

Management Board
20 October 2011
Parma

Subject :	EFSA's Executive Director Progress Report	
Document number:	mb 20 10 11 item 4 doc 3	
Submitted by :	Executive Office	
Document for :	X	Information
		Discussion
		Possible adoption

EFSA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PROGRESS REPORT

Executive Summary

The present report refers to the period from 1st June to 30th September, 2011.

Science Strategy and Coordination (SCISTRAT): EFSA has adopted two Scientific Opinions and three Scientific Opinions have been endorsed for public consultation. Two editorials have been published in the EFSA Journal. Five technical reports were published on EFSA's website.

Risk Assessment and Scientific Assistance (RASA): EFSA has adopted 13 Scientific Opinions and endorsed one Guidance Document for public consultation. Five scientific reports have been published in the EFSA Journal. Seven external reports, one technical and nine internal reports were produced. The 16th EFSA Scientific Colloquium on "Emerging risks in Plant Health: from plant pest interactions to global change" was held in Parma on 9 June.

During the STEC crisis, RASA provided full-time support in data collection, organisation and analysis of tracing information in the food supply chain. A joint EFSA/ECDC technical report on Shiga toxin/verotoxin-producing *E. coli* in humans, food and animals in the EU/EEA was published in June, with special reference to the German outbreak strain STEC O104.

Scientific Evaluation of Regulated Products (REPRO): EFSA has adopted 62 Scientific Opinions, four Scientific Statements, one Guidance Document, eight conclusions pesticide peer review and 32 reasoned opinions on MRLs. Two guidance documents have been endorsed for public consultation. One ESCO report, two scientific reports, seven technical reports and one external report have been produced.

All remaining Article 13 non-botanical claims were published in two series of opinions. The fifth series of opinions of 536 health claims covered in 73 opinions was published on 30 June 2011 and the sixth series of 35 health claims covered in 5 opinions was published on 28 July. Since 2009, the panel has assessed 2,758 general function claims. The so-called Article 13 botanical claims (1,548 claims) are still on hold.

The conclusion for the final re-submitted active substance will be adopted in 2011, and the peer review programmes will commence for the 56 pending new active substances, and the remaining 52 active substances of stage 4 of the review programme, for which EFSA should deliver its views by 31 December 2012.

Communications (COMMS): implementing a more thematic approach, EFSA has broadly communicated in the fields of GMO, Independence, Zoonoses and Agrofood innovation. EFSA dealt with 371 media queries and organised 36 interviews with the Executive Director and scientific staff and experts with media from across Europe. Close liaison with DG COMM enabled real-time redistribution of EFSA press releases, making EFSA news available instantly from the Commission's online Press Room. EFSA's *E. coli* activities were prominent on the Europa homepage. The web user survey received 5,426 responses over a period of 1 month, providing crucial insight into the demography, opinions and needs of website users.

EFSA received the visit of the Director-General of European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization (EPPO), Ringolds Arnitis, to discuss further collaboration between EFSA and EPPO. The Executive Director met with the Bulgarian Minister of Agriculture and Food Miroslav Naydenov, the Bulgarian Food Safety Agency (BFSA) and the Risk Assessment Centre to further strengthen collaboration between the Bulgarian authorities and EFSA. In the context of the regular contacts with the EU Presidencies of the EU, the Executive Director met the Polish Presidency and representatives of the Polish Chief Sanitary Inspectorate, in Warsaw.

Recent appointments at EFSA for management position

- Giovanni FUGA has been appointed as ad-interim Head of the Corporate Service Unit as of 1st of September
- Per BERGMAN has been appointed as acting Director of Scientific Evaluation of Regulated Products as of 1st of October
- Ermanno CAVALLI has been appointed as acting Head of IT and Operations Unit as of 1st of October
- Karine LHEUREUX has been appointed as Head of the Application Desk Unit as of 1st of October
- Hubert DELUYKER has been appointed as Director of Science Strategy and Coordination as of 16 October
- Mari ESKOLA has been appointed as acting Head of the CONTAM Unit as of 16 October
- Claudia HEPPNER has been appointed as acting Director of Scientific Evaluation of Regulated Products as of 16 October
- Alberto SPAGNOLLI has been appointed as Head of the Executive Office as of 16 October
- Alessia VECCHIO has been appointed as Head of Human Capital and Knowledge Management as of 1st of November

EFSA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PROGRESS REPORT

SCIENCE STRATEGY AND COORDINATION

Scientific Committee (SC)

At its June plenary, the Scientific Committee was presented with a review of current EFSA practices in environmental risk assessment (ERA) and endorsed the recommendations. The technical report was published on 22 September 2011.

The following draft opinions were endorsed by the Scientific Committee in June for public consultation, (1) the draft EFSA guidance on repeated-dose 90-day oral toxicity study on food/feed in rodents, adoption expected in November 2011; (2) the draft guidance on Default Values, adoption expected in December 2011; (3) the draft Opinion on Threshold of Toxicological Concern (TTC) adoption expected by the end of 2011.

The Scientific Committee opinion on Statistical Significance and Biological Relevance was adopted via written procedure on 10 September and published on 15 September 2011.

The Scientific Committee adopted the opinion on genotoxicity testing strategies on 13 September. The opinion will be published shortly along with a technical report of comments received during the public consultation.

Emerging Risks Unit (EMRISK)

EMRISK published two technical reports concerning crisis preparedness and response, and two technical reports concerning emerging risk identification. The former were (1) the 2010 annual report of EFSA's activities on crisis preparedness and response and (2) a report on the tracing of seeds in relation to the Shiga toxin-producing E. coli outbreaks in France and Germany. A third scientific report taking stock of the E. coli outbreak incident has been accepted and will be published shortly.

Concerning emerging risks, a report on strategies for data collection for emerging risk identification, and a report summarising Stakeholder activities on emerging risks were published.

