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Work Programme 1998

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Annex 1: FOUR YEAR ROLLING WORK PROGRAMME, 1998-2001

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SUMMARY

1. This Work Programme 1998 is based on the Agency's Four-Year Rolling Programme 1998-2001. 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 on National and Community Priorities and Programmes and on Research. According to Article 10.1 of the Regulation, the European Commission and the Advisory Committee for Safety, Hygiene and Health have been consulted before the final version was approved by the Administrative Board in November 1997.

2. The planning model reflects the dualistic nature of the Agency's network organisation structure. It contains both a European level, covering the common development targets for the development of the Agency's network activities, and a national level, allowing the national networks to include the supplementary national development 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 in a transparent way in order to increase efficiency

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

4. The financial resources of the Agency for 1998 will be 5.21 Mecu with 0.7 Mecu in reserve. In the Work Programme (full version) the specific activities, which would be financed by the extra 0.7 Mecu, are indicated. Only with a 5.91 Mecu budget will it be possible gradually during 1998 to recruit the 24 staff, envisaged in the establishment plan.

5. The development of the Agency's information network and active participation of all its participants will be a major priority for 1998, with the focus on

- the organisation, planning and management of the information network
- the development of the network technology, based on Internet
- a common plan for information content development covering

1. Safety and health guidelines and standards
2. Safety and health systems and institutions
3. National and EU safety and health legislation
4. Specific safety and health topics (see point 7)

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

- Responses to requests
- 4-6 Agency Newsletters
- 2-3 Safety and Health Magazines/Bulletins
- Press Service
- Information system for monitoring health and safety in the EU
- A number of conferences, seminars and exhibitions
- Bilbao as a venue for health and safety events

7. The delivery of information projects will be another important output of the Agency in 1998. The Agency plans to carry out its project activities according to the following prioritised rolling plan 1998-2000:

- The State of Occupational Safety and Health in the EU, incl. Risk Sectors * The aim is to provide a major contribution to the development of a system for monitoring the development of safety and health in the Union. The project will give a comprehensive picture of the working conditions in the Member States based on existing national and European data and information sources. Special emphasis will be given to information about Risk Sectors. The Agency will set up a co-funding system in order to support the development of a monitoring system at national level. (1998-1999)

- Follow-up of Surveys on Priorities and Strategies and on Economic Impact

The aim is to organise further relevant follow-up of two surveys in 1997 conducted by the Thematic Network Group on National and Community Priorities and Programmes. One covers National Priorities and Future Strategies and the other the Economic Impact of Safety and Health. (1998)

- Safety and Health Research

The aim is to organise the collection and dissemination of information about all

relevant safety and health research, to disseminate research results, identify gaps, increase transparency and to inform decisions on future research. As a first step priority will be given to stress at work and to risk factors for upper limb disorders*. Secondly, the aim is to draw up a document to assist in the determination of future research priorities and activities. (1998-2000)

- Practical Solutions – best practice

The aim is to explore how information on practical solutions to common problems can be collected and disseminated through the Agency's information network. Priority will be given to databases/information about 1) stress at work, 2) musculoskeletal disorders and 3) the substitution of dangerous substances, e.g. asbestos and organic solvents. The Agency will make use of external assistance (experts, consultants or Topic Centres) in the development process. A special focus will be given to information about practical solutions provided by enterprises, social partners and other non-governmental organisations. (1998-2000)

- Safety and Health in the Information Society

The aim is to provide support to the Member States to manage the safety and health implications of the changing structure of employment following the development of the Information Society. A seminar will be organised in 1998 and based on the results from this seminar, the Agency intends to set up a special Topic Centre, if the necessary resources are available. (1998-2000)

- Safety and Health Campaigns

The aim is to give an overview of the specific methods and tools for the planning, performance and evaluation of preventive campaigns used in the Member States, in order to provide inspiration for concerted safety and health actions in the EU and/or co-operation between Member States. (1999-2000)

8. It is the aim of the Agency to develop modern, efficient administrative management systems covering all its activities and taking advantage of information technology.

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1. Introduction and content

1.1 According to its founding Regulation, it is the aim of the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work to provide Community bodies, the Member States and those involved in the field of safety and health at work with scientific, technical and economic information. The purpose is to encourage improvements, especially in the working environment, in the protection of safety and health of workers as provided for in the Treaty and successive action programmes concerning safety and health at the workplace.

1.2 The collection, assessment and dissemination of information is the core activity of the Agency, which has to be carried out in close co-operation with its information network, based on Focal Points in each Member State of the Union. The Focal Points, in turn, are responsible for the development of national networks of the major information providers in their own Member States. In addition to the Focal Point network, the Agency is required by

the Regulation to create information links to other EU and non-EU bodies, including Community bodies and international organisations involved in occupational safety and health activities. In *chapter 2* the Agency's planning model is described covering both common goals for the network development and specific goals for the Agency and the national networks.

1.3 The Agency's activities are decided by the Administrative Board, based on a Four-Year Rolling Programme and a more specific annual Work Programme, prepared by the Director. Based on a philosophy of co-operation, it is essential that the Agency and the Focal Points plan and develop their activities to reflect the needs of their main user groups and in a transparent way in order to increase efficiency and to avoid duplication. The European Commission and the Advisory Committee for Safety Hygiene and Health at Work have been consulted about this Work Programme. The views expressed by other important safety and health organisations and user groups have also been taken into account. These contributions are described in *chapter 3*.

1.4 The Agency's Work Programme is dependent on the resources available. The Four-Year Rolling Programme 1998-2001 was written on the basis of a steady incremental increase in the Agency's resources over the period to 2001, by which time the Agency should be fully operational. As the Agency is dependent on Community subsidies, the resources which will be made available are decided upon as part of the general annual budget procedure. In *chapter 4* a short overview of the expected financial resources for 1998 is given.

1.5 In *chapters 5-7* detailed plans for the safety- and health-related development activities of the Agency and its Focal Points are presented. Reflecting the major activity areas of the Agency, development goals are identified for Network development (*chapter 5*), Information services (*chapter 6*) and Information projects (*chapter 7*), comprising both common goals for the development of the Agency's network and specific goals for the Agency.

1.6 This Programme is especially focused on the planned safety- and health-related activities of the Agency. But during this developmental stage, the establishment of modern, efficient administrative management systems is also an important issue. In *chapter 8* the targets for the development of these management systems are presented based, amongst other things, on the advice received from the Court of Auditors and the Financial Controller.

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2. Planning model

2.1 As the Agency is based on a central organisation in Bilbao linked to a decentralised organisation in all Member States, the planning process must reflect these two different strands. For each strand, development targets covering *Agency and Focal Point activities* will be established, including common goals for Agency-related activities at Member State level. In planning their national development programmes, the Focal Points and their networks are encouraged to include these common goals. In addition, each Focal Point could introduce further activities reflecting the specific national network context.

