisations

Assessing the risk of specific groups of regulated substances and developing proposals for risk-related factors, following legally defined notification procedures and time schedules

48. In 2007, EFSA's work in the field of regulated substances will continue to comprise the following areas:

- Assessment of novel foods;
- Evaluation of substances for food contact materials;
- Evaluation of recycling processes of plastic for food contact uses;
- Re-evaluation of food additives (starting with colours);
- Evaluation of new food additives;
- Evaluation of substances for use in food supplements and foods for particular nutritional purposes;
- Evaluation of chemically defined flavouring substances;
- Evaluation of smoke flavourings;
- Evaluation of safety and efficacy of antimicrobials for decontamination of meat;
- Evaluation of processes for treatment of natural mineral waters;
- Assessment of feed additives;
- Evaluation of GMO dossiers both for new applications and for renewal of existing licenses;
- Peer review of risk assessment for existing and new active substances of pesticides;
- Peer review of proposed maximum residue levels (MRLs) of pesticides;

Monitoring and assessing specific biological risk factors

Monitoring and assessing specific biological risk factors for human health and animal diseases.

49. EFSA's work in the area of data collection and analysis shall be further expanded in 2007, based on identified needs. New activities will include European food consumption patterns, exposure data of defined population subgroups and chemical occurrence data (e.g. contaminants and pesticide residues in food and food commodities).
50. The activities in the area of monitoring and assessment of specific biological risk factors will include the usual tasks in the area of zoonoses, antimicrobial resistance, and food-borne outbreaks. An analysis will be made of community-wide Salmonella baseline studies in animal populations, and work will continue on the quantitative risk assessment for pathogenic microorganisms in the food chain.
51. In the area of animal diseases, specific work will be conducted in the area of exotic disease animal surveillance. The risk assessments on the introduction of exotic diseases into the EU will be continued.

Investing in food safety science

Development, promotion and application of new and harmonised scientific approaches and methodologies for hazard and risk assessment of food and feed.

52. The following subjects falling in the area of investing in food safety science will be addressed in 2007 subject to further priority setting:
- Activities to further improve and ensure transparency of the risk assessment process
 - Harmonisation of methodologies for quantitative risk assessment of pathogenic microorganisms at European level

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- Development of a framework for risk-benefit assessment
- Continuation of the work on uncertainties in exposure assessment
- Investigating new aspects of risk assessment in the field of nanotechnology within the food area;
- Continuation of the work on the benchmark dose method
- Application of the Margin of Exposure approach
- Validation of the application of the Qualified Presumption of Safety approach for microorganisms
- Continuation of the work on the identification of early warnings of (re-) emerging risks
- Development of a framework for the safety assessment of botanicals and botanical extracts
- Development of a pro-active animal welfare policy in EFSA's risk assessment approaches

All these projects are intended to provide the same level of safety for all Europeans. This would require co-operation with other bodies in Europe and internationally, see point 91-93.

Networking and participation

53. In 2007, experts from EFSA will continue to participate in and contribute to scientific cooperation networks whose aim is the coordination of activities, the exchange of information, the development and implementation of joint projects, and the exchange of expertise and best practices in the fields within the Authority's mission.

54. EFSA will set up a network of food consumption database managers to develop an EU-wide food consumption database and to create a network of experts who could carry-out on ad-hoc basis dedicated exposure assessments using representative national dietary intake data on request of EFSA. Most likely EFSA will be requested to play a leading role in developing guidance for

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setting nutritional profiles for the support of nutrition and health claims. EFSA will involve all Member States and its stakeholders in this process and organise a Science Colloquia on nutrition issues.

Scientific meetings

55. The Authority will again organise 3-4 science colloquia addressing fundamental issues in the area of food safety. Their general aim is to provide a suitable fundament for further consideration by EFSA. One of these colloquia is envisaged to be devoted to plant health.