One procurement for the construction of the EFSA hazard database has been successfully assigned. Two calls for procurement, one on the collection of consumption data on energy drinks and one on a study on the possible future applications of '-omics' technologies in risk assessment have been launched. The internal mandate for an internal task force to review approaches for addressing chemical mixtures has been approved.

Advisory Forum and Scientific Cooperation (AFSCO)

At the 41st Advisory Forum (AF) meeting, strategic discussions took place on EFSA's Science Strategy, data collection, risk communication guidelines, and the work of EFSA's Scientific Committee. The AF also discussed lessons learned from the recent E. coli outbreak. EFSA signed a new pre-accession programme, running from September 2011 to September 2013 and participated in a TAIEX workshop on animal health and welfare for the Mediterranean Neighbourhood countries in Brussels. For the upcoming Focal Point Meeting, discussion has been prepared on Article 36 List guidelines, dissemination of scientific information and requests from EFSA at national level, the Information Exchange Platform (IEP), and training courses through the Better Training for Safer Food (BTSF) programme. As part of promotion activities for the IEP, all Panels and Networks are being updated on the database. In order to gain oversight of available scientific expertise within EFSA, an in-house expertise database was launched in July 2011. This database was merged, with the EFSA Expert Database, into the Expert Support System during August 2011. In September, almost 2,900 experts were included in the EFSA Expert Database. Two editorials have been published in the EFSA Journal: one on Conclusions on Pesticides and another on the European Response to BSE: A Success Story. EFSA's 16th Scientific Colloquium - Emerging Risks in Plant Health: from plant pest interactions to global change took place on 9-10 June in Parma with over 100 participants from 31 countries.

RISK ASSESSMENT AND SCIENTIFIC ASSISTANCE

Panel on animal health and welfare (AHAW)

The AHAW Panel adopted three opinions: (1) Hatchery Waste as Animal By-products, (2) Meat Inspection of Domestic Swine and (3) Epizootic Ulcerative Syndrome (EUS). In addition, three external reports were published: (1) Methodologies for the Validation of Animal Based Indicators of Welfare, (2) Preparatory Work for the Future Development of Animal Based Measures for Assessing the Welfare of Pigs, and (3) Contribution of Meat Inspection to Animal Health Surveillance. A technical meeting with various industry observers, together with EC and FAO representatives, took place in June 2011 addressing the opinion on EUS.

In the coming months, the Panel will focus on the four mandates recently received on (1) Foot and Mouth Disease, (2) Swine Vesicular Disease and Vesicular Stomatitis, (3) Welfare of Broilers, and (4) Electrical Requirements for Waterbath Stunning Equipment for Poultry. In addition, the Panel will continue working on the meat inspection mandate for the remaining species. The 2nd AHAW Scientific Network meeting will be held in November 2011.

Panel on biological hazards (BIOHAZ)

The BIOHAZ Panel adopted six opinions: two on food hygiene, (Efficacy of lactic acid for the microbial decontamination of beef, and Resistance caused by bacterial strains producing cephalosporinases); two on food-borne zoonoses, (Parasites in wild caught fish from the Baltic Sea, and Public health impact of setting a new target for the reduction of Salmonella in broilers); one on Hatchery waste as animal by-products; and one on Public health hazards to be covered by inspection of swine meat, which was jointly adopted by the AHAW, BIOHAZ and CONTAM Panels (first opinion of a series of 6 on different animal species). In addition, the BIOHAZ Unit published a scientific report of EFSA following a request from the EC for urgent advice on the public health risk of Shiga-toxin producing *E. coli* in fresh vegetables.

The 5th meeting of the EFSA Scientific network for microbiological risk assessment was held on 15 June and was attended by 19 Member States and 3 candidate countries.

In the coming months, the Panel will focus on the three mandates recently received on (1) a bacteriophage (LISTEX P100) for the decontamination of raw fish from *Listeria monocytogenes*, (2) the Risk posed by Shiga toxin producing *E. coli* (STEC) and other pathogenic bacteria in seeds and sprouted seeds, and (3) the Assessment of the scientific elements supporting the prohibition of the placing on the market of GM potato EH92-527-1 for cultivation purposes in Austria (to be jointly adopted by the BIOHAZ and GMO Panels).

Panel on contaminants in the food chain (CONTAM)

The CONTAM Panel has adopted three opinions related to (1) hexabromocyclododecanes in food, (2) dioxins and dioxin-like Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in liver from sheep and deer, and (3) meat inspection of swine (in co-adoption with the BIOHAZ and AHAW Panels). One external report (output of an EFSA grant) on the toxicity of 3-MCPD esters was published. In the coming months the CONTAM Panel will focus on the recently received mandate in relation to mercury and methyl mercury in food.

Panel on plant health (PLH)

The PLH Panel adopted an opinion on solanaceous pospiviroids. The Panel also endorsed the draft guidance document on the environmental risk assessment of plant pests, which was subsequently launched for a public consultation.

The 16th EFSA Scientific Colloquium – Emerging risks in Plant Health: from plant pest interactions to global change was held in Parma on 9 June.

In the coming months, the PLH Panel will focus on the two mandates recently received on: (1) the phytosanitary risk of certain plants species and genera as regards the pine wood nematode, and (2) the risk to plant health posed by European versus non-European populations of the potato cyst nematode. In addition, the PLH Panel will continue to address the request concerning the export of Florida citrus fruit from the USA to the EU (citrus canker) and on the production of guidance for the evaluation of the effectiveness of risk reduction options.

