



Up

# Work Programme 1999

## Index

### SUMMARY

1. Introduction
2. Information Network - Building the Links
3. Information Services - Communicating Knowledge
4. Information Projects - Developing Knowledge
5. Other Agency Matters

Up

## Summary

### **- Introduction**

1. This Work Programme 1999 is based on the Agency's Four-Year-Rolling Programme 1998-2001 and the multiannual activities of the annual Work Programme for 1998. Following the consultation of the Bureau of the Administrative Board in September, the Work Programme has been discussed with the Focal Points and the Thematic Network Groups of the Agency. Further the Dublin Foundation has been consulted as foreseen in the Memorandum of Understanding. In accordance with article 10.1 of the Regulation, the European Commission and the Advisory Committee for Safety, Hygiene and Health at Work have been consulted before discussion and approval by the Administrative Board of the final draft in November 1998.
2. The planning model reflects the dualistic nature of the Agency's network organisation structure. It contains both a European level, covering the common targets for the development of the Agency's network activities, and a national level, allowing the national networks to include the supplementary national targets as well.
3. It is essential that the Agency and its network plan and develop their activities to reflect the needs of their main user groups and do so in a transparent way, in order to increase

efficiency and avoid duplication. The view expressed by major European and national safety and health policy makers, organisations and user groups have been taken into consideration.

4. The financial resources for 1999 will not be finally decided, according to the EU budgetary procedure, until the end of 1999. In this Work Programme the basis is the minimum budget of 5.7 MECU<sup>(1)</sup> as proposed by the Council. The specific additional activities that could be financed by the extra 0.8 MECU, proposed by the European Commission, are indicated. Furthermore, the transfer of tasks from the Commission to the Agency and budgetary provisions from the Community budget are mentioned, subject to clarification with the Commission and the European Parliament within the budgetary procedure.

### **- Information Network – Building the Links**

5. The further development of the Agency's information network and active contribution from all its participants will be a major priority for 1999, with special focus on

- the consolidation and stepwise expansion of the national information networks
- the gradual extension of the Agency's network to the applicant countries
- the network relations and exchange of information with the United States
- the strengthening of the Agency's operational capacity through Topic Centres
- the development of the network technology, based on Internet, including the development of applications for data-collection, information dissemination and presentation (see point 7)
- the provision of information on the national and the Agency's web-sites about:
  1. Good Safety and Health Practice
  2. OSH-Systems and Programmes, incl. OSH-training
  3. Specific safety and health topics (see point 7)

### **- Information Services – Communicating Knowledge**

6. The communication of information about safety and health issues through the following complementary services will also be given priority:

- Responses to requests
- 4 Agency Newsletters
- 2 Safety and Health magazines
- A number of conferences, seminars and exhibitions
- An information campaign about the Agency's web-site
- European Week for Safety and Health at Work
- Information services related to the enlargement process
- Press information resource
- Bilbao as a venue for safety and health events

## **- Information Projects – Developing Knowledge**

7. The delivery of information projects will be another important output of the Agency in 1999. The Agency's information projects will be organised around four key activity areas:

- OSH-Monitoring
- Good Safety and Health Practice
- Research on Work and Health<sup>(2)</sup>
- OSH-systems and Programmes

Within these key areas the Agency plans to carry out its project activities according to the following rolling plan 1998-2000:

### **OSH-Monitoring**

- Preparation of a consolidated report on "The State of Safety and Health in the European Union", based on 15 national reports and involvement of EEA/EFTA-countries in the State of OSH-survey (1998-1999)
- Follow-up of the State of OSH-report: an evaluation of the methods used in the first survey and development of a model for OSH-monitoring in co-operation with the Commission, Eurostat and the Dublin Foundation<sup>(3)</sup>. (1999-2000)
- Employment effects of safety and health<sup>(3)</sup> (1999-2000)

### **Good Safety and Health Practice**

- Management of Topic Centres on "Good safety and Health Practice" related to stress at work, dangerous substances and musculo-skeletal disorders (1999)
- Organisation of the data-collection, preparation of a state-of-the-art report and planning of further activities related to the following topics (1998-2000):
  - Substitution of dangerous substances (asbestos and organic solvents)
  - Stress at work
  - Musculo skeletal disorders

### **Research on Work and Health**

- Management of a Topic Centre about "Research on Work and Health" (1999)
- Organisation of the data-collection, preparation of a state-of-the-art report and planning of further activities related to the following topics (1998-2000):
  - Stress at work
  - Musculo skeletal disorders
- Preparation of a document about emerging risks, future research needs and priorities and organisation of a consensus conference (1998-1999)

### **OSH-Systems and Programmes**

- Organisation of the data-collection, preparation of a state-of-the-art report and planning of further activities<sup>(3)</sup> (1999-2000)
- Follow-up of the economic impact report<sup>(4)</sup>:
  - The ways organisations use safety and health as market and procurement strategy (1999-2000)
  - "Good safety and health is good business" (1999-2000)
- OSH-campaigns (1999-2000)
- Safety and health and employability<sup>(5)</sup> (1999-2000)

The Agency plans to organise information project activities within each of the four key areas related to "The changing World of Work", based on a discussion of amongst other things the conclusions of the joint Austrian Presidency and Agency conference on the subject in October 1998. A proposal for those activities will be discussed at the Board meeting in March 1999.