56. In the area of GMOs, a scientific workshop envisaged for the European Biosafety Advisory Committees dealing with the deliberate release of GMOs and a stakeholder consultation on new GMO guidance documents will be organised.

Progress indicators

57. EFSA will continue in 2007 with the development and implementation of indicators for the quality and impact of the scientific work conducted by the Scientific Panels, Committee and Expert Working Groups.

Organisation and prioritisation of work

58. All requests for opinions will be assessed in terms of their priority, their scope, and also in terms of ensuring that the best and most appropriate means is applied to addressing the request. The criteria for priority setting will remain broadly the same as in previous years:

- the anticipated public health impact,
- legal obligations and deadlines, and level of urgency .

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59. In this regard EFSA is very sensitive to emerging issues. Such issues will continue to be handled through self-tasking. This enables EFSA to take on a number of emerging public health matters.

60. Where appropriate, this prioritisation may allow EFSA to identify issues which are given top priority and to which resources are allocated accordingly. Also, where scientific information is requested which does not warrant full consideration of the Scientific Committee or Panels e.g. where the science is well established or where additional data is needed first, EFSA will consider in close consultation, as appropriate, with the Chair of the panel responsible for the matter whether such a response can be prepared by EFSA's scientific staff.

IV Advisory Forum

61. EFSA believes that a strong culture of cooperation between EFSA and the Member States is of utmost importance to its work. In view of this EFSA will continue in 2007 through the work of the Advisory Forum to foster close collaborative relations with the national agencies and authorities in Europe.
62. EFSA will increase its collaborative activities with the national authorities under the auspices of the Advisory Forum in scientific data and information collection. Although ideally meetings of officials from EFSA and the Member States would be optimal EFSA will also further develop information exchanges on scientific and technical data and information via the EFSA Extranet. This would allow members to share scientific information electronically with EFSA and enable the national bodies to feed into the work of the scientific panels in EFSA. Similarly, as the EFSA Extranet grows consideration will also be given to the method of meeting of the Advisory Forum Working Groups on Communication and Information Technology. Information exchanges via the Advisory Forum will continue to be particularly beneficial in co-ordinating at European level, information that existed at national level on specific topical issues. Specific exchanges – via questionnaires, requests for specific data will be developed further in 2007 where EFSA's Scientific Panels or Committee have identified a need for background data and information.
63. In 2007 EFSA will continue to focus on core EFSA activities at the AF meetings involving the Member States more fully in the preparation and development of themes and papers. The Advisory Forum will also continue to develop it in depth discussions on more horizontal matters such as working plans – to avoid overlap and promote cooperation by comparing and where appropriate comparing National and EFSA Working Plans.

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64. The outcome of the Scientific Committee WG on emerging risks will be shared with the Advisory Forum for consideration as it is anticipated that its role in identifying emerging issues will be strengthened. In view of the outcome of the crisis exercise jointly organised by the Commission and EFSA and the MS which will be held at the end of 2006 or the beginning of 2007, EFSA will revise and strengthen its procedures to deal adequately with emerging issues and crises.

V Communication Activities

65. In order to meet its communications goals and continue to address among others the outcomes from the EFSA evaluation carried out in 2005, EFSA will need in 2007 to further expand its risk communications programme and outreach, building visibility for its work and recognition for its scientific expertise. In doing so, the Authority will continue to collaborate with national food safety authorities and stakeholders in the development and dissemination of clear and targeted messages, adapted to the needs of key target groups. The Authority will seek to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of its risk communications activities taking into account learning from: consumer research; media monitoring and analysis; advice of risk communications experts; and more generally, dialogue and feedback from all of the Authority's customers and stakeholders.

66. EFSA has identified 5 key strategic directions for the pursuit of its communications activities in 2007 outlined in the following sections A – E.