2.2 The result should be a flexible planning system, which reflects both the need for a common European network-development plan and the need for specific activities as part of

the national network-development. Transparency could be ensured by publishing both the Agency's annual Work Programme and the national development programmes on the Agency website. The Agency will, together with the Focal Points, prepare a common framework for the national development programmes for 1998 in order to facilitate the planning process.

2.3 The Agency's *other network partners* have also been included in the planning process. Their development plans for information network links with the Agency will form part of more structured forms of co-operation (e.g. Memoranda of Understanding, exchanges of letters) which are expected to be entered into in 1997 and 1998.

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3. Context for the Work Programme 1998

3.1 It is essential that the Agency and its network plan and develop their activities to reflect the needs of their main user groups and in a transparent way in order to increase efficiency and to avoid duplication. The views expressed by the major European and national safety and health organisations and user groups have been taken into consideration in this final version of the Work Programme.

3.2 At **Community** level, the Agency has noted the results of the *Amsterdam European Council* to incorporate both the Social Agreement and a new title on Employment in the Treaty. The social policy chapter includes the "improvement of the working environment" as a leading theme.

3.3 *Commissioner Flynn* addressed the Advisory Committee in April 1997 and in his speech he expressed his intention to give safety and health at work a higher political profile and asked for the support of the Committee. He made it clear that the health and safety of the workforce should be seen as key aspects of job creation, employability and competitiveness.

3.4 In completing the "Community Programme 1996-2000" on health and safety at work, the *European Commission* is intending to concentrate its priorities for 1998-2000 on securing good working conditions during a time of change; ensuring good information for SMEs; ensuring European health and safety legislation is effective; making safety and health a key component in other Community policies; preparing the European Union enlargement and developing international co-operation. The Agency will support Community actions and the Commission has already approached the Agency with a number of initiatives to date (for example, a report on the State of Occupational Safety and Health in the Union including a special report on Risk Sectors; Upper Limb Disorders and Stress at Work).

3.5 The conclusions of a *conference in Bilbao* "Good Safety and Health – Good Business for Europe", organised jointly by the Luxembourg Presidency and the Agency supported the theme that better safety and health at work will lead to improved employability and increased competitiveness for Europe.

3.6 The *European Parliament* has expressed its visions and expectations of the Agency's work mainly through the Social Affairs and Employment Committee and more generally on

budgetary and administrative questions through the Budget Committee. Following presentations by the Director to the Social Affairs Committee in April and November 1997, the Committee Chairman on behalf of the Committee expressed satisfaction about the quality and scope of the activities already carried out and those planned by the Agency.

3.7 The *Advisory Committee* has in its rolling work programme 1996-2000 defined a number of areas of concern within the broad categories of high risks, special target groups, new concerns, preventive and organisational measures, where it will advise on Commission action and monitor results. The Commission has involved the Agency in the follow-up to the recommendations for action in the Committee's report about stress at work. The Agency has consulted the Advisory Committee about the Work Programme.

3.8 The *Senior Labour Inspectors Committee* (SLIC) was informed about the Agency's draft Work Programme in June 1997. SLIC has decided to focus its thematic activities 1997-1998 on the following items: waste handling, practice and priorities in inspection, risk assessment, textile industry. The Committee's work programme also covers a number of activities related to the exchange of information about the national enforcement and inspection systems. It is important that the work of the Agency will support initiatives taken by SLIC.

3.9 The *European Foundation for Living and Working Conditions* is involved in a number of projects related to the working environment and to the safety and health of workers. In order to reflect the need for transparency, to avoid duplication and to ensure the complementary nature of their activities, a Memorandum of Understanding is being prepared for approval by the two Boards. In the Dublin Foundation's Four Year Programme 1997-2000, a number of projects are proposed primarily addressing the challenge of health and well being. These are Employment and health, Monitoring working conditions in the EU, Design for integration, Ill health and workplace absenteeism. The Programme stresses that the development of activities within these areas has to be co-ordinated with the Agency.

3.10 The **Agency Network** has forwarded contributions to the Work Programme 1998 mainly through the Focal Points, the Thematic Networks and the Internet Group. *Focal Point representatives* have identified some priorities both at Focal Point meetings and individually. An important input to the development targets for the information network and the information services has been provided by the surveys of Users Needs and of Information Providers. Further, a comprehensive input to information projects has been generated through the survey of Member States' future priorities organised by the *Thematic Network Group* "National and Community Priorities and Programmes". Two new Thematic Network Groups, "Research" and "Practical Solutions and Preventive Action" will be encouraged to provide further contributions to the Agency's Programme. Finally, the development goals for the organisation, technology and content of the Agency's information on the Internet have been discussed and prepared in co-operation with the *Internet Group and the Focal Points*.

3.11 The Agency has also been in contact with both the 1998 *Presidencies* of the European Council, the United Kingdom and Austria.

3.12 Finally, the goals for the development of the Agency's network relations with *non-EU network bodies* have been discussed with applicant countries, and with in particular the CEECs that form part of the enlargement process and also with the EEA-countries.

4. Assessment of the resources available for Agency activities 1998

4.1 The Four-Year Rolling Programme is based on a steady increase in the Agency's resources over the period to 2001, when the Agency should be fully operational. According to the budget procedure of the Community, Agencies' budgets are decided on an annual basis. As its activity planning is based on multiannual programmes, the Agency is a strong supporter of multiannual budgets based on these programmes. It has therefore forwarded a proposal to the EP Budget Committee, together with the other Agencies, of becoming a pilot institution for multiannual budgets.

4.2 According to the Financial Regulations, the final budget of the Agency for 1998, including the establishment plan shall be adopted before the beginning of the financial year. The Administrative Board agreed upon seven Mecu in its budget proposal for 1998 as necessary for the development of the Agency. The Commission has forwarded a budget proposal including a five Mecu subsidy for the Agency. The Council has forwarded this proposal without amendment to the European Parliament.

4.3 The Agency has discussed the possibility of receiving additional funds with the EP Social Affairs and Employment Committee and the rapporteur of the Budget Committee on agencies. At its first reading the Budget Committee has agreed to add 0,7 MECU in reserve to the PDB. This Work Programme shows what can be achieved with a five Mecu budget and also shows the specific activities which would be financed by the extra 0,7 Mecu. It is foreseen that the Agency will receive a 0.21 Mecu grant (75 % of the rent of the Agency offices) from the Basque Government and the Government of the County of Vizcaya, and therefore its total budget will be 5.21-5.91 Mecu.

4.4 The Agency's *budget* is divided between three titles and the planned breakdown is as follows (Mecu):

| | | |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Personnel | 2.11 | 2.11 |
| Building/Infrastructure | 0.80 | 0.80 |
| Operations | 2.30 | 3.00 |
| Total budget | 5.21 | 5.91 |

The distribution of the Agency's *staff* is planned as follows:

| | |
|--------------------------------|----|
| Directors office | 2 |
| Planning and Information | 5 |
| Network and Project Management | 12 |

Administration

5

Agency staff in all**24**

Within a 5.21 Mecu budget, only 18-20 staff can be recruited 1998, while a 5.91 Mecu budget would allow the Agency to recruit all 24 staff gradually during 1998.