The Agency intends to set up a co-financing scheme for the Focal Point contributions to the planned information project activities.

## - Other Agency Matters

8. The Agency will continue the development of modern, efficient administrative management systems covering all its activities and taking advantage of information technology.

Up

# 1. Introduction

1.1 According to its founding Regulation, the objective of the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work is:

*"In order to encourage improvements, especially in the working environment, as regards the protection of the safety and health of workers as provided for in the Treaty and successive action programmes concerning safety and health at the workplace, the aim of the Agency shall be to provide Community bodies, Member States and those involved in the field of safety and health at work with scientific, technical and economic information of use in the field of safety and health at work."*

1.2 The Agency's activities are decided by the Administrative Board, based on a Four-Year Rolling Programme and a more specific annual Work Programme. As it is essential that the Agency plans and develops its activities to reflect the needs of its main user groups, the views expressed by European institutions and other important safety and health organisations and user groups have been taken into consideration. At the European level, particular attention has been paid to the European Commission's Social Action Programme 1998-2000, the mid-term report on the Community Programme concerning safety, hygiene

and health at work (1996-2000) and the priorities expressed by the Advisory Committee. As part of a common effort between the Commission, the Agency and the Dublin Foundation special emphasis will be placed on information activities that can support the priority areas identified in the Commission's mid-term report.

**1.3** According to its Regulation, the Agency has consulted the European Commission and the Advisory Committee for Safety, Hygiene and Health at Work before presenting the final draft to the Board. Consultation has also taken place with the Dublin Foundation as laid down in the Memorandum of Understanding between the two institutions. The final version of the work programme has been discussed and approved by the Board in November 1998.

**1.4** This annual Work Programme for 1999 should be seen in the context of the Four-Year Rolling Programme 1998-2001 and the annual Work Programme for 1998, in which a number of multi-annual activities are described. These include the follow-up of the Agency's report about the economic impact of safety and health policy. As the Agency is still in a developmental phase, the Work Programme for 1999 reflects both the need for consolidation of the organisation and activity areas established in 1997 and 1998 and for the introduction of new elements that will bring the Agency closer to full operational capacity, envisaged for the year 2000.

**1.5** As the budget for 1999 has not yet been discussed or decided by the European Parliament, this Work Programme is based on two basic scenarios: The Commission's budget proposal of 6.5 MECU and the Council's budget proposal of 5.7 MECU<sup>(6)</sup>.

**1.6** The structure of this Work Programme follows the three strategic areas for Agency activities:

- Network development – building the links
- Information Services – communicating knowledge
- Information Projects – developing knowledge

Up

## 2. Information Networks - Building the Links

### - Organisation

**2.1** During 1998 important progress has been made in all Member States as regards the establishment of the Agency's national information networks. This positive development is expected to continue in 1999. At Agency level, initial links have been established with important European and international information providers. Network co-operation with EU

and international partners will be developed further and special attention will be paid to the countries included in the enlargement process.

## 2.2 The aims for the *development of the Agency's information network* in 1999 are:

- Consolidation of the Agency's EU-wide information network with continued growth at the national level through the gradual involvement of further network participants and databases according to the national practice.
- Development of co-operation links with the EU-institutions and organisations at EU-level, including relevant services of the Commission, the Parliament, other Agencies and the social partners at European level. Close co-operation with the Dublin Foundation within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding.
- Enlargement: The Agency intends to play an important role as a "bridge-builder" in the pre-adhesion period through the gradual development of a parallel system of national safety and health web-sites, thus giving the users in the applicant countries easy access to the Agency's information network. The more specific timing of the extension of the Agency's information network will be discussed with the Commission and the applicant countries involved.
- Strengthening network relations to the EEA/EFTA countries with an option to participate in the Agency's network activities on a self-financing basis.
- Development of network arrangements with the most important international OSH organisations and institutions, like the ILO, WHO, PAHO and with relevant OSH organisations of the major trading partners of the EU.
- Increasing network relations and exchange of information on specific topics with the United States as agreed at the joint US/EU Conference in Luxembourg in October 1998

## 2.3 During 1998 the Agency's co-operation with the Focal Points, the three Thematic Network Groups, the Internet Group and National Editors has been consolidated.