Should EFSA need to curtail its communications programme due to budget restrictions, then the Authority will focus on the high priority areas related to information delivery (through media relations and the web) and on appropriate liaison and co-ordination of communications with the European Commission and Member States. In a context of budget restriction, EFSA would necessarily need to reconsider those activities which are less "business critical": for instance, the ability to evaluate the effectiveness of EFSA's communications activities. It is often the case in Communications that the cost of evaluating a programme (and learning gained) needs to be considered in light of the overall budget context. Section E (evaluation) would therefore be the first area to review and reduce should budgets need to be cut back. Additionally, new initiatives proposed to further leverage EFSA's scientific advice beyond the traditional tools and channels would need to be reconsidered.

A. Enhance clarity and relevance of risk communications for key target audiences and the public at large

- a) Bridge the gap between science and the consumer
- b) Develop further interface between Science and Communications

67. Building on the Eurobarometer on risk issues carried out in collaboration with DG SANCO in 2005, EFSA will investigate further opportunities to refine, expand and repeat this quantitative research in future in order to evaluate trends in public perception over time and to help monitor the effectiveness of public policies and programmes.

68. EFSA will also implement the use of focus groups to better understand consumer perception of food and feed safety issues as well as to test consumers' understanding and uptake of risk communications messages. Collaboration with Member States will be sought in developing such activities, notably concerning the identification of key thematic research areas.

69. EFSA will pursue the development of web-based 'Explanatory Notes' for selected scientific opinions which provide non-specialist audiences with the key points of an opinion in clear, accessible language and outline the rationale, background and implications arising from the findings of the risk assessment.

70. In order to achieve this goal, EFSA will need to ensure continued ability to recruit communications professionals, and notably to secure the support of editors with experience in drafting scientific communications for lay audiences. Such expertise will also be required for further development of the Authority's web site.

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71. EFSA will further develop 'Focus on the issues' pages on the Authority's website in order to address topics of public interest such as: Avian Flu, GMOs, BSE etc... Each page would act as a portal to direct users to information (opinions/press releases/background documents...) which are spread across the website in different areas. (This work will follow on from the web survey launched in 2006 in order to provide user input to guide further developments).

72. Media play an important role in disseminating information to the public on food and risks associated with the food chain. EFSA aims to organise information seminars for media on more general topics such as: risk assessment methodology; how to interpret research findings; role of the media in risk communications; public perception... Such seminars will provide journalists with important background information in order to help them better understand EFSA's scientific work, the relevance of specific risk assessment findings and impact of communications on public perception.

73. EFSA will seek to collaborate with other actors involved in communicating science in order to leverage resources more effectively and share learning. Such collaboration could be organised with appropriate partners such as DG Research, DG SANCO and national food safety authorities. Initiatives could include: joint organisation of media seminars (as outlined above); consumer perception research; evaluation of communications campaigns; participation in science/communications expert networks etc...

74. EFSA will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of its media relations in terms of accuracy and clarity of media coverage related to the Authority's press materials. The results of the Annual Review on key themes addressed in risk communications by the Authority (and other risk assessment bodies), carried out in 2006 by the Advisory Group on Risk Communications, will also provide valuable insights for further development of EFSA risk communications.

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75. In addition, EFSA plans to undertake in 2007 a media audit in order to better understand media needs and expectations with respect to information on food and feed safety, and the role and contribution of EFSA in particular.
76. EFSA will continue to organise training programmes in order to support and strengthen the effectiveness of the Authority's spokespeople in relaying key messages to the media and to the public at large. Participants will include appropriate staff from EFSA's Science and Communications departments as well as the Chairs of EFSA's Scientific Committee and Panels and Chairs of Working Groups addressing key topical issues.

B. Continue to build visibility for EFSA's scientific work

77. EFSA will seek to further develop and fine-tune its media relations strategy:
- a. Continue to establish and implement appropriate tools, processes and systems to better serve the media and optimise communications efforts.
 - b. Consolidate, leverage and expand contacts with media in EU and beyond, working with national food safety authorities as appropriate.
 - c. Better understand needs of media target audiences and tailor information delivery appropriately
78. EFSA plans to become engaged in public dialogue and debate related to risk assessment and risk communications, for instance:
- a. Information seminars with media and other interested parties on subjects related to EFSA's work programme
 - b. Public information events and conferences
 - c. Presence at key European and international conferences and fairs relative to scientific risk assessment, food/feed safety.

