



European Food Safety Authority

Parma, 27 January, 2006
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Mr Borrell Fontelles,
President of the European Parliament,
Paul-Henri Spaak Building,
11B011
60, rue Wiertz
B-1047 Brussels

Dear Mr Borrell Fontelles,

As Chair of the European Food Safety Authority's Management Board and as Acting Executive Director of EFSA we would like to express our deep concern over the Council's Common Position on the Financial Framework 2007-2013 and in particular the implications of the 'freezing' of Heading 3B under which the Authority is financed.

As you are aware EFSA was established as a result of various food crises across the European Community, including BSE and dioxins. It became operational only in 2003, providing the robust scientific basis for food and feed safety legislation, and, by being the keystone of European Union (EU) risk assessment regarding food and feed safety, rebuilding consumer and trading partners' confidence in the European food supply. Since its establishment EFSA has developed a reputation for its scientific excellence and, openness and has striven to build close links with national food safety agencies, consumers and other stakeholders to meet the goals of the legislators to provide a high level of protection of human life and health and rebuild confidence in the European food supply.

The Authority is still in a critical development phase and freezing the budget at current level will inevitably affect its ability to provide the scientific basis for legislation in the area of food and feed safety, which is its *raison d'être*. This would not only impact on activities set out under the existing legal framework but also call into question much of the work foreseen under new or planned legislation – e.g. in relation to the scientific work needed to support Community policies on nutrition and obesity. Attached to this letter you find an overview of possible effects of budget reduction on EFSA's activities

after 2006 resulting from the Council's Common Position on the Financial Framework 2007-2013.

In addition, EFSA, with the endorsement of the European Parliament, has made commitments to the authorities in Parma concerning the building of its final headquarters and indeed would face financial and legal difficulties if its budget were to be frozen.

EFSA is at the forefront of the scientific work on the protection of consumers from risks arising from the contamination of food, assessing the risks of pesticide levels in foods, examining the best ways to prevent the spread of Foot and Mouth Disease and other exotic diseases in animals and more recently has been at the forefront of the work on the identification of the routes of spread of avian influenza from Asia to Europe, engaging in several in-depth scientific studies to ensure that EU policies in this area are based on sound science.

It is with deep regret that we have to inform the European Parliament that the freezing of the budget envisaged will have severe implications on the Authority's work which in our opinion will lead once again to an erosion of consumer and trading partners' confidence in European food and feed, and potentially to a detriment in consumer protection. Industry will also be affected. The Authority's ability to assess dossiers for the ultimate marketing of food and substances used in foods and feeds will be stymied with the net result that industry will be held back in its ability to compete on the world markets. We have illustrated some of these issues in annex.

Therefore we would like to ask the European Parliament to look closely at the allocation to Heading 3B and in particular ask that the importance of the work of the Authority is underpinned by proper financial support in any further discussion on the Financial Framework for 2007-2013.



Stuart Slorach
Chair



Herman B.W.M. Koeter
Acting Executive Director

Copies:

- Karl-Heinz Florenz, Chair of the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety
- Janusz Lewandowski, Chair of the Committee on Budgets
- Reimer Böge, Vice Chairman of the Committee on Budgets

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- Zuzana Roithová, Vice Chair of the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection
- Joseph Daul, Chair of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development
- Austrian Presidency, Minister Grasser
- Robert Madelin, European Commission, DG SANCO
- Zsuzsanna Jakab, European Center for Disease Prevention and Control
- Sue Davis, Chair of EFSA's Stakeholder Platform
- Rainer Lau, Director Head of Unit Responsible for EU Agencies, Secretariat Général European Commission

Annex : Table : "Possible effects of budget reductions on EFSA's activities after 2006 resulting from the Council Common Position on the Financial Framework 2007-2013, subject to preferences and priorities of EU Institutions commissioning tasks to EFSA."

POSSIBLE EFFECTS OF BUDGET REDUCTIONS ON EFSA'S ACTIVITIES AFTER 2006 RESULTING FROM THE COUNCIL'S COMMON POSITION ON THE FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK 2007-2013, SUBJECT TO PREFERENCES AND PRIORITIES OF EU INSTITUTIONS
COMMISSIONING TASKS TO EFSA

Effect of the various budget projections on named activities			
	Initial budget projection	Budget projection considered as minimum for sustainable operations	Budget projection based on zero-growth
Total staff once fully developed	400	360	250
Year of reaching full development	2009	2013	2006
Activity			
Assessing levels of pesticide residues in food and food products which are considered acceptable (MRLs)	Unaffected	Delayed	Not possible
Nutrition issues other than those related to food safety	Unaffected	Probably unaffected	Not possible
Assessment of organisms harmful to plants or plant products posing a threat to crop production and biodiversity (Plant health issues)	Unaffected	Delayed	Not possible
Safety assessment of new and existing pesticides	Unaffected	Delayed	Severely delayed or not possible
Development of scientific tools and methods aimed at the prevention of outbreaks of major animal diseases such as avian influenza, foot and mouth disease, salmonellosis.	Unaffected	Delayed	Probably not possible

Interactions with EFSA's stakeholders including consumers, industry and environmental NGO's	Unaffected	Reduced level of interaction	Severely reduced level of interaction
Communication activities	Unaffected	Reduced level of activity	Reduced level of activity
Risk assessment of dossiers in the context of authorizations for use of substances such as GMO's, food additives, feed additives, enzymes, flavours, dietary products	Unaffected	Unaffected	Probably unaffected
Requests for scientific opinions on food and feed safety issues, including animal health	Unaffected	Unaffected	Number of opinions will no longer increase but remain at the level of 2006
Development of the annual zoonosis report	Unaffected	Unaffected	Probably unaffected
Activities aimed at the harmonization of methodologies for risk assessment (microbiological, chemical) in collaboration with national food safety agencies and international organizations with similar tasks as EFSA (e.g. WHO, FAO, OIE, OECD.)	Unaffected	Delayed	Severely reduced level of activity
Activities aimed at the harmonization of data collection (e.g. food consumption and occurrence data) in collaboration with national food safety agencies and international organizations with similar tasks as EFSA (e.g. WHO, FAO, OIE, OECD.)	Unaffected	Delayed	Reduced level of activity