A review of the existing Thematic Network Group structure in relation to the key activity areas foreseen for the following years has led to the proposal to establish a fourth Group covering the Agency's OSH monitoring activities, as initiated by the project on the "The State of Occupational Safety and Health in the EU". Following the decision of the Board the Group will be established in early 1999 with national experts in safety and health data and documentation, appointed by the Focal Points and experts nominated by the Social Partners and the Commission as observers.

The mandates of the existing Thematic Network Groups, the Internet Group and the National Editors Group have been revised in order to reflect the four key areas for information projects and to allow the participation of experts nominated by the Social Partners and by the Commission as observers in the Thematic Network Groups.

In order to strengthen the operational capacity of the Agency and the Focal Points, the establishment of a Topic Centre structure has been decided by the Board in November. As a first step, Topic Centres on "Good Safety and Health Practice" and on "Research on Work and Health" will be established before the end of 1998. The TC on "Research on

Work and Health" will be comprehensive, covering all research areas, while the TC "Good Safety and Health Practice" will be organised as three subject oriented Centres (on stress at work, on dangerous substances and on musculo-skeletal disorders). The experiences with these two models will be evaluated in 1999 as an input to the Work Programme 2000-discussion at Board level.

**2.4** As regards the *Agency's organisation and co-operation with the Focal Points and national networks*, the aims for 1999 are:

- To start the development of a flexible Topic Centre structure to assist the Agency and Focal Points in carrying out information project activities according to the Agency's work programme.
- Further development of an integrated planning and co-operation system between the Agency and the national Focal Points in order to optimise communication and decision-making. In order to improve the planning of Focal Point-activities following the Work Programme, a standard planning tool will be prepared with information about all Agency activities that involve the Focal Point network. An overview of planned Agency activities in 1999 in relation to the Focal Points, Expert Groups and national networks has been discussed with the Focal Points before the Board meeting in November.
- To establish a Thematic Network Group on OSH Monitoring and to streamline the Agency's co-operation with national experts and observers from the Social Partners and the Commission in the Thematic Network Groups, Internet Group and National Editors Group
- To discuss the development and co-operation procedures of the National Networks at a Pre-board seminar in March 1999
- To strengthen the corporate profile and identity of the Agency and its Focal Point network

For 1999 the following network meetings are planned: 4 Focal Point meetings, 3 Thematic Network Group meetings for each of the 4 groups, 4 Internet Group meetings and 2 National Editor meetings.

## **- Technology**

**2.5** The Internet-based information network of the Agency will cover 14 Member States by the end of 1998. Based on recommendations presented by an external consultancy and discussions in the Internet Group, a new version of the Agency's web-site will be introduced at the end of 1998.

**2.6** The aims for the development of the *Agency's information system based on Internet* for 1999 are:

- Further development of the Agency Web-site with increasing capacity and user friendliness at Agency and Member State level
- The development of Internet applications for the data-collection, information,

dissemination and presentation, envisaged in chapter 4 in close co-operation with the Topic Centres, external consultants, Thematic Network Groups and Focal Points

- The establishment and maintenance necessary support service for the Agency network, including assistance to the Focal Points in managing and maintaining their national network Web-sites
- The promotion of the Agency network within the Community programmes related to information society issues and tele-communication
- The functionality and design of the Agency website will be reviewed periodically and developed (based on user surveys)
- Additional extranet solutions will be developed for improved communication between the Agency and the Focal Points, Expert Groups, Board and Bureau.
- Tools, such as search engine facilities, will be developed in order to provide transparency and user friendliness. The Agency will make contact with other relevant international organisations in this respect, in order to avoid duplication and to co-operate on the development of these tools.
- An information campaign about the Agency's information system, with special emphasis on the web-sites, will be organised in early 1999 (see 3.8).

## **- Information content**

**2.7** The information content of the Agency's web-sites has been developed according to the targets established in the 1998 Work Programme. Following the positive development of the web-structure and the national and EU/international networks, an increasing amount of important safety and health related information has been made available. This development needs to be continued both according to a general plan for the information content and as a result of the information project-related activities (see chapter 4).

**2.8** The aims for the development of the *Information content* in 1999 are:

- The Agency and the Member States will provide national and international/European information according to a rolling plan for the information content reflecting the Agency's specific priorities, based on the users needs as agreed in the framework of the Agency's Work Programmes.
- During 1999 the following general OSH-related information will be made available
  - Good Safety and Health Practice
  - OSH Systems and programmes, including OSH training
- More specific OSH information topics will be developed according to the priorities and projects decided by the Board (see Chapter 4)
- The transformation of the Agency's web-site into a multi-lingual site will be continued. The directory structure of the Agency web-site will be developed further and user-friendly guides will be provided to help the user navigate



## 3. Information Services - Communicating Knowledge

**3.1** The core business of the Agency is to communicate knowledge about safety and health. Besides the electronic collection and dissemination of information through the Agency's Web-system, the Agency has developed complementary information services. These services will be consolidated during 1999.