Up

5. Network development – building the links

5.1 In 1997 there were some major achievements in building up the basic **organisation of the Agency's information network** including the establishment of the system of Focal Points, Thematic Network Groups, Internet Group, National Editors and User Panels. Also the first important steps towards the participation of other EU and non-EU bodies in the Agency's Information Network will be taken as links are built with a number of organisations based on a more structured form of co-operation. These achievements will be consolidated and developed further in 1998.

5.2 During 1998 network activities will be based on specialised work plans for each group. For 1998 the following *network meetings* are planned: 4 Focal Point meetings, 3 Thematic Network Group meetings (for each of the 3 groups), 4 Internet Group meetings, 1-2 National Editor meetings. There will also be regular co-ordination meetings with the Commission Services linked to the Agency network. Finally 1 seminar for all non-EU network bodies is planned.

5.3 Another important task for 1998 is to further develop the *network management and planning system* for the Focal Point network, based on Guidelines for Basic Requirements and network development programmes (see chapter 2). For the other network partners, the network management and planning should be based on a more structured form of co-operation, covering mutual information about the envisaged development of the information exchange. If appropriate, network development programmes will be developed with applicant countries, in particular the CEEC's included in the enlargement process of the EU and with EEA-countries based on the same principles as the Focal Point network.

5.4 Based on the Internet, the information **network technology** of the Agency will be developed further in order to provide a fully efficient infrastructure for the information network. The information system is distributed over several sites and requires co-ordinated development. The following *common goals* for the technology development plan of the Agency and the Focal Points are planned for 1998:

- The Internet information network will be improved and the information content enlarged according to the information content development plan (see 5.13)
- All Member States (Focal Points) will host and manage their own national network Web site
- The national information network partners will be represented on the Web sites and their information will be made available according to the agreed common and national goals

- The network will be promoted online and widely publicised

5.5 The information network will become fully operational on the Internet. The representation of the national information networks on the system will ensure access to a wide range of health and safety information for employers, workers and all with an interest in health and safety. The network will be promoted both online and in Agency information products to create awareness of the system thus giving access to a wider audience.

5.6 Besides these common goals the Agency will initiate the following *specific goals* for technology development (IT projects) depending on the budget available :

- Development of search engines
- Development of interfaces to existing electronic information resources
- Technical/logistical support to Member States
- Development of newsgroup facilities
- Integration of emerging Internet technologies, applications and intelligent agents

5.7 The aim of these specific projects is to develop a well-managed, secure and user-friendly structure. The development of search engines for the Web sites will enable users to search for information on specific topics making the location of relevant information easier, more productive and faster. A wide variety of occupational safety and health information is already available in electronic form. These can be made available to a wider audience by developing interfaces that enable users to access them via the Internet.

5.8 The Agency will continue to offer technical support to Member States particularly those that have not had experience of administering Internet facilities. In order to facilitate information exchange and make the network more interactive, newsgroup facilities will be developed both to support communication between network partners (e.g. closed discussion group for Focal Points) and to provide a public forum where current OSH issues can be discussed.

5.9 The Internet is an ever-changing environment, with new developments occurring with great regularity and the Agency plans to effectively exploit these new technologies to enhance the dissemination of OSH information. Technologies will be explored which enable the delivery of tailored information to the user; that will help maintain and update sites with the aim of reducing the workload and human involvement in creating and maintaining information, and hence costs, for network partners. In order to improve the flow of information between the Agency and its network partners, the Agency will establish a telematic development plan for a period of three years. This plan will contain an assessment of the need of telecommunications with the different partners and an assessment of requirements. In addition, the Agency will use Telematics projects such as HSPRO-EU and, if possible, the Commission's programmes to support its technological development.

5.10 Since summer 1997, the Agency has had a presence on the Internet in the form of an experimental Web site. Since then the **information content** of the Agency's and the Focal Points' web sites has been gradually developed. A major challenge for 1998 will be to ensure a *common plan for information content development* on the system so that information resources can be developed in a co-ordinated manner. The following information items will be included in this common development plan for 1998:

- Safety and health guidelines and standards

- Safety and health systems and institutions
- National and EU safety and health legislation
- Specific safety and health topics (see Chapter 7)

5.11 The plan will provide a framework for the implementation of information content on the system, however, in the early stages, the entry of information will be influenced primarily by the availability of information in electronic format. It is essential that the system offers a quality information service with up-to-date, accurate and timely information and therefore the system will be well-maintained and regularly updated. Mechanisms for the promotion and evaluation of the information network to users will be explored.

5.12 The Agency Web site will provide organised access to all relevant available EU and international information resources by incorporating hotlinks to relevant EU institutions, especially the Commission and to international organisations such as the ILO, WHO, etc. In order to ensure co-operative and complementary development of EU and international OSH information provision on the Internet, the Agency will establish arrangements with other network bodies

5.13 Further, *specific plans for the information content* for the Agency, covering European and international information, and for each Focal Point, covering specific national priorities for information, will be prepared. For the Agency, following the more structured forms of co-operation developed with other network bodies and for the Focal Points, as part of the development programmes for the national networks (see 5.3).

Up

6. Information services – communicating knowledge

6.1 To communicate knowledge about safety and health is the core business of the Agency. The Agency's information services will first and foremost be based on the development of its information network activities, both by collecting and disseminating already existing information as well as creating new information for example through information projects.

6.2 In addition to making information available on the Internet, the Agency plans to provide the following complementary information services and systems in 1998:

- *Response to requests* from the Community bodies, Member States and those involved in the field. The Agency's information policy should be to respond to requests for information about the activities and work of the Agency and its network. It should also provide access to the extensive range of information on safety and health issues, which will be available through its network. Responses will be prioritised according to the resources available in the Agency and its network and in accordance with the priorities laid down in the Regulation;
- A *Newsletter* for the Agency network and other interested parties will be produced periodically 4-6 times a year in order to update Agency network users, health and safety professionals and decision-makers on the activities of the Agency and

developments in the area of safety and health;

- A *Safety and Health Magazine/Bulletin* will be produced 3 times a year for safety and health experts and professionals and will contain a series of specialist articles on new information, research, activities and events at both the European and international level;
- *Press information resource*, 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. The press strategy shall be targeted at both the European level and at the national level in co-operation with the Focal points. Articles will be targeted to reach a variety of audiences (specialist, general public, particular interest groups, etc.);
- Build up an *information system for monitoring health and safety* on a European level. As a major contribution to this development, the results of the biennial "State of Occupational Safety and Health in Europe" report (see 7.2) will be disseminated and communicated regularly to all interested parties through the Internet, in Agency information publications and through press information releases;
- Organisation of or participation in *conferences, seminars, exhibitions* etc in order to increase the profile of the Agency in the area of safety and health. The Agency will organise one major conference per year and will organise and participate in a series of other conferences and seminars. (See 7.3–7.7). These will be targeted at the European and international level in order to promote the role of the Agency and its network in providing a major safety and health information resource. Amongst others a Workshop on Occupational Safety and Health Research Dissemination in Brussels in November has already been agreed with the Swedish National Institute of Working Life. 3 to 4 exhibitions per year will also be targeted at the European and international level with the objective of increasing the awareness of potential users about the Agency's information resources;
- *Bilbao* will be used as a venue for safety and health events (conferences, exhibitions, and seminars). Amongst other things, the Agency will help bring together private sector partners at the Spanish and European level in order to explore the possibility of holding a safety and health fair in Bilbao.

