



European Food Safety Authority

Adopted Minutes of the Management Board Meeting 23 January 2007 Palazzo Ducale, Parma

Members of the Management Board present

- Diána Bánáti
- Giorgio Calabrese
- Peter Gaemelke
- Marion Guillou
- Matthias Horst
- Joao Machado
- Robert Madelin
- Pirkko Raunemaa
- Bart Sangster
- Roland Vaxelaire
- Patrick Wall

Professor Vittorio Silano, Chair of the Scientific Committee of EFSA

Staff of the European Food Safety Authority present

- Antoine Cuvillier
- Catherine Geslain Lanéelle
- Herman Koeter
- Djien Liem
- Christine Majewski
- Alexandrine Maviel-Sonet
- Francois Monnart
- Lionel Rigaux
- Ingela Soderlund

PUBLIC SESSION

Preliminary Formalities

Patrick Wall opened the meeting by welcoming the Board Members, Professor Silano, the Authority's staff and the viewers on the web. The Chair asked if members wished to make any declarations of interest for any agenda items beyond those already made in the annual declarations of interest. Apologies had been received from Konstantinos Yazitzoglou, Deirdre Hutton and Marianne Elvander.

1. Adoption of Agenda (Document MB 23.01.2007 -1)

- 1.1 The Chair asked the Members of the Management Board if there were any changes or additions they would like to make.
- 1.2 No items were added to the agenda. The agenda was adopted.

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2. Adoption of draft minutes of the previous meeting and matter arising from the minutes (Document MB 23.01.2007 - 2)

- 2.1 The minutes of 19 December 2006 were adopted and would be published on the Authority's website.
- 2.2 No matters at the meeting had been carried over from the December Board meeting.

3. For adoption: Management Plan 2007 (Document MB 23.01.2007 - 3)

- 3.1 The Chair invited the Head of External Relations to update the Management Board on the changes made to the Management Plan since the previous meeting.
- 3.2 The Head of External Relations pointed out that the main changes that were made reflected the fact that the Board had adopted a change to the budget at its December meeting to include the €4.1 million from the positive outturn. Some minor editorial changes were made to explain in paragraph 20 what the continuous Management Plan was, changes suggested to the scientific parts on New Harmonised Risk Assessment methods in paragraph 67, looking at developing close links to the RTD of the Commission and its development of the Framework programmes. The Board had further suggested changes to paragraph 74 to put emphasis on emerging risk and better networking with the other European organisations and agencies and the World Level organisations and agencies that are looking at areas within EFSA's remit. A reference had been added in paragraph 79 on REACH, the new regulation which establishes the European Chemical Agency and the synergy of work between EFSA and this new agency. Finally, some very minor changes on the communications part in paragraph 107 and 110 had been made which were of mainly an editorial nature.
- 3.3 The Chair welcomed the work described in the plan that would be carried out by the Authority in the area of nano-particles. One Board member asked for clarification to ensure that the text in the plan referring to the work on nano-particles was referring to the setting up of a method of risk assessment and not that EFSA would be carrying out risk assessment of specific products. This was confirmed by the Executive Director.
- 3.4 The Board congratulated the Authority on the quality of the plan. A Board member asked for a figure in the establishment plan to be explained and reminded EFSA an Executive Summary of the plan would be necessary. The Executive Director said that figures in the Establishment Plan would be double checked and promised to provide an Executive Summary in February, together with an updated version of the PowerPoint presentation of EFSA.
- 3.5 The Board adopted the Management Plan.