### - Agency News

**3.2** During 1998, 3 issues of the Agency's Newsletter have been produced in close and positive co-operation with the National Editors. In 1999 4 issues are planned. The content will be developed in close co-operation with the National Editors, based on amongst other things user surveys, the first one to be carried out in the first half of 1999.

The aim is that by 2000 the newsletter should be one of the most important printed news-resources for information about safety and health development in Europe. A limited number will be distributed free of charge to the Agency network; extra editions will be based on subscription and/or special financing arrangements. It will be freely available on the web-site.

### - Agency Magazine

**3.3** The aim is to issue two magazines in 1999, which will be distributed according to the newsletter model (see 3.2). It will be based on a thematic approach, i.e. focusing on strategic safety and health topics from different angles like research, practical solutions, viewpoints at EU and national level, social partners viewpoints etc. The topics will be based on the Agency's Work Programme. For 1999 they will cover "The Changing World of Work" and "The Economic Impact of Safety and Health".

The Agency will enter into a contract with an external expert to assist in the editing etc. of the magazine. The National Editors will also be involved in the magazine's production and distribution.

### - Conferences and seminars

**3.4** As regards the organisation and active participation in *safety and health conferences and seminars*, the Agency's aims for 1999 are:

- Organisation of a conference in Bilbao in co-operation with the incoming Finnish EU Presidency, building on the Agency's activities related to the changing world of work. Co-operation activities are also expected with the German Presidency.
- Co-organisation of the European conference part of the A+A conference and exhibition in Düsseldorf.
- To play an active role in the World Conference in Sao Paulo in 1999 and plan its participation - together with the Commission - in the EXPO 2000 event in Hannover,

which foresees a special topic about the Future of Work.

- Co-organisation of a seminar for safety and health practitioners in order to promote the Agency's activities and co-operation with these important players who have shown great interest in the work of the Agency.
- Organisation of a seminar with non-EU partners in order to co-ordinate activities and network arrangements, with special focus on the enlargement and EEA/EFTA countries.
- Following the data collection in 1998 and the preparation of a draft document about future research needs and priorities at the beginning of 1999, to organise a consensus seminar with the participation of the Thematic Network Group and experts from the Commission and the social partners.

Other seminar activities will be organised as a follow-up to information project activities, including special activities to promote the exchange of expert knowledge on safety and health subjects, which will be investigated together with appropriate partners in the Member States and at EU level.

### **- Awareness raising activities**

**3.5** Following the Commission's decision about the transfer of the European Week activities to the Agency, the organisation of the week will be discussed at the March meeting of the Board. In parallel the question of additional budget provisions needs to be clarified together with the Commission.

### **- Information Requests**

**3.6** In 1999, the Agency will continue to provide information at the request of EU institutions, Member States, social partners and third parties. As this information service involves a lot of resources both at Agency and at Member State level, a limited number of comprehensive requests will be replied according to a set of priorities and targets/levels, and to the model for dealing with information requests agreed between the Agency and the Commission at the end of 1998.

### **- Enlargement**

**3.7** The Agency has been approached by the Commission about its possible role in the pre-adhesion strategy, especially on Institutional Building. The Agency could assist the Commission, in particular DGI/A, in identifying health and safety experts in the Member States who would be able to work in the applicant countries within the framework of programmes like the PHARE. The Agency intends, in co-operation with its Focal Point network, to create a database with information about such experts. Another information service will be to establish an overview of ongoing, planned and finalised co-operation projects in the safety and health area in the applicant countries every 1-2 years, in order to increase transparency and to avoid duplication of effort. The first overview of this kind could be prepared in the beginning of 1999.

### **- Information-Campaign**

**3.8** In the first half of 1999, the Agency plans to organise an EU-wide information campaign about its information network facilities, with special emphasis on the Internet-system. This campaign will be prepared in close co-operation with the Focal Points. An external consultancy will be contracted to assist the Agency and the Focal Points in the preparation and implementation of the campaign.

### **- Press information resource**

**3.9** The Agency's press information resource will be developed further in 1999, incorporating a pro-active press strategy using the media as an additional information resource to promote the work and activities of the Agency and its network.

### **- Bilbao as a venue for safety and health events**

**3.10** The positive results achieved in 1997 and 1998 in using Bilbao as a venue for safety and health events (conferences, exhibitions and seminars) will be followed up during 1999, where a number of activities are planned to take place in the Agency's host city.