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7. Information projects – developing knowledge

7.1 The delivery of information projects will be another important output of the Agency in 1998. The Agency plans to carry out the following project activities in partnership with the Focal Points, either through the Thematic Networks, through ad hoc networks of experts convened on a particular topic or through Topic Centres designated to carry out a specific task for the Agency. Some projects will be carried out for and in co-operation with the European Commission. The rolling plan for The Agency's information projects 1998-1999 has the following priorities:

- The State of Occupational Safety and Health in the EU, incl. Risk Sectors
- Follow-up of Surveys on Priorities and Strategies and on Economic Impact
- Safety and Health Research

- Practical Solutions – best practice
- Safety and Health in the Information Society
- Safety and Health Campaigns

7.2 The information project *The State of Occupational Safety and Health in the EU* is planned to be a major contribution to the development of a system for monitoring the development of safety and health in the Union. The information gathered can serve as an input to priority decisions and to stimulate further preventive activities at national and European level.

The project will give a comprehensive picture of the working conditions in the Member States based on existing national and European data and information sources. Amongst other things it will identify common exposures and risks in relation to economic sector, occupation, employment status, gender, age etc., give information about preventive policies and strategies and identify gaps in information and needs for further development of information sources, especially in regard to "emerging risks". Where appropriate, information about the occupational risks posed by environmental conditions will be included. Specific attention will be given to information about risk sectors.

The project is initiated jointly by the Agency and the European Commission and will be carried out in close co-operation with the Commission. Besides the Focal Points, the Thematic Network Groups and national experts, EUROSTAT, the Dublin Foundation etc are expected to participate as well. As it is expected to have major resource implications for the Agency and its network partners, the Agency will set up a co-funding system in order to support the development of a monitoring system at national level.

The project is expected to be finalised in 1999 and will be carried out each second year. It will be the key information project activity of the Agency in 1998.

7.3 The *Thematic Network Group on National and Community Priorities and Programmes* has conducted two surveys in 1997, one on National Priorities and Future Strategies and one on the Economic Impact of Safety and Health. The results of the first survey are reflected by a number of information projects for 1998.

Further relevant follow-up of these surveys will be discussed within the Thematic Group and the Focal Points and will be decided by the Administrative Board. It is expected that seminars will be organised on specific subjects of common interest with the participation of national and European experts. As part of the preparation of these seminars, further (limited) information project activities can be foreseen.

7.4 According to the decision of the Administrative Board, a Thematic Network Group on Research is established in order to assist in the development of the Agency's information activities about *Safety and Health Research*.

The first task of the Agency in 1998 will be in co-operation with this Network Group to draw up a plan as to how to organise the collection and dissemination of information about all relevant safety and health research activities. As a first step, priority will be given to 1) stress at work and to 2) risk factors for upper limb disorders.

Re 1) Stress at work. In order to co-ordinate activities, the European Commission has asked which activities the Agency has planned in relation to the recommendations of the Advisory Committee for Safety, Hygiene and Health at Work. Further the Agency survey of

National Priorities and Strategies indicates that stress at work or related subjects are important priorities and that their impact will be of considerable interest in the future.

Therefore the Agency will include the following information projects:

Firstly, the subject stress at work will be one of the priority areas for the content development plan 1998 for the Agency's information network on the Internet. All relevant information at Member State and Community level about stress at work, e.g. research results, legislation and guidelines, preventive policies and actions as well as practical solutions will be made available and a special newsgroup for exchange of information will be established for experts and practitioners.

Secondly, the three Thematic Network Groups of the Agency will be asked to give this subject high priority in their activities.

Thirdly, the Agency intends to set up a special Topic Centre, whose specific tasks would include:

1. to monitor information on stress at work via the Internet and other media;
2. provide an overview of national policies, legislation and guidelines to improve the prevention of stress at work;
3. review research in particular intervention research about stress at work;
4. develop methods for improving the exchange of information about stress at work, including best practices for SMEs;
5. collect and monitor information about education and training about stress prevention.

These tasks will, if necessary, be further developed in co-operation with the Board. If the necessary resources (0.125 Mecu) are available² the Agency will enter into a contractual arrangement with an external expert institution, based on a call for offers/tender. The work of the Topic Centre would then be carried out from the second half of 1998 to mid-2000.

Re 2) Risk factors for upper limb disorders. The European Commission has asked for the Agency's collaboration in relation to action on risk factors for upper limb disorders. The Commission has, in its request for an Agency contribution, stated, that "in order to analyse the need for a Community action on risk factors for upper limb disorders including the opportunity to set standards, the Commission has decided to carry out some preparatory work which should result in a proposal for a Community action."

More specifically the Agency has been asked to contribute to the collection of relevant research results and to the description and assessment of the relevant research results concerning risk factors for upper limb disorders.

The second task will be, amongst other things, to draw up a document to assist in the determination of future research priorities and activities on the basis of the information gathered. In order to facilitate the preparation of such a document, the Agency will organise a seminar in the second half of 1998 in order to discuss future research priorities with national and European and international experts.

Following this seminar, input from the national interest groups and experts, including the social partners and researchers, will be organised through meetings and seminars in the Member States in the rest of 1998 and the first half of 1999. The project is expected to be

finalised in the second half of 1999.

The project activities will be prepared in close collaboration with the Thematic Network Group on Research and with national network experts. European and international experts, including the relevant Directorates of the Commission, will be involved especially in the preparation of the document.

7.5 The Thematic Network Group on *Practical Solutions, Preventive Action and Co-operation* will start work in early 1998 and amongst others discuss how information on practical solutions to common problems can be collected and disseminated through the Agency's information network.

These considerations are expected to lead to several information project activities. One of these would be to look into already existing data(bases) with useful information about possible practical solutions to common safety and health problems, taking into account the (pilot) projects and other initiatives taken by the Commission. Priority will be given to databases/information about 1) stress at work, 2) musculoskeletal disorders and 3) the substitution of dangerous substances e.g. asbestos and organic solvents.