Scientific assessment support Unit (SAS)

During the STEC crisis, SAS provided full-time support in data collection, organisation and analysis of tracing information in the food supply chain, first to the German STEC task force in Berlin (1 staff member) and then to the EFSA crisis team (3 staff members). In addition to the contributions to the writing of the STEC technical and scientific reports, eight internal reports were completed in the reporting period and delivered to: (1) GMO, in support of the Opinion on the Post-Market Environmental Monitoring of GM plants; (2-3-4) NUTRI, in support of i) the Health claim on collagen hydrolysate, ii) the draft Opinion on Melatonin, and iii) the application on Vitamin D; (5) AHAW in support of the opinion on public health hazards to be covered by meat inspection of Bovines; (6) CONTAM, in support of the Opinion on the presence of opium alkaloids in poppy seeds, and (7-8) PLH, in support of i) the Opinion related to the solanaceous pospiviroids and ii) the US request on export of citrus fruits to Europe. SAS was also responsible for the Scientific Committee working group on “Developing guidance for statistical approaches to assess adverse or biological relevant effects” and the first related opinion “Statistical significance and biological relevance” adopted by the Scientific Committee.

In the coming months, the unit will focus on the recently accepted internal mandates on 1) starting a Working Group on Guidelines for expert knowledge elicitation in food and feed safety risk assessment and 2) implementing three contracts on i) “Sentinel surveillance networks for adverse events in primary production”, ii) “Statistical support” and iii) “Training on systematic literature review for experts and staff”. In addition, SAS will finish 7 ongoing assistance requests for AHAW, NUTRI, PLH, PESTICIDES and SCOM and expects at least 7 additional assistance requests the next month (SCOM, AHAW, GMO, FEEDAP).

Dietary and chemical monitoring Unit (DCM)

A scientific report on monitoring of furan levels in food was published in September including an exposure assessment based on the around 5,000 sample results received and dietary information from the EFSA Comprehensive European Food Consumption database. One external report (grant under art. 36 cooperation) was submitted by Austria covering their pilot of electronic data submissions. One internal report was filed in relation to an assistance request from the CONTAM Panel covering an evaluation of exposure to hexabromocyclododecanes.

The Working Groups on “Total Diet Studies” and “Food Classification” both finished their respective tasks in August. The report on total diet studies is awaiting agreement from FAO and WHO, to be published jointly. The report on food classification will be published as soon as the accompanying tool to view the proposed system is finalised.

The Expert Group on Chemical Occurrence held its annual meeting in June. The first round of annual data submissions for chemical occurrence data was the main topic of discussion and the Expert Group issued a series of recommendations for simplifying the process.

In the coming months, the unit will focus on follow-up activities related to the recently concluded calls for updating the Comprehensive Food Consumption database and introduction of electronic submissions of contaminant data as well as on the implementation of the new food classification system across our data collections.

Biological monitoring Unit (BIOMO)

Two scientific reports of EFSA produced by the BIOMO unit were adopted: (1) report on statistical analysis of temporal and spatial trends of zoonotic agents in animals and food, part II, and (2) a report on harmonised epidemiological indicators for public health hazards to be covered by meat inspection of swine. The latter is closely connected to the opinion from BIOHAZ, CONTAM and AHAW panels on public health hazards to be covered by inspection of meat (swine). In June, the Unit published a joint EFSA/ECDC technical report with the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) on Shiga toxin/verotoxin-producing E. coli in humans, food and animals in the EU/EEA, with special reference to the German outbreak strain STEC O104. In addition, two external reports (final deliverables under procurement) were accepted: (1) on statistical analyses methods on antimicrobial resistance data and (2) on estimation of the relative contribution of different food and animal sources to human Salmonella infections in EU.

The Task Force on Zoonoses Data Collection met on 21-22 June, and a special Task Force meeting on IT issues related to reporting of data on zoonoses was held on 21-22 September.

mb 20 10 11 item 4 doc 3 - ED progress report

In the coming months, the unit will continue to work on the meat inspection mandate. The EU Summary reports on zoonoses, foodborne outbreaks and antimicrobial resistance data for the year 2010 will be finalised within the next six months in collaboration with ECDC.

SCIENTIFIC EVALUATION OF REGULATED PRODUCTS

Panel on food additives and nutrient sources added to food (ANS)

The renewal of the ANS Panel took place in July 2011. The Panel has adopted one scientific statement on the Safety of Calcium Lignosulfonate and one scientific opinion on Calcium Carbonate and the E320 Butylated hydroxyanisole (BHA). In addition, two scientific statements on the revised exposure assessment for Sunset Yellow FCF[®] and Calcium L-Ascorbate were issued.

In the coming months, the Panel will mainly focus on the re-evaluation of food additives in line with Regulation (EU) No 257/2010 setting up a programme for the re-evaluation of approved food additives in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008. In addition, it will continue the safety assessment of new food additive applications, safety assessment of nutrient sources, including nutritional substances for use in fortified food that are subject to national derogations according to Regulation (EC) No 1925/2006. The Panel is also developing guidance on submission for food additive evaluations, which is anticipated to be finalised in 2012.

Panel on food contact materials, enzymes, flavourings and processing aids (CEF)

In July 2011, the new CEF Panel had its inauguration meeting adjacent to the last meeting of the former CEF Panel. The former CEF Panel adopted ten scientific opinions on applications, belonging to the following: flavouring group evaluation (5); smoke flavouring (2); recycled plastics used in food contact (1); food contact materials (2). At the September plenary meeting, the new Panel adopted five scientific opinions on: flavourings (3) and food contact materials (2). The final report of the ESCO working group on "Non-plastic food contact materials" and the explanatory note for guidance on enzymes were published in July.

In the coming months, the CEF Panel will focus on the evaluation of plastic recycling processes and active and intelligent packaging materials. Another focus is the continuation of the re-evaluation of hundreds of flavouring substances, for which the outcome of the evaluation was that additional data were needed. The Panel will also work on the revision of the food contact material guidance which will be taken up in order to harmonise with other guidance documents already in place for applications within the CEF Panel remit.

Panel on additives and products or substances used in animal feed (FEEDAP)

The FEEDAP Panel adopted 24 scientific opinions on the authorisation of feed additives, belonging to the following additive categories: technological (15), zootechnical (5), nutritional (3) and sensory (1). The majority of the additives evaluated were applied as re-evaluation of feed additives (14 opinions). Most of these scientific opinions were based on micro-organisms to be used as silage additives. One of the scientific opinions dealt with an additive with an application of use as a mycotoxin binder. Both silage additives and mycotoxin binders are functional groups under the category "Technological additives" which were introduced with the Regulation (EC) No 1831/2003. The re-evaluation of feed additives remains one of the main working areas of the Panel.