Up

## **4. Information Projects - Developing Knowledge**

**4.1** Information project activities are another important output of the Agency in 1999. The Agency's information projects will be organised around four key activity areas:

- **OSH Monitoring**
- **Good Safety and Health Practice**
- **Work and Health**
- **OSH Systems and Programmes**

In the following chapter information activities within each of these key areas are presented. The majority of activities originate in the Agency's Work Programme for 1998, which included several multi-annual information projects. In addition, they reflect input to the Agency's planning from a variety of sources, the most important being the European Commission and the Member States. These additional project activities will depend on additional financial provisions, as provided for in the Commissions budget proposal (+0.8 MECU).

As mentioned in chapter 2, the Agency intends to set up Topic Centre activities for initially two of the key areas in order to assist the Agency and the Focal Points in the implementation of the programmed activities. The Topic Centres that will be contracted by the end of 1998 are three TC's about "Good Safety and Health Practice" on stress at work, on dangerous substances and on musculo-skeletal disorders and one TC on "Research on Work and Health", following the Boards designation. The work of the Topic Centres will be

organised in a transparent and co-ordinated way, so that duplication of effort will be avoided in areas where the Work Programme foresees parallel activities.

The activities are presented with brief information about their background, objectives and the envisaged activities, time-scale and participants. A co-financing system for the Focal Point contributions to the Agency's information project activities will be established.

Following the conclusions of the October 1998 Conference in Bilbao on the "Changing World of Work", the Agency will, together with the EU Presidencies in 1999, organise activities related to this topic. In particular, the Agency plans, with assistance from the Topic Centres or from external experts, to collect and disseminate information within the four key information areas available in the Member States. Special emphasis is expected to be given to information related to telework/homework and other new forms of work organisation, about workplace re-design and other initiatives aimed to increase the employability of ageing workers and other groups of workers. The specific activities will be discussed at the Board meeting in March 1999. Proposals for activities will be prepared by the Agency based on an expert meeting in January/February 1999. Following the decision of the Board the implementation of the activities will be discussed with the relevant Thematic Network groups. The data collection via the Focal Point network is planned to take place during the second half of the year and a state-of-the-art report is expected to be ready by the end of 1999/beginning of 2000.

## OSH Monitoring - The State of Occupational Safety and Health in the EU

### **- Background**

**4.2** Agency Regulation, article 3.1 (a), (e) and (i), Agency Work Programme 1998, chapter 7.1 and request for co-operation from the European Commission DG V.

### **- Objective**

**4.3** The development of a European OSH Monitoring System based on existing national and European monitoring systems and data, as well as qualitative information that can inform political decision-makers and others with an interest in safety and health at work about the state of OSH in the EU as a basis e.g. for policy making at European level and common activities in the Member States. The Commission, Eurostat and the Dublin Foundation will be involved in the development of the system in order to ensure that already developed data-collection systems at EU-level will be included. One of the aims is periodically, every 2-3 years, to organise the preparation of national reports on the State of OSH and a consolidated report for the EU, based on the national and European information.

### **- Activities and participants:**

#### **- *State of OSH report (1998-1999)***

**4.4** A consolidated report on The State of Occupational Safety and Health in the European Union will be prepared by the Agency with assistance from external consultants and the

new Thematic Network Group in the first half of 1999. It will be based on 15 national reports prepared by the Focal Points and their national networks during the second half of 1998.

### ***- Involvement of the EEA/EFTA countries in the State of OSH (1998-1999)<sup>(3)</sup>***

**4.5** As discussed at the Board meeting in February 1998, non-EU countries, such as the EEA/EFTA, could be invited to participate on a self-financing basis in information projects of the Agency, where appropriate. The State of OSH is a project activity, where the participation of EEA/EFTA countries is of general interest. As regards the participation of applicant countries it has been discussed with the Commission to include these countries in future surveys when appropriate.

The Agency has informed the EEA/EFTA countries about the project and has invited them to prepare national reports, based on data collection according to a modified version of the manual for the study and to include a special chapter, based upon these reports, in the Agency's general report. This additional activity will be included in the contract with the external consultancy that assists the Agency in the preparation of the report.

### ***- Follow-up of the State of OSH report -development of an OSH Monitoring System (1999-2000)<sup>(3)</sup>***

**4.6** An evaluation and discussion document based on the methods used in the first State of OSH-report, will be prepared by the Agency with external assistance. The aim is to develop and present ideas for the further improvement of the quality of methods and data in close co-operation with the Member States, the European Commission, Eurostat and the Dublin Foundation in order to develop a **European OSH-monitoring System (EPOS)** and for the next comprehensive monitoring activity of the Agency in 2000. This development includes the design and implementation of user-friendly Internet applications. The document will be discussed at a meeting of the Thematic Network Group with the participation of external experts by the end of 1999/beginning of 2000.