Practical solutions to the subjects in question will be one of the priority areas for the content development plan 1998 for the Agency's information network on the Internet. All relevant information at Member State and Community level about practical solutions including specific examples, legislation and guidelines, preventive policies and actions will be made available and a special newsgroup for exchange of information will be established for experts and practitioners. A special focus will be given to information about practical solutions provided by enterprises, the social partners and other non-governmental organisations.

The Agency will make use of external assistance including experts, consultants or Topic Centres in the development process, whose specific tasks related to the three subjects would include:

1. to develop models for the presentation and exchange of information about practical solutions and best practices on the Internet, CD-ROM etc, with special emphasis on SMEs;
2. provide an overview of national programmes, policies, legislation and guidelines to support the development and implementation of practical solutions;
3. review relevant intervention studies;

These tasks will, if necessary, be further developed in co-operation with the Board. If the necessary resources (0.125-0.375 Mecu) are available³ the Agency will enter into a contractual arrangement with external expert institutions, based on a call for offers/tender. The work of the Topic Centres would then be carried out from the second half of 1998 to mid-2000.

The three Thematic Network Groups of the Agency will be asked to give practical solutions a high priority in their activities.

7.6 The Agency's survey of National Priorities and Strategies has identified the need for Member States to manage the safety and health implications of the changing structures of employment following the development of the *Information Society*. Also the European Commission has recently addressed the subject in two green papers on the information

society and on new organisation of work. The latter poses the question "What impacts, both favourable and detrimental, are the new forms of work organisation, flexibility in working time and employment contracts, having on the health, safety and job environment and for the management of these issues?"

In order to design an adequate approach to this complex subject and to ensure transparency and to avoid duplication of efforts, the Agency will organise a seminar about Safety and Health in the Information Society in 1998 with the participation of national, European and international experts. This event will be prepared in co-operation with the Thematic Network Group on National and Community Priorities and Programmes. The European Commission, the Dublin Foundation and the European Social Partners will be invited to participate.

The Agency will in its work take into account the outcome of the conferences and workshop, which have already taken place, e.g. on the social dimension of teleworking.

Based on the results of this seminar, the Agency intends to set up a special Topic Centre whose tasks will be to:

1. collect and assess the available information on this subject, including
 - work organisation
 - home working
 - teleworking
 - employment status including the "self employed"
1. disseminate information via reports, databases, Internet activities, seminars etc. for the Agency.

The tasks of the Topic Centre will, if necessary, be further developed in co-operation with the Board. If the necessary resources (0.125 Mecu) are available⁴ the Agency will enter into a contractual arrangement with an external expert institution, based on a call for offers/tender. The work of the Topic Centre would then be carried out from the second half of 1998 to mid-2000.

7.7 The results of the Agency survey on National Priorities and Future Strategies clearly indicate the importance of *safety and health campaigns* as a preventive measure. Therefore the following information activities within this area are planned within the frame of the Thematic Network Group on Practical Solutions, Preventive Action and Co-operation in together with the Thematic Network Group on National and Community Priorities and Programmes.

Firstly, a study will be organised to give a more in-depth overview about the specific methods and tools used by Member States so far for the planning, performance and evaluation of preventive campaigns, as well as about plans for the future within this area. An important aspect will be the involvement of the social partners and other interest groups. (1st half of 1999)

Secondly, the study will be followed by a seminar where the results will be discussed and specific experiences of successful campaigns will be exchanged. This is in order to provide inspiration for concerted safety and health actions in the EU and/or as part of the co-operation between Member States on sector- and/or risk-oriented campaigns. (2nd half of 1999).

Thirdly, the process of developing safety and health campaigns will be continued and organised according to the recommendations of the seminar during the rest of 1999 and the first half of 2000.

The key participants in this project will be the Thematic Network Groups on Practical Solutions and on National and Community Priorities as well as network experts. These and other relevant national (authorities, social partners etc) and European (Commission, European Foundation) safety and health experts will be invited to the seminar.

Up

8. Development targets for the administrative management of the Agency 1998

8.1 During 1997 the Agency received advice from the Court of Auditors and the Financial Control of the Commission about the development of its financial management system. Financial management and other administrative management questions are discussed at Inter-Agency meetings in order to create transparency and to benefit from common solutions to common problems. The development of an appropriate common accounting system has been given a high priority and continues to be a key request from all Agencies to the Commission.

8.2 It is the aim of the Agency to develop modern, efficient administrative management systems covering all its activities and taking advantage of information technology. Most of these systems are expected to be implemented in 1998, depending on the development horizon of the different technical and administrative solutions.

8.3 A special goal for 1998 is to start the development of an overall *Management Information System* based on key figures for budget, activities and performance, based on the annual Work Programme and the more detailed contracts with each section of the Agency. This Information System should serve different purposes: staff should be able to monitor their activities and performance as an important element of personal planning; programme and project managers should be able to monitor the activities they are responsible for, including the implementation of contracts and the Director should be able to monitor the budget, activity and performance based on aggregated key data. External consultants will be involved in this development. The Agency will also take into account any relevant developments made or foreseen in this area by the European Community institutions in the framework of its administrative modernisation.

8.4 Development goals for *Financial Management* for 1998 are to consolidate the administrative systems that have been developed throughout 1997. This includes a provisional accounting system based on Excel, Cubic, RAI and SIETE (Home Banking software). In this respect, the Agency will explore with other Agencies the use of a working prototype of a Beta-version of SI 2 (integrated budget and accounting system provided by the Commission) in conjunction with a commercial accounting system. In addition, the Agency's financial management system will include the development of activity budgeting in order to establish transparency in the use of its resources and to involve the responsible programme and project managers in the financial management of their activities and

projects.

8.5 For *Personnel Management* development in 1998 a major challenge will be to finalise the recruitment of statutory staff and to ensure the best possible integration of new staff, both professionally and socially. In order to ensure common methods for communication and co-operation between staff, a training programme will be developed and implemented. This will include language training, training in project management and in quality management, as well as training/instruction in the Agency's IT-solutions and administrative systems. A special development programme will be introduced for all staff based on a system of personal development discussions with the Director or relevant manager. For staff with management responsibilities, these discussions will include management development.

8.6 *Information Technology management* is a particularly key area for the Agency, since its network activities are mainly based on Internet solutions. The development and implementation of the Internet technology is therefore one of the most important methods for developing the core business of the Agency. The specific goals for these activities are explained in chapter 5. Effective IT systems are also vital to support the internal administrative management, co-operation and communication within the Agency. During 1997 most of the individual office systems supporting the different administrative functions will have been established. The development of an integrated, automated office, started in 1997, will be continued as an important step towards the overall aim of a "paperless administration". A key aspect of this development will be to organise a system of record management, with different steps (processing, circulating and filing), that will allow the staff to access information at the required time.