79. EFSA wants to develop new tools and channels for further dissemination of its scientific advice.

- a. In collaboration with EFSA scientists, work will be undertaken to develop appropriate tools for further dissemination of EFSA's scientific advice. This could include collaboration with a scientific publishing house following exploration of this opportunity in 2006.
- b. The Authority will develop greater and more effective integration between on- and off-line publication. The new corporate identity and logo to be implemented in 2006, together with guidelines for their use across all on- and off-line publications will promote this integration

C. Foster coherent risk communications in the Community and strengthen collaboration and co-ordination with the European Commission, Member States and stakeholders in the development and dissemination of messages

80. A key mechanism for enhancing collaboration in risk communications between EFSA and Member States is the Advisory Forum Communications Working Group. This forum provides opportunity for exchange of information and is a basis for co-ordination of communications activities between the national authorities and EFSA. The group also strives to develop best practices in risk communications and share learning from past experiences through the evaluation of communications initiatives and campaigns carried out by the Authority and/or national agencies. Risk communications training, initiated in 2005 will be pursued in 2006 and 2007.

81. Timely and effective communications during emerging risks is another key priority. Building on work commenced in 2005 and progressed in 2006, the group will further identify crisis communications requirements and define more effective strategies for collaboration in times of emerging communications issues and/or crises. Further development of the Advisory Forum extranet and other communications tools such as video web conferencing will also continue to play an important role in 2007.

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82. EFSA will seek to strengthen ties and collaboration with EU partners in risk communications (national authorities, DG SANCO, DG RTD, EU agencies ...) among others through participation in networks of excellence, joint projects, liaison between press officers of the respective institutions etc ...

83. Liaison on communication issues with stakeholders and notably dialogue through the Stakeholder Consultative Platform will also provide valuable input to further development of EFSA's risk communications activities.

D. Continue to improve usability of the EFSA web site and delivery of information through the web

82. By 2007 the EFSA website will have undergone a complete redesign in terms of navigation, "look and feel" and content. While during 2007 work on some of these aspects, specifically additions of new types of content, will continue, the emphasis during the year will be on projects that complement the site and use of the power of the Web to deliver information more effectively and promote dialogue and communications with users. The overall budget context will necessarily be taken into account in order to maximise available resources.

83. In 2007, EFSA will seek to improve delivery of information to its users for instance by developing a fully electronic newsletter (to ensure that important news can be highlighted and delivered quickly) and applications that pro-actively alert users to new information on the website or to deliver such information directly to them (eg alerts to mobile phones).

84. EFSA will seek to better serve its users by customising information delivered according to user profiles. A log-in area could be created for frequent users so that content on the first web page can be tailored to their profile and/or particular

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interests (for instance, users with a special interest in Nutrition could be presented a page configured to show the latest risk assessments, press releases, conferences etc...).

85. EFSA also intends to provide multi-media content in 2007 which would allow users to access audio and video clips (eg speeches and interviews), an image library (with photos of management and key events) and presentations given by EFSA staff.

86. Depending on budget availability, EFSA will also engage in initiatives to further develop awareness of the Authority's website. EFSA will ensure that all relevant partners are cross-linking to the Authority's website; will pursue a project to enhance indexing of EFSA web pages by search engines and directories; and where return on investment can be demonstrated, could undertake media promotion activities to attract new users (for instance, banners from online newspapers and specialised press linking to the EFSA website).

E. Evaluate impact and effectiveness of risk communications activities amongst key target audiences

87. Whilst evaluation of communications activities is critical to the development of effective strategies and programmes, EFSA may need to reduce and/or cut activities listed hereunder based on available resources.