Panel on genetically modified organisms (GMO)

The GMO Panel adopted seven scientific opinions on applications under Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003; one technical report on Post-Market Environmental Monitoring (PMEM) MON810 maize and one guidance document on "Update the 2006 Opinion of the GMO Panel on PMEM of GM plants". A public consultation on the draft guidance document on the "Risk assessment of food and feed from GM animals including animal health and welfare aspects" has been launched in August 2011. The GMO Unit published two technical reports on the public consultations on (1) Guidance document on PMEM; (2) Guidance document on risk assessment of GM microorganisms and their food and feed products; two technical reports on EFSA overall opinions on applications; one EFSA scientific report on the Evaluation of trial descriptions of strains of *Bacillus licheniformis* and *Aspergillus niger* genetically modified with alpha-amylase gene(s); and one internal mandate on EFSA administrative guidance to applicants. In June the GMO Unit held its second meeting with Member State experts of the EFSA scientific network on risk assessment of GMOs.

mb 20 10 11 item 4 doc 3 - ED progress report

The GMO Unit received three new applications and one EC mandate on the prohibition of the placing on the market of GM potato EH92-527-1 for cultivation purposes in Austria. One application was withdrawn. The evaluation of GMO applications remains one of the main working areas of the GMO Panel.

Panel on dietetic products, nutrition and allergies (NDA)

All remaining Article 13 non-botanical claims were published in two series of opinions. The fifth series of opinions of 536 health claims covered in 73 opinions was published on 30 June 2011 and the sixth series of 35 health claims covered in 5 opinions was published on 28 July. Since 2009, the panel has assessed 2,758 general function claims. In addition the Panel adopted nine scientific opinions related to health claims applications, one statement on the conditions of use for an application on "toothkind" juice drinks, three scientific opinions on applications on exemptions for labelling of substances used in the manufacture of wine as fining agent and one scientific opinion on novel food. The Panel endorsed a draft guidance document on the requirements for health claims related to neurological and psychological functions. EFSA published four technical reports related to responses to comments received on opinions on the scientific substantiation of health claims. A public consultation on the draft scientific opinion on dietary reference values for protein has been launched in July 2011. For health claim applications, the NDA Panel has received to date 332 applications of which 119 opinions have been adopted covering 112 applications; 126 applications have been withdrawn and 17 applications are in progress.

EFSA may receive before the end of the year a number of Article 13 claims (up to 290 claims) for reassessment (probiotics for which EFSA concluded that they are not sufficiently characterised, and claims for which EFSA concluded that there is insufficient evidence). The so-called Article 13 botanical claims (1,548 claims) are still on hold. The Panel received three new requests for advice on safety in use and upper levels for Vitamin D, Calcium, and omega-3 long chain polyunsaturated fatty acids (DHA, EPA, DPA). A new request from Ireland on allergen risk assessment was also received and the internal mandate on the safety of glucosamine for patients taking coumarin anticoagulants was accepted.

Panel on plant protection products and their residues (PPR) and Pesticide Unit (PRAS)

Eight conclusions were adopted following the pesticide peer review of eight active substances. 13 reasoned opinions on routine MRL applications in response to 15 MRL applications were published, assessing ca. 160 MRLs. In addition, 19 reasoned opinions reviewing ca. 760 MRLs for 19 pesticides were adopted. EFSA published one scientific report (Scientific support for preparing an EU position in the 43rd Session of the Codex Committee on Pesticides Residues) where EFSA assessed the validity of Codex Maximum Residue Limit (CXL) proposals for 22 pesticides. An opinion on the science behind the revision of the Guidance document on "Dermal Absorption" and a related report on the outcome of the public consultation were published in July. An external scientific report on the applicability of QSAR (quantitative structure-activity relationship) analysis for the evaluation of developmental and neurotoxicity effects for the assessment of the toxicological relevance of metabolites and degradates of pesticide active substances for dietary risk assessment was published in June.

The conclusion for the final re-submitted active substance will be adopted in 2011, and the peer review programmes will commence for the 56 pending new active substances, and the remaining 52 active substances of stage 4 of the review programme, for which EFSA should deliver its views by 31 December 2012. 45 MRL applications have been submitted to be assessed within three months. In addition, EFSA will further progress on the MRL review programme by issuing reasoned opinions for ca. 15 pesticides. EFSA will also work on the request of the European Commission regarding the cross-contamination for pirimiphos-methyl. The PPR Panel received a new EC mandate to prepare a guidance document on exposure assessment for workers, operators, bystanders and residents to pesticides. A new working group for risk assessment of Plant Protection Products on bees was established in August.

COMMUNICATIONS

COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITIES / MAIN HIGHLIGHTS

THEMATIC:

GMOs – EFSA published two web news stories on GMO-related scientific outputs over the summer period. The first accompanied the updated guidance on post-market environmental monitoring of GM plants and the second, the launch of the draft guidance on the risk assessment of food and feed from GM animals including animal

health and welfare aspects. In both cases, targeted media relations were carried out to raise awareness of the guidance amongst specific audiences, particularly scientific and industry stakeholders. A special GMO Task Force meeting was held to agree on strategic priorities over the next two years for the GMO thematic approach.

Independence – In support of the important work on the development of its Draft Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes and in the context of its thematic work in this area, EFSA broadly disseminated news of its Public Consultation on the draft policy.

Zoonoses - In view of its thematic work on zoonoses, EFSA ensured that its work in response to the urgent request for scientific support on the E. coli outbreak, provided the necessary context about food-borne zoonotic diseases. This was further supported by the proactive outreach undertaken to highlight the publication of the first joint EFSA/ECDC report on antimicrobial resistance in zoonotic bacteria affecting humans, animals and food.