8.7 Since information service is the core activity of the Agency and given its decentralised network structure, it is essential that this service is relevant, customer-orientated, timely and quality-assured. *Quality Management* is the key to delivering such a service and quality management instruments will be introduced and used to achieve an appropriate level of customer satisfaction with the Agency's services. As part of the gradual implementation of quality management, every new service or product of the Agency will be given a specific quality target against which performance will be measured. All staff will be trained in quality management and it will be an important element of the internal contracts with the different sections of the Agency. The aim is to improve the efficiency and quality of the Agency's services offered to other institutions, companies and the public.

8.8 In line with the Agency's structure and objective, other important aspects of its work organisation include networking, multi-disciplinary staff, flexible use of resources (including staff) and internal/external project work. *Project Management* is the instrument that will form the common basis for the Agency's work organisation and planning. All staff will be trained in basic project management and additional training for project and programme managers will include IT project management tools.

Up

Annex 1: FOUR YEAR ROLLING WORK PROGRAMME, 1998-2001

September 1997

Chapter 1. Introduction

The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work is required, under Article 10 of the Regulation establishing the Agency (2062/94) to draw up a four year rolling work programme, of which the Annual Work Programmes approved by the Administrative Board shall form a part.

The Programme is written with a clear objective in mind, as set out in Article 2 of the Regulation 2062/94:

"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 health and safety at the workplace, the aim of the Agency shall be to provide the Community bodies, the Member States and those involved in the field with the technical, scientific and economic information of use in the field of safety and health at work".

The specific actions the Agency has to carry out are outlined in art. 3 and 4 of the regulation 2062/94. The Agency therefore proposes to address the issues concerned, in co-operation with the European Commission and in partnership with the other Community bodies, the Member States, European social partners and other parties involved in the occupational safety and health field, in a positive and open manner.

1.2. The forward planning of the Agency is currently in two phases; the first is this rolling work programme which consists of a four-year plan, that will be updated and rolled forward each year. The programme will begin with the plans for 1998 and set out medium and longer term aims for 1999-2001, allowing the necessary flexibility for them to be amended to reflect new developments and changing priorities. The second phase is the annual work programme for 1998, which gives detailed information about the Agency's goals and activities.

This first four year programme presents a particular challenge as it is necessarily written before the first full year's work has been undertaken, and before the Agency has all the necessary input and information (notably on costs) to provide the appropriate level of detail. In addition, its progress is naturally heavily dependent upon the activity of the first full year of activity, 1997. It aims to build upon and develop the themes begun in 1997. Particularly important will be the successful establishment of the Agency's information network based on the Internet and the role of the National Focal Points and national information networks. Specifically, the programme will concentrate on three main activity areas:

Network Development - building the links

Information Services – communicating knowledge

Information Projects – developing knowledge

1.4. This rolling work programme is written on the basis that there will be a steady incremental increase in the Agency's resources, over the period to 2001 when the Agency should be fully operational. Resource allocations as set out in the Financial Statement for 1998 would enable the Agency to develop its work and make the necessary technical enhancements to its network. In each year of the four year programme, activities will be

undertaken in each of the three areas described above. Emphasis will be given to ensuring wide public access to information at national level through the network structure, and to promoting high safety and health standards at national and EU level by carrying out a number of key information projects.

This programme is written on the basis that the period 1998-99 will be a time of further development and consolidation of the Agency's main network, of its other information dissemination activities and of its staffing and resource base; and that in 2000-1 the Agency will be fully operational, with its network in full partnership with bodies both inside and outside the EU, having the capacity to manage a wide range and number of complex projects.

Since the resource increases cannot be assumed, the programme attempts to emphasise what will be the Agency's priorities at any given level of resources. At a lower than expected level of resources, these priorities would continue to be pursued (albeit possibly to a longer time scale than originally envisaged), and lower priority work would not be undertaken. Activities on information activities and information projects in para 1.3 would have to be managed so that they did not take place at the expense of the development phase of the basic information network.

1.6 As background to the plans set out in this programme, it is expected that by the end of 1997 the following will have been achieved (dependent on availability of resources):

- An IT plan will be in the course of implementation, basic network links will have been established, the role of the Focal Points and the national information networks will have been defined and pilot activities may have been commenced.
- Other information services will have been launched through the production of an information brochure, a newsletter, and stands at Conferences in Düsseldorf, Bilbao and Seville;
- Information projects will have been started, including projects on the economic impact of safety and health and occupational safety and health priorities and strategies
- The ad hoc requests for information will be routinely dealt with;
- A start will have been made to organising the political priorities of the Agency on a more structured basis, including relationships with other bodies with a close interest in the Agency's area of work. These will have been placed on a firmer footing, notably with the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions in Dublin, with whom a Memorandum of Understanding is expected to be agreed and implemented.

Chapter 2. Network Development - building the links.

2.1 The major tasks for the Agency as mentioned in art. 3 of regulation 2062/94 will be the following:

to establish the network comprising the main component elements of the national information networks; the national focal points and any future topic centres. This will be done in co-operation with the Member States, and the Agency will co-ordinate it, taking into account the national, Community and international bodies and organisations which provide this type of information and services;

to collect and make available information on safety and health matters from and to third countries and international organisations (WHO, ILO, PAHO, IMO etc.);

Particularly in the early period of the programme, the task of developing further the information network based on the Internet, through the Focal Points and National Networks, will be a high priority activity. The aim of this activity will be to link all existing safety and health information that are available through IT to the Agency's network, and to ensure that it is easily accessible to the target users. This will involve building up the IT infrastructure and expertise of the Agency to handle the relevant information. It will build on the achievements of 1997, which have included the creation of a Homepage system for the Agency and the Focal Points, and access to basic safety and health data in Member States through this gateway. It will be firmly based on the needs of target groups, which will be regularly monitored (see paragraph 2.11 below).

The Establishment of a Guidance on Basic Requirements and Development Plan for the Agency Network

2.3 By 1998, it is expected that agreement will have been reached on the requirements/responsibilities of the Agency Network. A development plan for their work and the national networks should have been constructed on the basis of the annual work programme, and implementation and further development should be in progress. This will feature the following:

- further development of the format of the information, and its means of access, so as to facilitate its use by target groups; this includes continual study of the needs of users;
- plans for linking existing occupational safety and health databases through the network;
- how material currently available in printed form might be accessed through the network;
- the scope for, and means of, developing the provision of information on a commercial basis;
- further development of the role of the Focal Points, for example in channelling information to the Agency network, in quality control/consistency, in contributing to information projects, and especially in building up effective national networks, which link policy-makers, social partners, academic and research institutions and other major information providers in all Member States into the Agency's network. This will involve the sharing of good practice, securing commitment to the necessary input of resources, support, and advice from the Agency.

2.4 A regular programme of meetings of the Focal Points will be established (3-4 per year), and there will be systematic liaison with each Focal Point.