- Media monitoring and analysis
- Web statistics package (to track online use of information and help set communications targets)
- Annual Review on Risk Communications (overseen by the Advisory Group on Risk Communications)

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- Media audit
- Consumer perception research (qualitative research via focus groups; develop protocol for further quantitative research across the EU)

**VI Collaboration with EFSA's Institutional, International and
Stakeholder partners**

Institutional Collaboration

84. EFSA will ensure its presence in the discussions in the relevant committees of the European Parliament and in particular the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety and Budget and Budgetary Control Committees. In this respect EFSA will ensure that its officials at all levels are available to provide Members of the European Parliament with scientific input relevant to the discussions at the main EP committees as well as any background information needed to help to conduct budgetary discussions that might have an impact on the Authority's budgetary resources.
85. During 2007, and dependant on available budget EFSA will organise in the Parliament a Food Safety week in order to provide information to the European Parliament on EFSA's activities and food safety matters in general thus raising the profile of EFSA within the European Parliament.
86. During 2007 EFSA will also invite members of the European Parliament to visit EFSA to provide insight into EFSA's work that is relevant for the European Parliament. The Authority represented by the Executive Director will arrange to be able to present its Management Plan 2007 before the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee and to be able to respond to any questions by MEPs.
87. The Authority will continue to participate in the meetings of the European Commission's standing committees on relevant topics to EFSA. Close contacts with representatives from the Commission will continue to be important at all levels of EFSA. Liaison with the Commission will continue to be a top priority to ensure a seamless interface between risk assessment and risk management activities and to ensure close collaboration on risk communication.

88. The Authority will also continue to offer assistance to the European Commission's services in the international arena when required and will formalise agreement on the procedures for involving EFSA in this respect. Equally, the relations with the Council of Ministers and with the country hosting the Presidency of the Council will be consolidated.

Accession Countries

89. The budget available for the pre-accession programmes of EFSA is provided to EFSA from a different part of the Community budget to the rest of EFSA's funding and is as such ring fenced. Therefore EFSA's activities in this area would be unaffected by the budget restrictions flagged up in paragraph 19. At the beginning of 2007 Romania and Bulgaria will accede to the European Community. The close collaboration forged during the PHARE project of 2005 – 2006, "Progress towards accession: Strengthening the food safety systems in Bulgaria and Romania", should enable both countries to integrate fully into the work of EFSA from the beginning of 2007.

90. During 2006 work started on implementing the pre-accession aid programme with Croatia and Turkey. Also ring fenced, the specific budget allocated to ESFA will provide for ESFA to develop, promote and facilitate an understanding of the mandate and role of EFSA. The programme will be aimed at : a) an exchange of scientific and technical expertise and legal regulatory affairs information, b) preparation of the relevant bodies in Croatia and Turkey, active in the fields related to the work of EFSA, c) inclusion of Croatia and Turkey in crisis co-ordination exercises with EFSA and the development of appropriate crisis information exchange infrastructure, d) the creation of communication and information exchange systems to support Croatia and Turkey in their communication activities, e) transfer of knowledge on methodologies, in particular on risk assessment and data collection. In this respect a number of workshops and seminars are planned between EFSA and

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these countries on *inter alia*: risk assessment, BSE/TSE, data collection, zoonoses, communication in a crisis, the involvement of stakeholders. During 2006 EFSA will also look into the possibilities for including a wider Europe into the work on Food Safety. Primarily EFSA will focus on the possibilities for a specific programme in the CARDS Programme for Western Balkan and for EFSA to be included in the European Neighbourhood Policy initiative.

Other EU Agencies

91. As an EU Agency EFSA will continue to participate in joint meetings and collaboration with its Agency counterparts in order to develop better the joint understandings of Agency policies with the objective of benefiting from shared experience and initiatives e.g. in relation to the application of staff regulations and other human resources policies in EU agencies.

