

Management Board
21 October 2010
Brussels

Subject :	Holding EFSA Management Board meetings in public	
Document number:	mb 21 10 10 - item 9 doc 7	
Submitted by :	Communications Directorate	
Document for :		Information
	X	Discussion
	X	Possible adoption

Holding EFSA Management Board meetings in public: a review of options

Executive summary

At the EFSA Management Board meeting in July 2010, EFSA was requested to review the available options for holding Management Board meetings in public. This document summarises possible options.

The Board is asked to consider and possibly endorse the recommendation provided by the document.

Holding EFSA Management Board meetings in public: a review of options

1. Introduction

EFSA's founding regulation ([Regulation \(EC\) No 178/2002](#)) stipulates that "The Management Board shall hold its meetings in public unless, acting on a proposal from the Executive Director, it decides otherwise for specific administrative points of its agenda, and may authorise consumer representatives or other interested parties to observe the proceedings of some of the Authority's activities." EFSA Management Board (MB) meetings are open to the public through pre-registration. In addition, EFSA extends the reach of the proceeding to a wider audience by webcasting MB meetings live and providing a video on-demand over the Internet.

EFSA has been asked by the MB to review the available options for holding MB meetings in public, tools available to broaden their public outreach, and their related costs.

2. Review of options and costs

	Cost €
Audiovisual webcast (live)	52,000
Audiovisual webcast (on-demand only)	42,800
Audio webcast/podcast (live)	20,000
Audio webcast/podcast (on-demand only)	10,800
Transcript	8,000 (estimate)
Minutes only (in EN/FR/DE/IT)	4,400 (estimate)

- In 2009, the reach of the **live webcast** ranged from 700 to 1300 viewers. After the meetings, between 1200 and 1500 viewers accessed the on-demand recordings. (A list of Management Board meetings webcasting views is available in Annex 1). Making available the video only "on demand" represents a 15%-20% saving in comparison with costs related to the live webcast.
- **Audio webcasting/podcast:** the audio format is not appropriate for events with large numbers of speakers since it becomes difficult or impossible for a listener to distinguish who makes which comments, even if the meeting is chaired. An audio webcast therefore would not allow users to follow the proceeding of such a meeting and decisions made by members.
- **Meeting transcripts** include all the details of the full discussions, and are fully searchable but would need significant and time-consuming editing.

- EFSA already produces **minutes** for the MB meetings; these are normally published within 8 weeks of the meeting. The process could be accelerated, making the English version available within 20 days, and the other three working languages' versions available within 6 weeks from the meeting.

3. Benchmarking

The research includes a review of the MB web pages of 43 other EU agencies, national food safety agencies, EU institutions, and other leading international organisations. Of the reviewed organisations:

- The majority publishes minutes of the MB meetings.
- None publishes transcripts or makes audio available from the MB meetings.
- Two provide webcasts from the MB meetings (EFSA and the UK FSA).

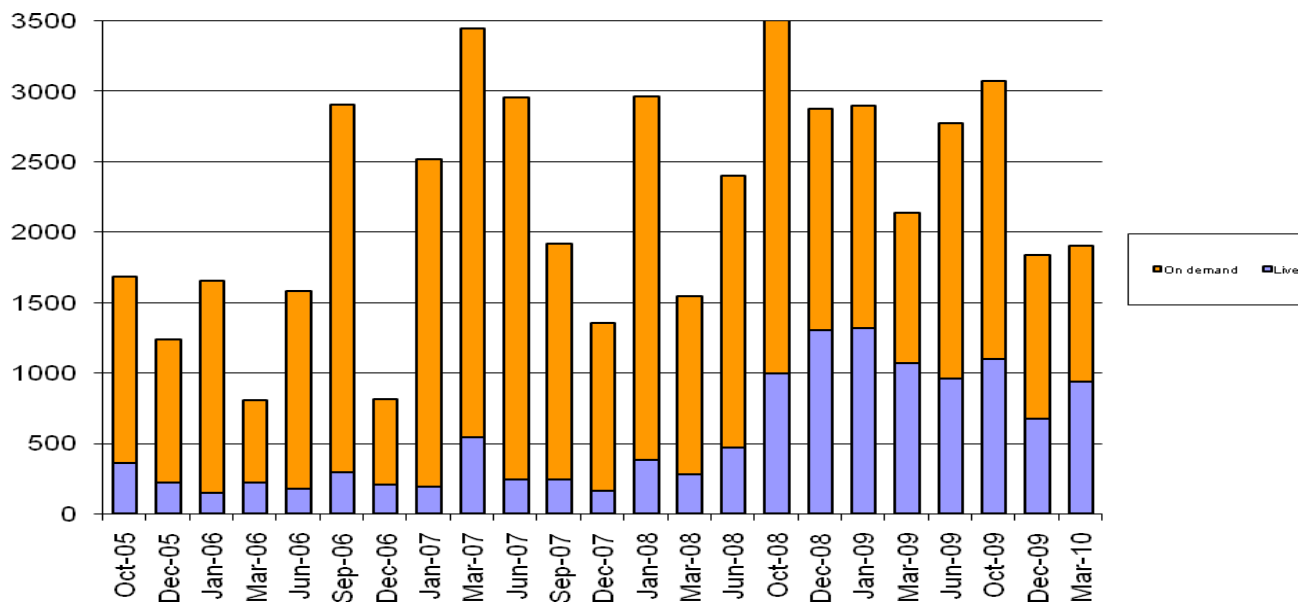
However, the webcast meetings of the UK FSA are mainly related to risk management activities and less so to management/administrative issues.

3. Recommendation

Webcasting of Management Board meetings ensures maximum transparency of proceedings for interested parties. In order to reduce costs, Board members may wish to consider making available the video only on demand (15-20% savings with a 24-hour delay for publication of video on EFSA website).

Should Board members wish to reduce costs further, EFSA recommends meeting minutes as the best alternative to webcasts in keeping interested parties informed of discussion and decisions made by EFSA's Management Board. This is based on a cost-benefit analysis and taking into account EFSA's financial resources overall.

Annex 1: Management Board meetings webcasting views



	Live views	On demand views	Total
October 2005	362	1321	1683
December 2005	226	1014	1240
January 2006	150	1510	1660
March 2006	225	583	808
June 2006	176	1405	1581
September 2006	297	2614	2911
December 2006	205	608	813
January 2007	197	2323	2520
March 2007	543	2908	3451
June 2007	245	2711	2956
September 2007	243	1674	1917
December 2007	162	1194	1356
January 2008	383	2581	2964
March 2008	283	1262	1545
June 2008	469	1937	2406
October 2008	996	2512	3508
December 2008	1308	1571	2879
January 2009	1318	1582	2900
March 2009	1070	1068	2138
June 2009	963	1815	2778
October 2009	1098	1981	3079
December 2009	678	1163	1841
March 2010	940	965	1905