Agrofood innovation – Since July 2011 EFSA staff have been making the technical and editorial preparations for a new 'Regulated products' section of the EFSA website that will support the work of the Applications Desk and provide a more 'client-oriented' service to applicants. The section gathers together all the information required for applicants including FAQs, technical and administrative guidance, useful links, and includes a dedicated web form for submitting questions to the Desk. These new features are scheduled to go online on 1st November 2011. This is the first phase of these developments which are being led by REPRO office with input from the scientific Units concerned. In addition, considerable conceptual work has gone into planning future communications which can highlight EFSA's innovative scientific work within the context of the EU's 2020 growth strategy.

COOPERATION AND OUTREACH:

MEMBER STATES

AFCWG - 21-22, June – 31st meeting of the Advisory Forum Communications Working Group (AFCWG). Key agenda issues at the meeting included case studies on the E.coli outbreak in Germany with presentations given by the WG members from Spain and Germany and from EFSA; there was also a presentation and discussion of EFSA's draft independence policy; an update on the results from research carried out by the UK Food Safety Authority on consumers' views on the use of nanotechnology in food and food packaging and a discussion about a common Frequently Asked Questions document on nanotechnology. The group also had a presentation on emerging social media trends affecting EFSA and national food safety authorities; an overview of EFSA's website user survey; an update on the integrated approach on zoonoses and on EFSA's Medium Term Planning. The agenda also included a discussion on key issues in Member States and an update on the risk communications guidelines.

MEDIA RELATIONS

Media activities - In the three months June-August 2011, the Media Relations team dealt with 371 media queries and organised 36 interviews with the Executive Director and scientific staff / experts with media from across Europe, e.g. BBC Radio 4, Radio France International, TF1 (French national TV), Het Financieele Dagblad (Dutch financial daily), Panorama (Italian weekly), and 24 Chasa (Bulgarian national daily).

Media visit - 4 July, Parma – 20 journalists from Bulgaria came to EFSA on a media visit aimed at building visibility and helping them to understand EFSA's work, organised in cooperation with the EC representation in Bulgaria. The journalists, who cover European affairs, represented the major national media: Trud daily; 24 Chasa Daily; Standart Daily; Telegraph Daily; Sega Daily; Pari Daily; Dnevnik Daily; Capital Weekly; Monitor Daily; Bulgarian farmer; Zemlia; Fermer BG Bulgarian National TV; TV 7; Nova 7; Mediapool.bg; EUinside.bg. EFSA's director of communications gave the journalists an overview of EFSA's work, and EFSA scientists gave presentations on health claims, GMOs, and zoonoses, which were followed by Questions and Answer sessions and one-to-one interviews.

Outreach – Close liaison with DG COMM enabled real-time redistribution of EFSA press releases via a tailor-made RSS feed, making EFSA news available instantly from the Commission's online Press Room. The model was shared with the agency network for other agencies to copy. Further DG COMM liaison brought EFSA E. coli news to the top spots on the Europa homepage as well as in the Europa news area and press room on 5 July.

SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCES

Scientific Colloquium #16 - Emerging Risks in Plant Health: from plant pest interactions to global change – 9-10 June, Parma. More than 100 international experts took part in an open scientific debate on key issues related to the identification of emerging risks in plant health. The Colloquium attracted risk assessors, risk managers, scientists and stakeholders from 31 countries, including 19 EU Member States, seven candidate countries, Canada, Georgia, Japan, Norway, and the United States. The objective of the event was to obtain input for the development of EFSA's methodological framework for emerging risks identification in plant health, including systems and methodologies for data monitoring, data filtering and risk assessment of emerging plant health risks. EFSA in collaboration with all participants generated valuable material with which to further develop methodologies for assessing emerging risks in the area of plant health.

Safepork 2011 – 19-22 June, Maastricht: EFSA had an information stand at the 9th International Conference on the Epidemiology and Control of biological, chemical, and physical hazards in pigs and pork (Safepork 2011). EFSA contributed to the scientific programme with one presentation related to the EU-wide baseline survey on the prevalence of Salmonella in holdings with breeding pigs (2008), focusing on the prevalence and factors associated with Salmonella positivity. The conference was attended by over 250 worldwide researchers, government representatives and industry stakeholders.

Dioxin 2011 – 21-25 August, Brussels. EFSA also had an info stand at the 31st International Symposium on Halogenated Persistent Organic Pollutants (Dioxin 2011). EFSA presented a poster on dioxins in sheep liver and contributed to the session titled "Risk Assessment, Management, and Regulation" with a presentation on EFSA's risk assessment on brominated flame retardants (BFRs). The conference was attended by nearly 900 EU and international scientists and stakeholders.

