



# European Food Safety Authority

## *Transparency and Risk assessment: Developing criteria for public consultation*

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## What I will address

- **EFSA's Guidance Document on procedural aspects related to transparency in risk assessment**
- **Criteria for public consultation**

## History of the Guidance Document

- Scientific Committee (previous term) was requested by EFSA to provide guidance to ensure transparency of the risk assessments carried out by EFSA
- The mandate given to the Scientific Committee was split into two different parts:
  - Part I:** Procedural related considerations (current guidance document)
  - Part II:** Scientific related consideration (task for the new SC-starting in September 2006)
- The Guidance document was adopted in April 2006 and since then EFSA has already taken actions to implement the Recommendations in some areas, i.e. further guidance on DOIs, further involvement of MS (GMO Action Plan)

## Working Group on Transparency in RA

### *Sixteen members*

- Members of the Scientific Committee
- EFSA 's in-house Scientific Expert Services
- Scientific Secretariats
- International & Institutional Relations, Communication, Legal Departments
- European Commission

### *Provisional timetable*

- March 05 –
- February 06: WG to prepare draft Guidance Document
- April 06: Endorsement of Guidance Document by SC
- September 06: Part II (science related aspects) to start

## Process-related transparency issues

- Selection of qualified independent scientists responsible for the assessment
- Handling by EFSA of requests for scientific opinions (e.g. analysis/clarification of the question, refusal/modification)
- Facilitating adequate exchange of information and views (Risk Assessment/Risk Management interface)
- Involvement of stakeholders prior and during the Risk Assessment
- Procedure for adoption of opinions
- Dissemination of opinions
- Confidentiality and access to documents
- Procedure for revising/updating scientific opinions

## Issues considered and Recommendations

- **Selection of qualified independent scientists**

*Recommendation:* It is noted that there is a need for more guidance for the experts on how to declared their interests

- **Handling by EFSA of requests for a scientific opinion or technical assistance**

*Recommendation:* It is noted that some request currently asked under article 29 could be satisfactorily dealt with by EFSA staff or by a WG with the endorsement of the Panel.

- **Scientific opinions and other types of EFSA documents**

**Recommendation:** Common principles should be developed on how to incorporate the input of organisations or individuals entrusted by EFSA to undertake specific tasks

**Recommendation:** It is noted that there is a need for more guidance and, if applicable, harmonisation on the types of documents issued by EFSA

- **Ensuring availability of relevant data including those from literature**

**Recommendations:** *EFSA should strengthen its managerial policy in the area of data collection to help SC/Panels in searching for and retrieving data*

*EFSA should establish a documentation service*

*EFSA, based on a review of the available relevant guidelines, considers the development of a guidance document for literature data surveys*

- **Information exchange between SC/Panel and the originator of the request**

**Recommendation:** *an adequate information exchange between SC/Panel and the other originators of a request should be facilitated and preferable in compliance with a similar procedure to the one applicable to the European Commission*

#### **Adoption of scientific opinions**

**Recommendation:** *all the opinions for adoption of overlapping requests are in principle useful and practicable but the decision has to be taken on a case-by-case basis – need to develop criteria as a basis for such decisions*

- **Involvement of stakeholders**

***Recommendation:** EFSA should develop criteria for stakeholder involvement jointly with EFSA scientific experts and staff, experts in the fields of social and communication sciences and interested parties*

***Actions:** work taking off – first contact: the Stakeholder Consultative Platform*

## How, when, who, on what to consult

- Need to develop a common approach across EFSA to run public consultations
- Need to ensure the widest level of participation (effective consultations in terms of input and constituencies approached)
- Need to develop criteria for public consultation in consultation with key players/experts – Task Force to be set up

## Input from interested parties

- Setting up a Task Force within EFSA involving experts from different disciplines/backgrounds
- Considering input from other consultative groups of EFSA, i.e. EFSA's advisory group in risk communications
- Considering input from Stakeholder Consultative Platform – Working Group

## Few considerations

- Legal framework, i.e. fixed deadlines and strict procedures set up by law
- Involving stakeholders in a coherent and transparent way
- Identification of topics of public interest
- Definition of the nature of the input by stakeholders and its integration into the overall process
- Choice of optimal tools, i.e. public consultations, technical hearings, working groups within the Stakeholder Consultative Platform ?
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of different consultation process

## Stakeholder Consultative Platform: your input

- Working Group to be set up
  - ✓ Representative range of interests
  - ✓ Limited number of organisations (max.8 including Chair)
  - ✓ Involving SC/Panel, experts within EFSA
  - ✓ Rapporteur
  - ✓ First exchange of views - WG meeting October/or via e-mail exchanges
- Working Group reporting to the (whole) Platform – Spring 2007
- EFSA secretariat facilitating interactions with other established groups to exchange experiences

**GRAZIE MILLE !**

**EFSA's Official seat  
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