### ***- Safety and Health and Employability***

**4.7** The impact of occupational safety and health on the employability of workers is an issue of increasing concern both at Member State and at EU-level. It is widely recognised that good safety and health conditions at the workplace are of considerable importance for the employability of workers. The Agency intends during 1999 to collect information about the estimated impact of safety and health on the employability of workers in the EU. Information about the employment effects of safety and health at work in the Member States will be collected via the Focal Points and will include data from national health systems, social security systems and insurance systems. This project will be organised with assistance from external consultants and the Thematic Network Group and a report is expected to be finalised by the end of 1999/beginning of 2000.

### ***- Co-operation with Dublin Foundation and with Eurostat (1998-2000)***

**4.8** The Agency participates in the Dublin Foundation's expert group, which is preparing the Third Survey on Working Conditions in the EU in 1999. The Agency is principally interested in co-operation with the Foundation, within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding, in order to collect more detailed European survey data as part of the OSH monitoring system/State of OSH. Similar co-operation will be given to the work of the Commission/Eurostat, mainly through participation in the expert groups set up for the harmonisation of statistics for occupational accidents and diseases and co-operation on the OSH-chapter of future Labour Force Surveys.

#### ***- Meeting activities (1999)***

**4.9** Organisation of 3 meetings in 1999 of the new Thematic Network Group on OSH-Monitoring, that is expected to be set up at the beginning of 1999 following the Boards decision.

## Good Safety and Health Practice

### **- Background**

**4.10** Agency Regulation, article 3.1 (c) (e) (h). Agency Work Programme 1998 chapter 7.4 and 7.5 and request from the European Commission DGV.

### **- Objective**

**4.11** The aim is to identify, collect and disseminate information on Good Health and Safety Practice at work place level; to analyse the collected data and to identify gaps and further demands for the development of good practice. Important target groups for these activities will be safety and health practitioners, such as safety managers, safety representatives and OSH experts in preventive services. Special attention will be given to communicating information about good safety and health practice to SME's.

### **- Activities and participants**

#### ***- Data collection (1998-1999)***

**4.12** Design and implementation of user-friendly Internet applications for information on Good Health and Safety Practice at work place level, in order to provide users with easy access to the relevant information. A first version of the system will be developed in 1998 in relation to the general and specific data-collection on stress, musculoskeletal disorders and substitution of dangerous substances. New applications will need to be developed as an integrated part of the information project activities envisaged by the Agency, with assistance from the Topic Centres and external Internet expertise.

The collection of general and specific information about good practice will continue during 1999, organised by the Focal Points and the Agency and with assistance from the Topic Centres.

### **- *Stress at work (1998-2000)***

**4.13** The collection of information on Good Practice concerning stress at work is an ongoing process that was started in 1998 and will continue throughout 1999, according to the Work Programme 1998. A Topic Centre on "Good Safety and Health Practice - Stress at Work" is expected to start activities by the end of 1998, following the Boards designation. Topic Centre activities will include further data collection at Member State level through the Focal Point network and at European and international level by the Agency.

**4.14** A state-of-the-art report prepared by the Topic Centre, presenting results of the data collection of Good Practice by implementing measures for the stress prevention at workplace level will be discussed with the Thematic Network Group in the second half of 1999. At this meeting, the Agency's activities to date will be evaluated, gaps in good practice will be identified and further information-strategies will be worked out as an input to future Work Programme activities.

### **- *Dangerous substances (1998-2000)***

**4.15** The collection of information on Good Practice, concerning the substitution of dangerous substances (asbestos and organic solvents), was started by the Agency in 1998 and will continue during 1999. The Topic Centre on "Good Safety and Health Practice – Dangerous Substances" is expected to carry out supportive activities, including further data-collection at Member State level through the Focal Point network and at European and international level by the Agency.

**4.16** Based on the experience gathered within the two fields, including a state-of-the-art report from the Topic Centre, the model used will be discussed with the Thematic Network Group and further areas for the collection of information on Good Practice concerning the substitution of dangerous substances will be identified as an input to the discussion of future Work Programmes.

**4.17** The collection and dissemination of good practice in the use of dangerous substances is a key activity area of the Agency. Besides information about the substitution of dangerous substances and the safe handling of dangerous substances during production, use and disposal are other important subjects. As it is a vast area to cover, priorities are necessary. The Agency will be assisted by the Topic Centre and the Thematic Network Group in preparing a priority document for further data collection, based on the results of the State of OSH in the second half of 1999. The priorities will be discussed in relation to future Work Programme activities.

### **- *Musculoskeletal disorders (1998-2000)***

**4.18** The collection of information on Good Practice concerning musculoskeletal disorders was started by the Agency in 1998 and will continue during 1999. A Topic Centre "Good safety and Health Practice – Musculo-skeletal Disorders" is expected to carry out supportive activities, including further data collection at Member State level through the Focal Point network and at European and international level by the Agency.