92. EFSA has the closest links with ECDC, EMEA and EEA agencies. In particular joint initiatives with ECDC on zoonoses and on diseases such as Avian Influenza will continue to be fostered to ensure that both agencies benefit from exchanges of data and information within their fields of competence and that indeed there is no duplication of effort.

International activities

93. EFSA will increase its activities in relation to the collaboration and co-operation with international bodies operating in the same areas as EFSA through working jointly on projects of mutual relevance and benefit. Co-operation with International Organisations (WHO, FAO, Codex Alimentarius, OIE, OECD etc) operating in the areas covered by EFSA will further be developed in 2007 through EFSA's International Relations Strategy, adopted in 2006. In particular EFSA will work to develop further formalised agreements on data and information exchanges so as to provide a secure and mutually understood basis for such exchanges.

94. In the international arena EFSA will increase its profile by participation in expert and other scientific meetings. In addition, EFSA will be available to assist in a more concrete manner the Commission in international fora by providing technical and scientific input where needed into the development Community positions and by assisting on request the Commission where appropriate with the meetings themselves.
95. In 2006, EFSA will continue to meet with international including third country authorities to explore where exchanges could be appropriate. Meetings will be arranged during 2007 between EFSA and third country and international bodies operating in EFSA's field to build on these experiences. EFSA will continue to explore the possibilities of further utilising the outcomes of work already undertaken by JECFA, JMPR, JEMRA and other international scientific committees while ensuring that the quality of EFSA's opinions and its scientific independence are fully upheld. EFSA will also continue to consider its input to calls for data for these committees and how in other ways mutual assistance can be developed.
96. The Authority will also increase its visibility in the international arena in relation to third countries. It will pursue further development of the strong links forged with partner organisations in third countries e.g. US-FDA, Health Canada, FSANZ, Japanese Food Authority, the Chinese Ministry of Health etc. A series of meetings will be held at the highest level with FDA, USDA Health Canada, and other third country authorities to reach agreement on the basic principles underpinning mutual work exchanges and collaboration.
97. EFSA will continue its practice of pre-notifying international and key third country authorities of its findings. This has proven mutually beneficial in dealing with sensitive matters and has thus promoted trust between EFSA and

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its international partners. This will be continued in 2007 and EFSA will seek practical ways to improve such exchanges through meetings and discussions.

Stakeholder Partners

98. EFSA will continue to engage in dialogue with its stakeholders through public consultations, technical meeting, bilateral meetings, meetings of the Stakeholder Consultative Platform (if supported by the Board in 2006), the Annual Colloque and other meetings as necessary to EFSA overall policy of openness and transparency and in the context of the Community policies on governance. With this exchange EFSA wants to continue to build consumer confidence in the food chain in Europe, to involve interested parties in its work and to guarantee that it continues to function in line with the expectations of stakeholders. EFSA stakeholder activities are not resource intensive and therefore should not be too unduly affected by resource restrictions

99. Work initiated in 2006 on the criteria for public consultations will be further enhanced through the Scientific Committee, EFSA internal experts, the Stakeholder Consultative Platform and with the involvement of interested parties in the process of developing criteria for public consultation. The objective is to ensure that the consultation process is streamlined and undertaken in a transparent and well understood manner. The guidance would also assist Scientific Committee and Panels in selecting suitable matters for consultation and the most appropriate method to use.

Relations with the Parma and other Italian Authorities

100. The close collaboration between EFSA and Italian authorities created in 2005 and expanded in 2006 will continue to be developed in 2007 via bilateral meetings with municipal, provincial, regional and national authorities as well as institutions and via meetings of the EFSA Liaison Committee. The EFSA Liaison Committee was established in 2005 and aims at ensuring EFSA's

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continued integration into Parma to the mutual benefit of ESFA and its staff and the local authorities and citizens in Parma.

