



EFSA ADVISORY FORUM

Working Group on Communication (including Risk Communication)

DRAFT Terms of Reference

The Advisory Forum hereby establishes a working group to consider communication and in particular risk communication on matters within the remit of the EFSA.

The primary objective of this working group is to consider the following:

How can the EFSA, the Commission and the Member States build closer collaboration in order to ensure better coherence on communication on food safety related matters and take best advantage of the benefits foreseen from such collaboration? The objective of communications is not to re-assure people irrespective of the scientific facts.

Are there any practical, political cultural or other barriers that can be identified and how could these be overcome in order to build greater coherence?

How could the communications networks between the Commission, EFSA and the Member States be improved? (e.g. define the key communication contact in each MS, contact details etc.)

What types of communication activities can be built as a priority: short, medium and long term for non-crisis situations? What would be the priority themes or topics? What mechanisms can be foreseen for crisis situations?

How can the experience of working group members in risk communications best be used? Should there be an ongoing review and evaluation of risk communications in order to identify key learning, share best practices etc.?

How could public risk perception be monitored on food safety in general as well as key issues for the EU (eg GMOs, acrylamide, BSE etc.) both in relation to existing information sources and possible new initiatives?

Timeframe and Working methods

The working group will meet for the first time during November 2003 and can be expected to follow up with another four meetings during 2004. The group will produce as part of its on going work programme a report by the end of 2004. The working group will report back regularly to the Advisory Forum on progress. The group shall be chaired by the EFSA Director of Communications.

The Terms of reference are to be open to review for the Advisory Forum after one year.