**4.19** Based on the experience gathered, including a state-of-the-art report from the Topic Centre, the model used will be discussed with the Thematic Network Group and further areas for the collection of information on Good Practice concerning the prevention of musculo-skeletal disorders will be identified. The Agency will also take into consideration the results of its project about work-related upper limb disorders.

### ***- Changing World of Work (1998-2000)***

**4.20** Following the conclusions of the October 1998 Conference in Bilbao on the Changing World of Work, the Agency will, together with the EU Presidencies in 1999, organise activities related to this topics (see 4.1).

### ***- Meeting activities (1999)***

**4.21** Organisation of 3 meetings in 1999 of the Thematic Network Group on Practical Solutions.

## Work and Health

### **- Background**

**4.22** Agency Regulation, article 3.1 (b) (e) (h) (i). Agency Work Programme 1998, chapter 7.3 and 7.5, and requests from the European Commission DGV.

### **- Objective**

**4.23** The aim is to collect, analyse and disseminate OSH research-related information, to identify gaps, to prevent duplication of effort and to inform decisions on future research activities in the field of safety and health at work.

### **- Activities and participants**

### ***- Data collection (1998-1999)***

**4.24** Design and implementation of Internet applications for information about OSH research started in 1998, and the first version of the system design has been created.



Further developments will be organised in 1999, in relation to the envisaged information activities, with assistance from the Topic Centre on "Work and Health" and external Internet assistance.

**4.25** The general data collection on OSH Research started in 1998 in the Member States and at Agency level. This activity will continue during 1999, with assistance from the Topic Centre.

***- Research needs and priorities (1998-1999)***

**4.26** A document about future research needs and priorities will be prepared, according to the Work programme 1998, based on the national data collection in the Member States during the second half of 1998. The Topic Centre will assist the Agency in the preparation of the draft document, which will be discussed at a consensus seminar to be held in the first half of 1999 with participation of the Thematic Network Group and experts from the European Commission, Social Partners etc.

***- Stress at work (1998-2000)***

**4.27** The data collection process started in 1998 and for 1999, the aim is to continue the data collection at Member State and European/international level and to review relevant research data. In particular, incidence and prevalence of work-related stress and its causes in the Member States and intervention research studies about stress at work will be reviewed in order to prepare a state-of-the-art report. Also, the aim is to develop a user-friendly Internet system for OSH Research Information related to stress at work. The Topic Centre and the Thematic Network Group will assist the Agency in carrying out the work.

***- Musculo-skeletal disorders (1998-2000)***

**4.28** A project on the Work-Related Upper Limb Disorders started in 1998, in order to prepare a state-of-the-art-report on the topic as requested by the European Commission (DGV). External consultants will assist the Agency in the preparation of the draft report, which will be discussed with the Thematic Network Group. Based on the results of this report, as well as the results of the State of OSH report, a priority document for further information activities about research on other musculo-skeletal disorders will be prepared, with assistance from the Topic Centre and will be discussed with the Thematic Network Group. The priorities will be discussed in relation to future Work Programme activities.

***- The changing world of work (1998-2000)***

**4.29** Following the conclusions of the October 1998 Conference in Bilbao on the Changing World of Work, the Agency will together with the EU presidencies in 1999 organise activities related to this topic (see 4.1)

As regards new risks, the Agency has initiated data collection in 1998 and plans to prepare a document about the subject with the assistance from the Topic Centre. The data collection model and the draft document about new risks will be discussed at a Thematic Network Group meeting in 1999.

### **- Meeting activities (1999)**

**4.30** Organisation of 3 meetings in 1999 of the Thematic Network Group on Research.

## OSH systems and programmes

### **- Background**

**4.31** Agency Regulation article 3.1 (a) (c) (e) (i) and the Agency's Work Programme 1998, chapter 7.2, 7.5 and 7.6

### **- Objective**

**4.32** The aim is to collect, assess and distribute information about the OSH-systems as well as OSH-strategies and -programmes in the Member States and at EU-level in order to provide decision-makers at national and EU-level with valuable information for the development of modern OSH infrastructures and the organisation of future preventive activities.

### **- Activities and participants**

#### **- Data collection (1999-2000)<sup>(3)</sup>**

**4.33** Design and implementation of Internet applications for information about OSH-Systems and Programmes in relation to the envisaged information activities with assistance from external Internet assistance.

**4.34** Information about the different OSH systems and programmes is a priority area for the development of the Agency's web-site. A model for data collection about OSH systems and programmes will be developed by the Agency with assistance from external consultants and the Thematic Network Group

The data collection about OSH systems aims to provide a guide about the national and European/international OSH infrastructure, including safety and health authorities, preventive services, Trade Union and Employer Organisation's safety and health services, OSH-training systems etc. The data collection about OSH programmes aims to provide information about the safety and health related policies, priorities and programmes formulated by the most important players at national and European/international level. Information about safety and health campaigns and other preventive action will also be included in the data collection.