Annex I

Legislation in force relevant to EFSA and legislation in preparation likely to impact on EFSA in 2007

I - Legislation in force

EFSA Founding Regulation

Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety (OJ L 31, 1.2.2002, p.1) as amended.

Implementing measures of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002

Commission Regulation (EC) No 1304/2003 of 11 July 2003 on the procedure applied by the European Food Safety Authority to requests for scientific opinions referred to it (OJ L 185, 24.07.2003, p. 6).

Commission Regulation (EC) No 2230/2004 of 23 December 2004 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of article 36 of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 with regard to the network of organisations operating in the fields within the European Food Safety Authority's mission (OJ L 379, 24.12.2004, p. 64).

Genetically Modified Organisms

Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 September 2003 on genetically modified food and feed (OJ L 268, 18.10.2003, p.1)

Directive 2001/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 March 2001 on the deliberate release into the environment of genetically modified organisms and repealing Council Directive 90/220/EEC. OJ L106, 17.04.2001, p.1-39.

Commission Regulation (EC) 641/2004 of 6 April 2004 on detailed rules for the implementation of Regulation (EC) 1829/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the application for the authorisation of new genetically modified food and feed, the notification of existing products and adventitious or technically unavoidable presence of genetically modified material which has benefited from a favourable risk evaluation.

Pesticides

Council Directive 91/414/EEC of 15 July 1991 concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market (OJ L 230, 19.08.1991, p. 1-32) as amended

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Commission Regulation (EC) No 451/2000 of 28 February 2000 laying down further detailed rules for the implementation of the second and third stage of the programme of work referred to in article 8(2) of Council Directive 91/414/EEC (OJ L 55, 29.02.2000, p. 25)

Commission Regulation (EC) No 1490/2002 of 14 August 2002 laying down further detailed rules for the implementation of the third stage of the programme of work referred to in article 8(2) of Council Directive 91/414/EEC and amending Regulation (EC) No 451/2000 (OJ L 224, 21.08.2002, p. 23)

Commission Regulation (EC) No 2229/2004 of 3 December 2004 laying down further work further detailed rules for the implementation of the fourth stage of the programme of work referred to in article 8(2) of Council Directive 91/414/EEC (OJ L 379, 24.12.2004, p. 13)

Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 February 2005 on maximum residue levels of pesticides in or on food and feed of plant and animal origin and amending Council Directive 91/414/EEC (OJ L 70, 16.3.2005, p.1)

Plant Health

Council Directive 2000/29/EC of 8 May 2000, as amended by Directive 2006/14/EC of 6 February 2006, on protective measures against introduction into the Community of organisms harmful to plant or plant products and their spread within the Community (OJ L 169, 10.07.2000 p. 1) amended by Council Directives 2003/116/EC (OJ L 321, 6.12.2003) and 2004/31/EC (OJ L 85, 17.03.2004)

Animal nutrition

Regulation (EC) No 1831/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council on additives for use in animal nutrition (OJ L 268, 18.10.2003, p. 29)

Animal Health

Directive 2003/65/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 July 2003 amending Council Directive 86/609/EEC on the approximation of laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States regarding the protection of animals used for experimental and other scientific purposes (OJ L 230, 16/09/2003, p. 32)

Council Directive 2003/85/EC of 29 September 2003 on Community measures for the control of foot-and-mouth disease repealing Directive 85/511/EEC and Decisions 89/531/EEC and 91/665/EEC and amending Directive 92/46/EEC (OJ L 306, 22/11/2003, p. 1)

Council Directive 91/629/EEC of 19 November 1991 laying down minimum standards for the protection of calves (OJ L 340, 11.12.1991, p. 28). Article 6 requires not later than by 1 January 2006 a Commission report to the Council drawn up on the basis of

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an scientific opinion on the intensive farming system (s) which comply with the requirements of the well-being.

Flavourings

Regulation (EC) No 2065/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 November 2003 on smoke flavourings used or intended for use in or on foods (OJ L 309 of 26.11.2003).