2.5 In the latter phase of the four-year period (2000-2001) it is likely that less priority will be given to this activity as it may be expected that by then, the role and responsibilities of the Focal Points and national networks will have been well established, and a relatively higher priority will be given to developing ways of using the information thus gathered.

Development of thematic networks through the Focal Points

2.6 The Agency's Information Projects will be carried out by the Agency in partnership with its national Focal Points, through 'thematic networks', with ad hoc groups of experts, through the Focal Points themselves, through studies of individual subjects, or through

Topic Centres designated to carry out a specific task for the Agency. This concept is explained further below, in chapter 4. The thematic networks will monitor the need for collection and dissemination of information in each of the areas identified in Article 3 of Regulation 2062/94 as being of relevance to the Agency.

The development of Partnership arrangements with other EU and non-EU organisations

2.7 In the earliest phase of this programme links will be established between the Agency's Network and safety and health organisations both at EU level and at international level (for example, the ILO, WHO, ISSA, UNEP). Initial links will also be developed to other countries which make information available through the Internet. The Agency will focus on the CEEC's included in the enlargement process of the EU, on EEA-countries, the USA and Canada. Development of these links will be limited in the start-up phase as priority will be given to building up the network within the EU, based upon the national Focal Points and networks. In the middle to later period of the programme (1999-2000) the Agency will aim to connect the Network to a wider range of countries, and to increase co-operation in the development of health and safety information on the Internet. It will also aim to link the network to other groups with an interest in occupational safety and health, for example NGO's and consumer safety groups.

2.8 By the middle to later period, the Agency would also expect to establish more sophisticated links with these bodies over the form and content of their information on the network and the uses of that information in projects. Thus the concept of 'full' and 'associated' partner status to the Network will be finally developed - the Agency would aim to formalise its arrangements for partnership with bodies outside the national focal point network by defining the terms of partnership with them, depending on their willingness and/or capacity to contribute to information projects with the existing full partners.

The development of the Network technology

2.9 Development of the technical aspects of the network will continue from 1997, when it is expected that a basic Homepage system will be set up. This work will continue throughout the programme, although clearly it will have high priority in the early stages. Implementation of the IT plan will continue, including implementation of a study of the structure of the safety and health data in Member States.

2.10 The technological development of the Network will be assisted where necessary through the use of outside consultancy, and by use through partnership of technical expertise within Member State safety and health organisations. The aim will be to implement the IT plan on the basis of the most objective advice available, and taking full advantage of the experience of the Telematics Project Health and Safety Promotion in the European Union (HS Pro-EU project).

2.11 The Agency will keep under review the inevitable changes in information technology over the programme period, including the question of whether the Internet will remain the most appropriate vehicle for the IT network, and the implications of these changes for the work of the Agency.

Operation of the Network

2.12 As an early priority, the Agency will implement ways of measuring, as far as possible,

the impact and effectiveness of its network. The information thus obtained will be used to target the information provided by the Agency so that it meets the needs of its priority users. This will build on work started in 1997. There will be an annual survey of Network users with, every two to three years, a more in-depth study of reactions to the network's information.

2.13 The Agency will also review regularly, in conjunction with its Network partners, the structure and operation of the network, and make changes if necessary. These reviews and the outcomes of the user surveys will be reported as indicators of performance in the Annual Reports and Financial Statements issued by the Agency.

Chapter 3. Information Services – communicating knowledge

3.1 Alongside the forward development of its main information network, based on the Internet, the Agency must use both this and other media to fulfil its obligations as set out in the Regulation to disseminate information on occupational safety and health; and it has specific obligations to organise certain forms of information exchange such as conferences and seminars. This work will continue throughout the period of the rolling programme, although it may be expected to grow in breadth and complexity over the period, as the Agency's access to information grows, and as its capacity increases to conduct and publish analyses, organise conferences, etc. The main elements of this work will be as follows:

Responses to ad hoc information requests

3.2 Throughout the period of the programme one of the tasks of the Agency will be to respond to a variety of ad hoc requests for information from Community bodies, Member States and those involved in the field. Depending on the complexity of the request, it is likely that some 'mini-projects' will need to be set up to meet them. Although much of the responsibility for meeting these requests would fall to the Focal Points, it would be a drain on the Agency's resources if they were dealt with in an uncoordinated way; therefore the Agency will establish a system of prioritisation.

Newsletter

3.3 Continuing an initiative to be begun in late 1997, the Agency will publish a newsletter 4 to 6 times per year, which will be targeted primarily at Focal Points, members of national networks and other network partners.

Safety and Health Bulletin

3.4 The Agency will, from 1998 onwards, produce 2 to 3 times a year a bulletin reporting on its activities and on EU safety and health issues. This will be based on the information relayed through the Agency's networks and produced by individual projects. It will be targeted at individuals with a professional interest in occupational safety and health in the EU.

Other Occupational Safety and Health Publications

3.5 The Agency will plan and carry out a programme of publications, including its forward plans, annual reports, and the outcomes and evaluations of projects. In addition, the Agency will produce every two years a comprehensive report about the state of occupational safety and health in the EU. This will be based on the information received and disseminated through all channels by the Agency, and on the outputs of its thematic

networks (see para 4.2 below), The report will include information on the development of legislation and organisational structures of health and safety institutions, and will identify emerging trends. European data will also be included e.g., statistics from EUROSTAT and data from surveys made by the European Foundation for Living and Working Conditions. Two such reports are planned - the first in 1999 and the next in 2001.

Conferences and Seminars

3.6 From 1998 onwards the Agency will be able to organise an agreed programme of seminars and conferences, either on its own initiative or in response to requests on particular topics. It will work especially with the safety and health authorities of the Member States holding the EU Presidency to co-ordinate such events. The Agency could have a role in helping to run other promotional activities at European level such as campaigns on specific subjects.

The Agency will develop, over the period, ways to use Bilbao as a venue for safety and health events in Europe. This could include an occupational safety and health fair.

3.8 The Agency will also seek to develop a role as a convenor of discussions on occupational safety and health at European level, by providing facilitation and a neutral forum for debate through seminars or meetings.

Exhibitions, Presentations

3.9 The Agency itself will continue to develop its strategy of representation at key exhibitions/conferences, either through an exhibition stand and/or through personal presentations. Such activities will be prioritised according to the relevance of the event to the Agency's objectives, the audience and the resources available at the Agency to support them. The Agency expects to have a stand at 4-5 exhibitions per year throughout the period of this programme.