4. For adoption: Supplementary and Amending budget (Document MB 23.01.2007 - 4)

- 4.1 The Head of Finance introduced the point, explaining that the supplementary amending budget proposed for adoption contained two parts. The first part concerned the pre-accession programme which runs during both 2006 and 2007. For the portion which was not utilised in 2006 under the pre-accession programme, the Authority was requesting the Board to make this portion, some 545,000 € available in 2007. The preliminary draft budget that the Board had adopted provisionally in March 2006 had now gone through the EU budgetary procedure and been adopted by the Council and European Parliament. This was the first part of the supplementary amending budget proposal.
- 4.2 The preliminary draft budget that the Board had adopted provisionally in March 2006 had now gone through the EU budgetary procedure and the Board had adopted this in March. The supplementary amending budget proposal before the Board was to fine tune what had been adopted in December by the Board
- 4.3 The second part of the document concerned the integration of the positive outturn which the Board adopted during the Management Board Meeting in December. The way the positive outturn would be integrated into the Budget 2007 would be through splitting the full amount between title 1 and 2 on the one hand, and title 3 on the other hand. The main change compared to the December version was the reduction of the outturn integrated in title 3 and an increase in title 1 and 2. Finally two technical corrections were needed for having the budget fitting with the budgetary authority approval and these were detailed in the document and in the table attached.
- 4.4 The Board adopted the document.

5. For adoption: Replacing experts on panels (Document MB 23.01.2007 - 5)

- 5.1 The Director of Science introduced the point. One member of the Panel on Animal Health and Welfare who had accepted membership was no longer available as a panel member. Therefore the Secretariat proposed that another expert should be nominated to the Panel and asked the Management Board for its approval.
- 5.2 The Panel on Scientific Products, Nutrition and Allergies panel had only 17 members. Now that the work load was better known it was proposed to add two experts from the reserve list. The panel considered that for other expertise that it would need, that expertise was not available among the profiles of experts on the existing reserve list. The panel would therefore in future propose to launch a dedicated call for expertise in those particular areas of nutritional profile in order to fill the panel up to 21. In summary the proposal was to add two members and to later make a dedicated call for two additional members to fill the panel up to 21.
- 5.3 Several Board members expressed an interest to know more about what EFSA had done to publicise the calls for Panels in Europe 27. It was suggested that EFSA could do better in capturing the interest of recently joined Member States. The Director of Science confirmed that the purpose of the call that EFSA would like to launch would be to try to reach those experts that EFSA did not

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reach the first time around. The Chair added that it was important that EFSA was as inclusive as possible and made every effort to that purpose.

- 5.4 Professor Silano drew the attention of the Management Board to a request from the Scientific Committee to have more experts in human medicine.
- 5.5 A Board member suggested that EFSA should make Professor Silano and the Chair available to visit new member states and speak to their national authorities, especially to some of the centres of excellence and universities there. The member suggested that scientific colleagues at the universities had heard that EFSA existed but assumed that the scientists who had applied and had been taken on by EFSA already filled up all reserve lists.
- 5.6 The Executive Director agreed that the point raised by several members of the Management Board was very important and reminded the Board that, in the Work Plan, EFSA had mentioned a number of actions that it would need to take in 2007 and in the following years to increase the awareness of EFSA in the newer Member States and to ensure a stronger involvement of the newer Member States in EFSA's activities. She added that this point had already been addressed with members of the Advisory Forum, who had made several positive suggestions about EFSA working more closely with national agencies, also in the field of training.
- 5.7 She stressed that EFSA already had seconded national experts coming from these Member States and would seek to encourage more to come and work at EFSA. To accomplish this EFSA would send a letter to all Member States with a particular focus on the newer Member States so that EFSA could welcome more seconded national experts in EFSA. Finally she indicated to the Board her intention to visit all the newer Member States to have a specific discussion with national interest agencies and national authorities and their experts to see how EFSA could involve the newer Member States in EFSA's activities to a larger extent.
- 5.8 The Board agreed to ask the Executive to keep the Board informed about proposals and progress.

6. Discussion: List of competent organisations under Article 36

- 6.1 The Chair raised the subject of EFSA's ability to use the opportunity laid down in article 36 of the founding regulation to assign work to a range of competent organisations throughout the EU capable of assisting EFSA. The list had been agreed at the December Board Meeting where several Board members had expressed interest in the cover note that would be published on the EFSA website to explain the basis for the list.
- 6.2 The Executive Director introduced the discussion about the cover note by seeking views from the Board on whether the cover note should also include information about the fact that an organisation is listed does not allow this organisation to use that to advertise itself, the fact that being on the list would not necessarily mean that tasks would be allocated to an organisation. The Board was informed that in addition to the covernote for the web there would also be a letter sent to the Member States to inform them of the content of the list, of the bodies that had been included. EFSA also should state that because an organisation was not on the list this did not mean that it could not apply to do complementary work for EFSA.