Council Directive 88/388/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to flavourings for use in foodstuffs and to source materials for their production (OJ L 184, 15.7.1988, p. 61), as amended.

Food Additives

Council Directive 89/107/EEC of 21 December 1988 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States concerning food additives authorised for use in foodstuffs intended for human consumption, (OJ L 40, 11.2.1989, p. 27), as amended.

Directive 94/36/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council 30 June 1994 on colours for use in foodstuffs; (OJ L 237, 10/09/1994 P. 0013), as amended.

Directive 94/35/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 June 1994 on sweeteners for use in foodstuffs (OJ L 237, 10.9.1994, p. 3), as amended.

Directive 95/2/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 February 1995, on food additives other than colours and sweeteners, (OJ L 61, 18.3.1995, p. 1), as amended.

Food supplements

Directive 2002/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of the 10 June 2002 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to food supplements (OJ L 183, 12.7.2003, p. 51)

Food contact materials

Regulation (EC) No 1935/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 October 2004 on materials and articles intended to come into contact with food and repealing Directive 80/590/EEC and 89/109/EEC (OJ L 338, 13.11.2004, p. 4)

Food labelling

Directive 2000/13/EC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs (OJ L 109, 6.5.2000, p.29), as amended by Directive 2003/89/EC of 10 November 2003 amending Directive 2000/13/EC as regards indication of the ingredients present in foodstuffs (OJ L 308, 25.11.2005, p. 15).

Zoonoses

Directive 2003/99/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 November 2003 on the monitoring of zoonoses and zoonotic agents, amending Council Decision 90/424/EEC and repealing Council Directive 92/117/EEC (OJ L 235, 12.12.2003, p. 31)

Regulation (EC) no 2160/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the control of salmonella and other specified food-borne zoonotic agents (OJ L 325, 12.12.2003, p. 1)

Novel Foods

Regulation (EC) No 258/97 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 January 1997 concerning novel foods and novel food ingredients (Official Journal L 43 , 14/02/1997 P.1)

Infant formulae

Commission Directive 91/321/EEC of 14 May 1991 on infant formulae and follow-on formulae (Official Journal L175, 04/07/1991 p. 35)

II - Legislation in preparation likely to impact on EFSA in 2007

Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on nutrition and health claims made on foods (COM (2003) 424 final, COD 2003/0165, adopted by the Commission on 16 July 2003 .) On the 19.01.2006 the European Parliament received the Common Position of the Council, awaiting 2nd reading by the European Parliament)

Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the addition of vitamins and minerals and of certain other substances to foods (COM (2003) 671 final, COD 2003/0262, adopted by the Commission on 10 November 2003 (on the 19.01.2006 the European Parliament received the Common Position of the Council. Awaiting 2nd reading by the European Parliament)

Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and the Council amending Directive 95/2/EC on food additives other than colours and sweeteners and Directive 94/35/EC on sweeteners for use in foodstuffs (COM (2204) 650 final, COD 2004/0237, adopted by the Commission on 11 October 2004 (on the 26.10.2005: Commission's position on European Parliament's amendments at first reading. Awaiting position of the Council on the amendments of the European Parliament at 1st reading).

Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH), establishing a European Chemicals Agency and amending Directive 1999/45/EC and

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Regulation (EC) on Persistent Organic Pollutants (COM (2003) 644 final, COD 2003/0256, adopted by the Commission on 29 October 2003 (on the 13.12.2006: Political Agreement on Common Position of the Council. Awaiting the adoption of the Common Position by the Council).

Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the application of the provisions of the Århus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in the Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters to EC institutions and bodies (COM (2003) 622 final, COD 2003/0242), adopted by the Commission on 24.10.2003 (on the 12.02.2006: transmission to the Council and to the European Parliament of the Commission's position on the EP amendments at 2nd reading. Awaiting the 2nd reading by the Council.