Chapter 4. Information Projects – developing knowledge

The delivery of 'Information Projects' represents an important output of the Agency's activity in setting up its main information network. These projects, will be undertaken by the Agency in partnership with its Focal Points, either through 'thematic networks' (see para 4.3 below), through ad hoc networks of experts convened on a particular topic, through studies of individual subjects or through *Topic Centres* designated to carry out a specific task for the Agency. The projects will utilise the information provided to the network, or will identify the need for data on issues not readily available and will devise means of obtaining it. Some work on developing such projects will begin in 1997, and continue into 1998, but as the basic structure of the Agency's network is consolidated in the following years, inevitably the Agency's capacity to deliver a greater number of projects, and more complex projects, will increase. In particular, the projects will be able to encompass not only existing information held within the network, but will be able to undertake the task of creating new information to meet gaps identified in the existing knowledge.

4.2 As provided for in the Regulation (Article 4(1) and 4(4)), the Agency would intend to set up some Topic Centres; these would be established in order to provide a more comprehensive approach to gathering information than that which is possible through using the Focal Point etc. networks. A Topic Centre could examine, for example, safety and health issues in a particular economic sector, or a specific risk area. The topic(s) would

have to be agreed by the Administrative Board, and the development of Topic Centres would also be dependent on the level of resources available. Subject to these, the first Topic Centres could be set up in 1998.

4.3 As far as the thematic networks are concerned a programme of activities will be drawn up with reference to the four year rolling work programme and the more detailed annual plans. The thematic networks will be organised by the Agency. Their members will be national experts on the various topics, appointed by the national Focal points. Particularly at the beginning of the four-year period, the work programmes of the thematic groups will be developed on a priority basis, in accordance with the resources available to support them, both in the Agency and in the national Focal Points. It is especially important that they should provide 'added value' at European level and avoid duplication with other work.

4.4 The following thematic networks will monitor the areas identified in Article 3 of Regulation 2062/94 as being of relevance to the Agency:

- **National and Community priorities and programmes**
- **Research**
Practical solutions, preventive actions and co-operation

4.5 The specific issues for information projects will be finalised in the context of detailed annual programmes within the following frames:

National and Community priorities and programmes

4.6 Based on the information it gathers about national and community priorities and programmes, the Agency will be in a good position to provide data on the various organisational infrastructures in the EU to regulate and promote safety and health at work. This includes the way in which good practice and technical knowledge are disseminated. By 1998 the Agency will have gathered information about the health and safety systems in the Member States, the changes that are being made to these systems and it will disseminate the lessons learnt to provide help to those facing similar problems. During the period of this Programme the Agency should be able to develop these issues with a wider range of international and EU partners, and should be able first, via the internet to support countries outside the EU with information and later, to respond to requests for information and technical assistance from those countries. The main tasks for the Agency as mentioned in art. 3 of regulation 2062/94 will be the following:

- to collect and disseminate technical, scientific and economic information in the Member States in order to pass it on to the Community bodies, Member States and interested parties; this collection shall take place to identify existing national priorities and programmes and provide the necessary input to the priorities and programmes of the Community;
- to supply the Community bodies and the Member States with the objective available technical, scientific and economic information they require to formulate and implement judicious and effective policies designed to protect the safety and health of workers.
- to provide the Commission in particular with the technical, scientific and economic information it requires to fulfil its tasks to identifying, preparing and evaluating legislation and measures in the area of the protection of the safety and health of workers, notably as regards the impact of legislation on enterprises, with particular reference to small and medium-sized enterprises;

- to contribute to the development of future Community action programmes relating to the protection of safety and health at work, without prejudice to the Commission's sphere of competence.

Research

4.7 The main tasks for the Agency as mentioned in art. 3 in regulation 2062/94, will be the following:

To collect technical, scientific and economic information on research into safety and health at work and on other research activities which involve aspects connected with safety and health at work and disseminate the results of the research and research activities. The available work and its conclusions will be related to the broader areas being considered by the Agency. In time, it should be able to identify where there is a lack of research or other types of information on any given subject.

Practical Solutions, preventive actions and co-operation

4.8 A key element of the Agency's work will be to collect and disseminate information about practical solutions to common health and safety problems, at workplace level, across the EU. These may be addressed by concentrating upon common risks, upon particular hazards, or certain high-risk activities, for example. This theme, whilst it can be made more sophisticated through the period of the four-year programme, will remain a basic part of the Agency's work. Furthermore, the Agency will concentrate upon identifying current means of information exchange and access between Member States, and upon areas in which information is lacking. In the latter part of this period it should be able to move to more proactive methods of promoting exchange of information for example by organising exchanges of personnel, and managing EC assistance programmes to support good practice or innovation. The main tasks for the Agency as mentioned in art. 3 of the regulation 2062/94 will be the following:

- to provide technical, scientific and economic information on methods and tools for implementing preventive activities, paying particular attention to the specific problems of small and medium-sized enterprises;
- to promote and support co-operation and exchange of information and experience amongst the Member States in the field of safety and health at work, including information on training programmes.

Chapter 5. Internal Management of the Agency

5.1 In the period of this Work Programme, the Agency will develop the management systems necessary for its effective and efficient operation. The basis for this will have been laid in 1997; it is hoped that from 1998 the Agency will be able to build up its staff and other resources and it is essential that it should be able to demonstrate that these resources are being used to give full value for money.

Management

5.2 Key indicators of performance and quality will be developed and monitored; among these will be evaluation either external or in-house, of the outcomes of the Agency's projects, and the surveys of network users referred to in par. 2.11. They will also include response times to enquiries and delivery of projects to time and to the satisfaction of those who commissioned them. Performance and quality measures will be reviewed regularly and

remedial action taken if targets are not met.

5.3 Throughout the period, the Agency will manage its finances according to the provisions of its internal Financial Regulations. It will set and meet an annual target for efficiency savings/productivity improvements. It will aim for standards of management of its resources, which are both efficient and environment-friendly.

Infrastructure

5.4 In 1998, the Agency will need to identify a location for its long-term seat in Bilbao for a move to this accommodation in 2001. In doing so it will have regard to the needs of the Agency as well as for economy, and for high standards in the working environment.

Personnel development

5.5 In 1998 it is intended that a programme of staff development should be in full operation, involving particularly training in IT skills, team-working, project management, and languages, notably Spanish. The Agency will utilise where appropriate staff on short term exchanges/secondments to provide additional expertise and flexibility to assist in the delivery of its objectives. It will have, and give practical effect to, a policy of equal opportunities.

Support to the Administrative Board and Bureau

5.6 The Agency will aim to provide efficient and effective secretarial support to the Board and Bureau throughout the period; it is expected that there will be 2 Board and 4 Bureau meetings per year.

Planning System

5.7 As required by art. 10 of the Regulation 2062/94 the Agency will update each year its four year rolling work programme and produce a more detailed Annual Programme. It will do so in consultation with the European Commission and the Advisory Committee on Safety, Hygiene and Health at Work. In constructing the four-year and annual programmes the Director will collaborate closely with the National Focal Points and receive input from the thematic networks. By 1998, and for subsequent years, a continual system of planning, budget-making and review will have been instituted.

Up



Work Programme 1998

European Agency for Safety and Health at Work

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