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- 6.3 Board members suggested that EFSA needed to have a procedure to decide how it would remove or add organisations to the list. Board members saw the need to stipulate this on the website in a communication published alongside the list of organisations. A Board member also asked for the list to be updated soon.
- 6.4 The Chair underlined the fact that the list should not be considered a static list and would be updated on an ongoing basis. A Board member asked for this to be stated clearly on the website. One member added that it was necessary to state that the list would be open to those institutes that live up to the standards and the quality required by EFSA.
- 6.5 The Chair reminded the Board that the list had been drawn up on the basis of institutions and bodies that were nominated by the Member States. EFSA had not itself nominated any organisations. The list could be updated.
- 6.6 A Board member suggested that EFSA needed to be more compliant with the text in paragraph 2 of article 36 where it referred not to institutions but to tasks that could be considered by the Authority for scientific co-operation. Therefore the various organisations or institutions should be chosen for the subjects areas or tasks in which they carried out their research and work in order to be chosen for cooperation with EFSA.
- 6.5 The Executive Director apologised to the public because the the cover note for the web was not yet publicly available and therefore it may be difficult to follow the discussion in detail. The Cover Note would soon be available to the once the input from the Board had been included. It would be made clear in the cover note that being on the list should not be used by an organisation for the purpose of gaining commercial advantage. She added that it would also be clarified in the cover note that this was a first list that would be updated on the basis of EFSA's future experiences and needs.

7. Adoption of Document “Replacing experts on Panels” (Document MB 23.01.2007 - 5)

- 7.1 The Executive Director asked the Chair to confirm the appointment of the experts to the AHAW and NDA panels, which had already been discussed under point 5. The Board adopted the document.

8. For discussion: General Report on the Authority's activities in 2006 (Document MB 23.01.2007 -6)

- 8.1 The Head of External Relations introduced the outline of the general report on the Authority's activities in 2006, In previous years, EFSA had produced only one document, an Annual Report. In the Annual Report EFSA had included subjects which traditionally figure in an Annual Activity Report, a document that EFSA was legally obliged to produce. With EFSA's new approach to both the management plan, the budget and the activity report, it had been decided to split the Annual Report and the Annual Activity Report into two documents. EFSA would continue to produce an Annual Report in order to communicate the Authority's objectives, priorities and highlights of

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results achieved. In addition EFSA would produce the Annual Activity Report which would reflect the expenditure, the resources that EFSA had utilised to support the activities as listed in the management plan for that year and how EFSA had reached its objectives during the year. In March 2007 the Annual Activity Report would be presented to the Board. It would be more formalistic and better reflect EFSA's activity related budgeting and spending.

- 8.2 The Board welcomed the approach to the Annual Activity Report being produced as a separate document. One Board member asked for the list of contents to be made clearer to highlight performance indicators. Another member asked for the reference to "authorisations" in Chapter 22 to be removed given EFSA's role as risk assessor.
- 8.3 The Board asked for a clarification about a new EFSA Panel that had been set up and was not mentioned in the list of contents. The Board suggested that the report should be used to promote a better understanding of how EFSA carries out its work, from the time that a question is received until the final opinion and public announcement of conclusions. Finally a Board member asked for the relationships with different stakeholders to be made clearer and more visible in the document. The Head of External Relations replied that that information would probably be better suited for the Annual Report.
- 8.4 The Director of the Communications Department reported on the progress of the Annual Report. The aim was to have a document available in English by the end of March. Once the draft text had been reviewed internally, it would be shared with the Board. The Annual Report would highlight EFSA's work, the priorities and the recommendations determined by the Board following EFSA's evaluation.
- 8.5 The Board took note of the document.