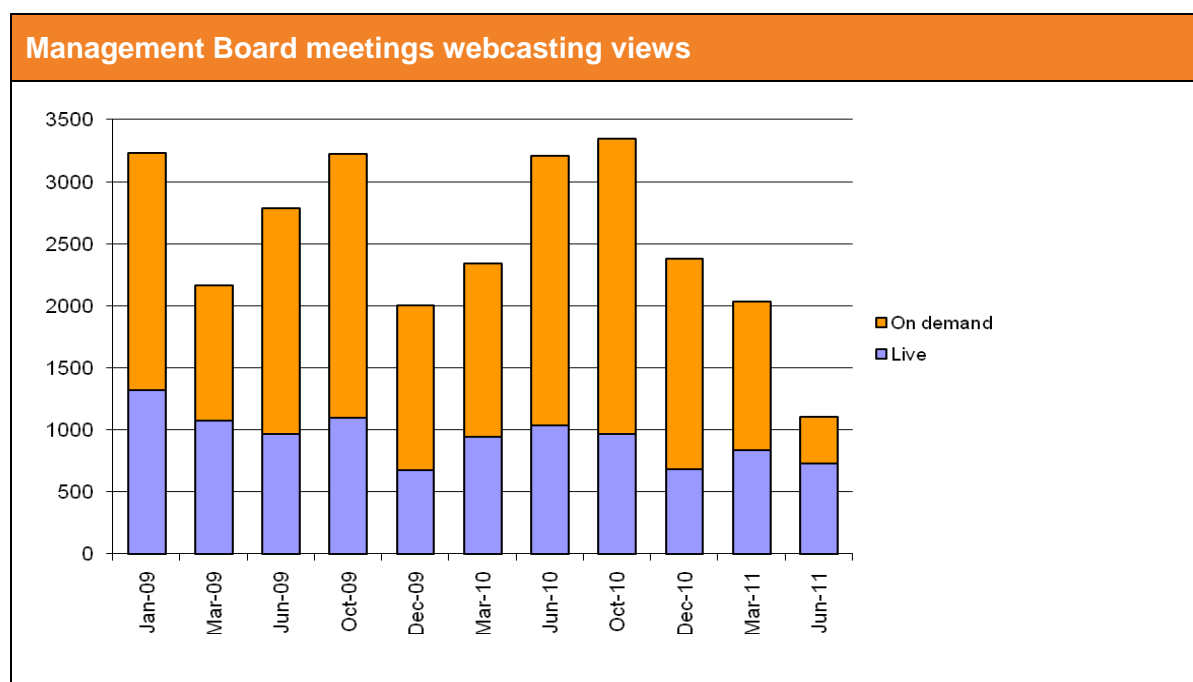
ONLINE COMMUNICATIONS

The web user survey received 5,426 responses over a period of 1 month, providing crucial insight into the demography, opinions and needs of website users. Search engine visibility and usability of the EFSA Journal was optimised by the removal of duplicate content and improved labelling. Several geolocation places were claimed by nominated EFSA Online Communications staff, thereby placing EFSA in control of key corporate content on these social media. Contact information was made available in 23 languages. Reorganisational changes were further reflected on the website through updates of menus, queries and related links. A framework contract tender for digital communications-related services with a maximum expenditure of € 2,600,000 over 4 years was launched.

MANAGEMENT BOARD WEBCASTS

Since March 2011, Management Board webcasts have been broadcast as audio only. Previous Management Board meetings were audiovisual broadcast. Initial figures indicate a marginal decrease of live and on-demand uptake, following the change, but data collected over a longer period is needed before decisive conclusions on uptake impact can be drawn.

A full year review will be undertaken following the December Management Board meeting.



Note: On-demand uptake increases over time. Hence recent meetings have lower on-demand uptake, than meetings which have been available on-demand for a longer time.

COMMUNICATIONS OUTPUTS:

Press Releases (3):

- EFSA issues advice to mitigate risks from possible exposure to STEC in vegetables (9 June)
- EFSA publishes report from its Task Force on the E. coli O104:H4 outbreaks in Germany and France in 2011 and makes further recommendations to protect consumers (5 July)
- EFSA finalises the assessment of 'general function' health claims (28 July)

Web News Stories (12):

- EFSA launches a public call for scientific data on aspartame (1st June)
- Public health advice on prevention of diarrhoeal illness with special focus on Shiga toxin - producing Escherichia coli (STEC), also called verotoxin - producing E. coli (VTEC) or enterohaemorrhagic E. coli (EHEC) (3 June)
- EFSA's 16th Scientific Colloquium - Emerging Risks in Plant Health: from plant pest interactions to global change (9 June)
- Public health advice on prevention of diarrhoeal illness with special focus on Shiga toxin - producing Escherichia coli (STEC), also called verotoxin - producing E. coli (VTEC) or enterohaemorrhagic E. coli (EHEC) (11 June)
- EFSA Management Board endorses draft policy on independence and scientific decision-making processes, adopts Code of Conduct (16 June)
- EFSA stands ready to provide scientific assistance to European Commission and Member States on French E. coli outbreak (25 June)
- EFSA sets up European task force to help investigate French E. coli outbreak (26 June)
- Phytophthora Ramorum is a threat to European forests, parks and gardens, says EFSA (28 June)
- EFSA and ECDC highlight importance of cooking sprouts thoroughly to reduce risk of further E. coli O104 outbreaks (29 June)
- EFSA publishes fifth series of evaluations of 'general function' health claims (30 June)
- EFSA launches public consultation on its Draft Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes (7 July)
- EFSA launches its guidance on 90-day feeding studies on whole food and feed for public consultation (7 July)

mb 20 10 11 item 4 doc 3 - ED progress report

- EFSA and ECDC publish first joint report on antimicrobial resistance in zoonotic bacteria affecting humans, animals and food (12 July)
- EFSA public consultation: The Scientific Committee evaluates the Threshold of Toxicological Concern approach (12 July)
- EFSA provides up-to-date information on food-borne viruses (14 July)
- New smoke flavourings data support safety of Fumokomp but uncertainties remain for Zesti Smoke Code 10 (27 July)
- EFSA launches updated guidance on post-market environmental monitoring of GM plants (2 August)
- EFSA evaluates the public health risk of bacterial strains resistant to certain antimicrobials in food and food-producing animals (2 August)
- EFSA launches public consultation on draft guidance for the risk assessment of food and feed derived from GM animals and related animal health and welfare aspects (10 August)

Other publications:

- EFSA's Annual Report 2010 and its summary
- Newsletters Moving Together 8 and InFocus 9 (Food, Animals, Plants)
- Mid-term planning brochure "Scientific Cooperation between EFSA and Member States – Taking stock and looking ahead"
- Translations of the pre-accession leaflet "Food safety cooperation beyond borders" in Albanian, Croatian, Macedonian and Turkish
- Updated version of the corporate brochure "The European Food Safety Authority at a glance"
- Several scientific posters for different conferences

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

A redesign of the intranet was launched, supporting staff efficiency through better access to operational workflows and internal information. Decentralised intranet content publication was improved through a set of easy-to-use guidelines for content providers.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Institutional relations

- 22 July, Parma: bilateral meeting of EFSA Executive Director with, the Director-General of European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization (EPPO), Ringolds Arnitis, to discuss further collaboration between EFSA and EPPO. EFSA participated in EPPO 60th anniversary conference in Bonn, Germany, in September.
- Preparatory work continue in September in relation to a joint seminar EC DG SANCO-EFSA-ECDC in the European Parliament, Brussels, on 10 October hosted by EP Vice-President Dagmar Roth-Behrendt, and a stakeholder consultative meeting on Independence and Scientific decision-making process organized by EFSA on 12 October in Brussels that sees the participation of Commissioner Dalli and MEP Kartika Liotard.