The data collection process in the Member States and at Agency-level will be organised according to a model that will be prepared by the Agency, together with the external consultants and the Thematic Network Group. The plan for the information collection will reflect the priority subjects established in the Agency's Work Programme 1998 and 1999.

### ***- Follow-up of the Economic Impact study (1998-2000)***

**4.35** According to the Agency's Work Programme 1998, the follow-up of the report on the Economic Impact of Safety and Health at Work is a priority. Possible follow-up activities have been discussed during 1998 with the Bureau, the Focal Points and the Thematic Network Group.

2 Project proposals for the follow-up will be discussed at the Board meeting in March 1999. The first project deals with practices in the ways organisations use Safety and Health as Market and Procurement Strategy will be contracted out in order to look into the information provided in the report in more depth. This project covers e.g. experiences in Member States of models used to ensure that subcontractors/suppliers of goods and services are selected based on their safety and health performance, or initiatives that demonstrate good safety and health performance, such as OSH labels or OSH declarations of products and services. Experiences with models where OSH information is used by business in connection with marketing and recruitment will also be of interest.

The collection of information about successful models used in the Member States in order to communicate the "Good safety and health is good business" message to business, especially to SME's, is the second follow-up project that the Agency proposes to organise with assistance from external consultants in 1999.

The data collection models will be discussed with the Thematic Network Group and the data collection will be carried out via the Focal Point network. The reports about the subjects are planned to be finalised during 1999.

### ***- OSH campaigns (1999-2000)***

**4.36** According to the rolling plan for information projects in the Agency's Work Programme 1998, a project activity about OSH campaigns is foreseen for 1999-2000. The aim of a project activity in 1999, which will be organised with assistance from external consultants, is to identify the factors that are essential for the successful planning, implementation and evaluation of effective OSH campaigns, with special focus on SME's. The data collection model, which should reflect different types of campaigns (risk, risk sector, risk group), will be discussed with the Thematic Network Group in the first half of 1999 and the data collection will take place in the second half of 1999 via the Focal Point network. A report based on the information provided is expected to be finalised by the end of 1999/beginning of 2000.

### ***- The changing world of work incl.- Safety and Health and Employability (1998-2000)<sup>(3)</sup>***

**4.37** Following the conclusions of the October 1998 Conference in Bilbao on the Changing World of Work, the Agency will, together with the EU-presidencies in 1999, organise activities related to this topic (see 4.1).

**4.38** The impact of occupational safety and health on the employability of workers is an issue of increasing concern both at Member State and at EU-level. It is widely recognised, that good safety and health conditions at the workplace are of considerable importance for the employability of workers. The Agency intends during 1999, with assistance from external consultants and the Thematic Network Group, to prepare a state-of-the-art-report on practices and experiences in the Member States with regard to programmes and initiatives that aim at increasing the employability of workers. The data collection in the Member States via the Focal Points will include both general instruments in order to increase prevention at the workplace and more specific programmes and practices aimed at (re-) integrating specific groups like ageing workers and other groups with reduced work capacity.

#### **- Meeting activities (1999)**

**4.39** Organisation of 3 meetings in 1999 of the Thematic Network Group on Priorities and Strategies.

## **5. Other Agency Matters**

Up

#### **- Management**

**5.1** The Agency will continue to develop its financial, personnel and IT-management systems in accordance with the general development at EU-level and the specific needs of the Agency, e.g. following the advice of the Court of Auditors and the Financial Controller. In addition, the Agency will focus on project- and quality-management as important tools for the proper implementation of its work programme.

#### **- Agency premises**

**5.2** The Agency has to decide about its final premises by the year 2000, when the present rental contract for Gran Via 33 expires. A working group will be established, with the Spanish and Basque Authorities, in 1999 in order to clarify the alternatives and to prepare the Board's decision.

#### **- Evaluation of the Agency Regulation**

**5.3** According to Article 23 of the Agency Regulation, "no later than five years after the entry into force of this Regulation, on the basis of a Commission report, accompanied as

appropriate by a proposal, the Council, having consulted the European Parliament, shall review this Regulation and any new assignment for the Agency that proves necessary." The Regulation came into force on 9 September 1994. The Agency is expected to assist the European Commission in preparing a report in the first half of 1999.

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- 1 Plus 0.180 ECU contribution to the rent of the Agency's premises from the Basque authorities
- 2 New activity transferred from the Commission to the Agency, dependent upon additional budgetary provisions
- 3 New activity, requires a 6.5 Mecu budget
- 4 Project proposals to be discussed at the Board Meeting in March 1999
- 5 New activity to be integrated in the changing world of work activities, requires a 6.5 Mecu budget
- 6 Additional 0.180 MECU contribution to the payment of the rent of the Agency's premises will be provided by the Basque authorities

[Up](#)