9. For information: Progress Report (Document MB 23.01.2007 -7)

- 9.1 The Executive Director introduced the Report on EFSA's progress since the last Board meeting. She highlighted the work on the two bluetongue mandates EFSA had received from Commission Services. In addition to the weekly report EFSA publishes on its website on the epidemiological situation in the European Union, EFSA had started to work with the member states to make an analysis of all the epidemiological data EFSA had received and would be able to provide Commission and member states with a report at the end of March. EFSA was cooperating with research institutes in France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany to carry out its mission.
- 9.2 The Executive Director reported on the first meeting of the EU Food Consumption database managers to complete a European database on food consumption. A public consultation to seek comments from the public on the Qualified Presumption of Safety as a tool for risk assessment with regard to micro organisms had been launched. EFSA would like to develop that tool in the next few months as a way to have EFSA more transparent and open and also to be able to ensure that EFSA has access to the best scientific available data. EFSA would organise a scientific conference on nutrition claims to follow up the Bologna conference to provide some scientific input to the NDA Panel with regard to its future work in this area.

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- 9.3 The Executive Director had recently visited Berlin where she had met both with the German risk assessment body, BFR and with risk managers. She had met with the State Secretary in charge of food safety and also with the General Director for food, to discuss the common subjects in the context of the German Presidency, with the European Organisation of Consumers (BEUC) and with the Japanese Food Safety Commission, a meeting where EFSA decided to develop further collaboration, in particular in terms of exchange of data, but also with regard to the area of risk perception and risk communication. Herman Koëter had visited Hong Kong with Patrick Wall, where they had participated at the inauguration of the Hong Kong Centre for Food Safety.
- 9.4 On communication the Executive Director highlighted that there would be an update of the EFSA logo, and the plan was to have a redesigned website by summer. In the area of human resources, EFSA had continued to make progress on the internal organisation and on data reporting.
- 9.5 The Board, after observing that 19 nationalities out of 27 are represented in the Authority, took note of the document.

10. Budget Transfers – for information (Document MB 23.01.2007 -8)

- 10.1 The Chair stated that EFSA is legally obliged to report transfers made in the budget to the Board.
- 10.2 The Head of Finance explained the amount of transfers made to the Board and drew the Board's attention to that the figure was only slightly higher than the one presented to the Board in December, some 6, 04%.
- 10.3 The Board noted the document.

11. For information: Execution of the 2006 Budget (Document MB 23.01.2007 -9)

- 11.1 The Chair asked the Head of Finance to introduce agenda point 9, the execution of the Budget 2006, to the Board.
- 11.2 The Head of Finance informed the Board that the execution of the budget would amount to some 90 per cent of the budget, significantly higher than the 2005 execution of 80 %.
- 11.3 The Chair explained that recruitment had not been as rapid as anticipated. He stressed that the personal expenditures and title two infrastructures had been fairly well executed above 95%. For title III the execution rate was 80% which was partly to be explained still by the under-recruitment which would be addressed in 2007.
- 11.4 The Board took note of the document.

12. Any other business

- 12.1 The Chair introduced the discussion. Several suggestions were made for the subject of the 26 March Away Day. Board members expressed a wish to talk about the organising of the Management Board meetings during the year, the functioning of the Scientific Panels and emerging risks. It was suggested to have a short discussion on which international organisations with which EFSA could develop or improve cooperation in order to try to avoid overlap in

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collecting data or in performing risk assessment. Another idea was to map the degree of how well known EFSA is as an authority across the now enlarged European Union. Finally a member proposed that the Authority should think about how it could improve communication within the respective Member States and throughout the community, also outside the EU.

12.2 The Chair announced that one topic for discussion that day could also be fees. The Commission had launched a public consultation process on the feasibility and advisability of EFSA charging fees for some of its activities. This was an issue that would need to be discussed also on the day of the Board meeting, 27 March,

12.3 Members of the Board had expressed a wish to visit EFSA. It was agreed that the secretariat would get back to members with suggested dates.

13. Concluding remarks

13.1 The Chair thanked the members of the Board, the audience, the Authority's staff for the preparatory work, the interpreters, Professor Silano, the team responsible for the web streaming and closed the meeting