International relations

- 27 July, Sofia: a delegation led by EFSA's Executive Director visited Bulgaria. EFSA met with the Minister of Agriculture and Food Miroslav Naydenov, representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the Bulgarian Food Safety Agency (BFSA) and the Risk Assessment Centre to further strengthen collaboration between Bulgarian authorities and EFSA.
- 7 September, Veyrier du Lac, France: EFSA's Executive Director addressed the international forum Better Foods for Better Health, with a presentation on EFSA's role and activities on nutrition.
- 9 September, Berlin: EFSA's Executive Director participated in the Asia-Pacific Weeks at the session entitled "Food Safety in Europe and Asia –Status quo and future prospects" by presenting EFSA's activities in the international arena and cooperation with national food safety agencies and research institutes in the Member States. Furthermore, during the conference day EFSA's Executive Director participated as well at the round table on "Consumer protection within a global food market".

mb 20 10 11 item 4 doc 3 - ED progress report

- 27 September, Warsaw: in the context of regular contacts with EU Presidencies of the EU, EFSA's Executive Director met the Polish Presidency, Polish Chief Sanitary Inspectorate, in Warsaw. During the bilateral meeting with the Przemysław Biliński, Chief Sanitary Inspector, who addressed the EFSA Advisory Forum meeting in Cracow, discussions focused on the Presidency priorities in the area of food safety and opportunities for further cooperation between EFSA and Poland beyond the Presidency term.

RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

Stakeholder relations

29-30 June, Parma: EFSA organized the 16th plenary meeting of the EFSA Stakeholder Consultative Platform, where, inter alia, particular focus was given on: i) the update on the E.cColi crisis; and ii) the organisation of the risk communication breakout sessions on three scientific issues: health claims, pesticides and zoonoses. The breakout sessions were proposed as new tool for interaction with the Stakeholders Platform Members in the "*Reflection Paper on the engagement of stakeholders on EFSA's activities*" adopted by written procedure following the Platform plenary meeting in April 2011. This document, written by a working group composed of Platform Members and Chaired by EFSA, puts forward a series of new proposals for the engagement of stakeholders on EFSA's activities that are undergoing an internal assessment.

Data protection (DP)

The DPO (Data Protection Officer) provided advice and support to ensure compliance with the DP Regulation, i.e. with respect to the treatment of personal data processed by the Agency, and in particular, advice was provided in the field of: anti-harassment informal procedures, follow-up regarding administrative inquiries & disciplinary proceedings, the compliance and follow-up on EDPS opinion concerning the selection of Scientific Committee and Scientific Panel members.

Court cases

There are four cases pending before the EU Courts: two cases are related to alleged infringements to public procurement rules put forward by excluded bidders and two cases alleging infringements to the EU access to documents procedure.

IT and Operations

- Delivery of the Expert Support System (ESS) which integrates the Meeting Organisation System (MOS), the Declaration of Interest (DOI) and the Expert Database (EDB) on 12 August;
- Successful migration to the new financial system (ABAC) on 19 September;
- Delivery to EFSA of the new Data Centre and beginning of network infrastructure installation on 12 August.

EFSA new seat

On 5 August 2011, with the Parma Municipality and the Authority STU, EFSA signed the 'Preliminary Purchase Agreement' and the agreement on penalties "Preliminare di comodato e ulteriori pattuizioni" which were discussed and approved by the Parma City Council on 30 August 2011. The signature of these acts marks an essential step in the purchase of the new seat which will be achieved with the signature of the 'Final Purchase Agreement' on 19 December 2011.

The ceiling costs of the building cleared by the Budgetary Authority (38.6 M€) will be respected. EFSA will start soon negotiations with financial institutions offering best conditions for the financing of the building purchase.

Works including variations to the initial design allowing a more versatile use of the premises were finished on 30 September 2011, in line with the agreed schedule. Last adaptations to match the building with EFSA's operational needs will be carried out until early December at the latest, on time to move during the Christmas break. As planned, EFSA will start to operate from its new premises on 5 January 2012.

The procurement of goods and services dedicated to the new EFSA seat is ongoing and most of them have already been completed. The status of the following procedures is as follows:

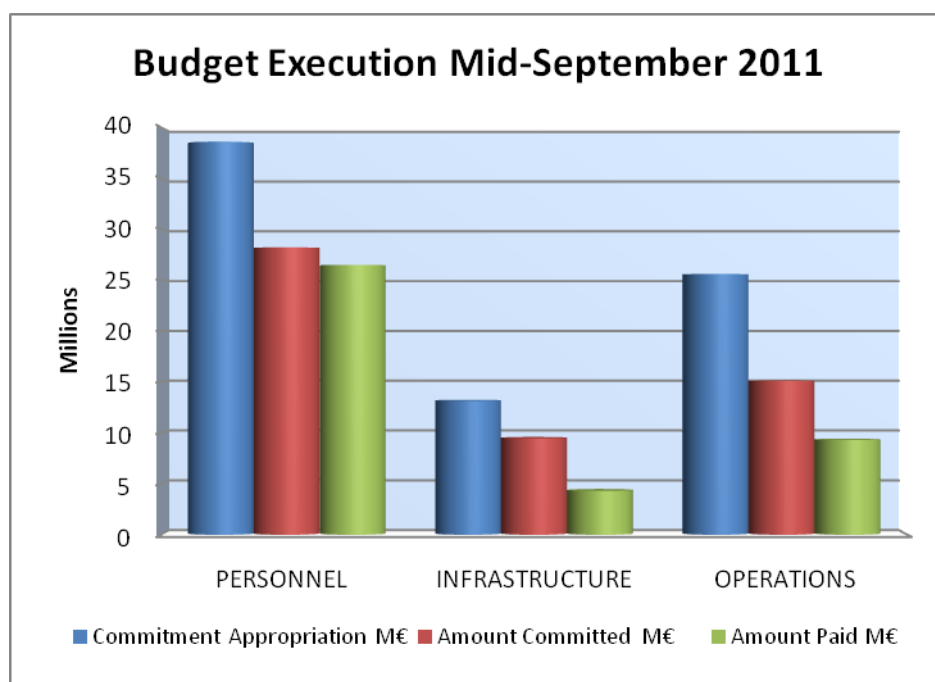
- Insurance services (completed);
- Purchase of new furniture (completed);
- Market valuation of the new EFSA seat building (ongoing, to be awarded end-October 2011);
- Canteen and bar services (published, to be awarded in December 2011).

Financial management

As of Mid September,

- EUR 52.74 million or 68.22% of the EUR 77.31 million budget was committed. This commitment level already included the September staff expenditure (EUR 3.3 million) and is in line with the target set at the beginning of the year. Under Title II Infrastructure, the budget is, with 72% committed, also in line with the objective. Under Title III Operations, the execution rate reached 59% with, in particular, the commitments under the scientific cooperation program (EUR 1.57 million) being below the initial objective (EUR 2.75 million). The commitments related to scientific fora already reached 79% of available appropriations.
- EUR 40.07 million or 52.08% of the EUR 76.96 payment appropriations were paid. This payment level stands 5% above the target. In July, payments were already observed at 6% above target.

Title	Commitment Appropriation	Amount Committed	% Committed	Payment Appropriation	Amount Paid	% Paid	RAL
PERSONNEL	38,569,100	28,200,489	73.12%	38,569,100	26,483,248	68.66%	1,717,242
INFRASTRUCTURE	13,152,300	9,464,220	71.96%	13,152,300	4,298,037	32.68%	5,166,183
OPERATIONS	25,588,400	15,078,284	58.93%	25,236,900	9,295,250	36.83%	5,783,033
Total:	77,309,800	52,742,993	68.22%	76,958,300	40,076,535	52.08%	12,666,458



Year on year, the commitments increased by EUR 6.68 million which represents a 14.5% improvement. The payments increased by EUR 1.16 million compared to last year which represents a 2.98% improvement.

mb 20 10 11 item 4 doc 3 - ED progress report

Title	Commitments Mid Sept 2011	Commitments Mid Sept 2010	Increase	Payments Mid Sept 2011	Payments Mid Sept 2010	Increase
PERSONNEL	28,200,489	26,374,416	6.92%	26,483,248	24,835,957	6.63%
INFRASTRUCTURE	9,464,220	7,126,084	32.81%	4,298,037	4,377,477	-1.81%
OPERATIONS	15,078,284	14,879,644	1.33%	9,295,250	9,703,206	-4.20%
Total:	52,742,993	46,058,008	14.51%	40,076,535	38,916,640	2.98%

Accounting

In the reporting period, more than 3,200 payments have been executed.

The preliminary observations on the 2010 EFSA's accounts, issued by the Court of Auditors, states that EFSA annual accounts are in all material respects, legal and regular.

EFSA annual financial report for 2010 has been published on EFSA's website.

The new financial system ABAC has been implemented as of 19 September 2011.

Human Resources

Staff Categories	Target 2011	Total Contracted and Offered
Temporary Agents and Officials		
Executives, Managers & Officers (AD)	213	201
Assistants functions (AST)	142	136
Total	355	337
Contract Agents		
Officers functions (CA FG IV)	51	40
Assistants functions (CA FG I, II, III)	59	50
Total	110	90
Seconded National Experts	29	14
Total all staff categories	494	441

On 30 September, 436 posts were occupied and 5 job offers have been sent to the selected candidates bringing the total to 441 posts filled-in out of the planned 494 posts. The Recruitment execution rate for the Establishment Plan 2011 (Temporary Agents and Officials) is at 95%.

Glossary

AF – EFSA's Advisory Forum
AFCWG – Advisory Forum Communications Working Group
BFRs – Brominated flame retardants
BFSA – Bulgarian Food Safety Agency
BHA – E320 Butylated hydroxyanisole
BTSF – Better Training for Safer Food programme
BSE-TSE - Bovine and Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies
CXL – Codex Maximum Residue Limit
DG COMM – Directorate General Communication
DG SANCO – Directorate General for Health and Consumers
DOI – Declaration of Interest
DPO – Data Protection Officer
EC – European Commission
ECDC – European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
ED – EFSA Executive Director
EDB – EFSA Expert Database
EDPS – European Data Protection Supervisor
EEA – European Economic Area
EP – European Parliament
EPPO – Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization
ERA – Environmental Risk Assessment
ESCO – EFSA Scientific Cooperation projects
ESS – Expert Support System
EUS – Epizootic Ulcerative Syndrome
FAO – Food and Agriculture Organisation
FP – Focal Point
IEP – Information exchange platform
MEP – Member of the European Parliament
MOS – Meeting Organisation System
MRL – Maximum residue levels
MS – EU Member States
PCB – Polychlorinated biphenyl
PMEM – Post Market Environmental Monitoring
QSAR – Quantitative Structure-Activity Relationships
SC – Scientific Committee
SP – Scientific Panel
STEC – Shiga toxin-producing Escherichia coli
TAIEX – Technical Assistance and Information Exchange instrument
TTC – Threshold of toxicological concern
WG – Working Group
WHO – World Health Organisation