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Subject: DR/ HR services and activities

We are writing to you to express our serious concerns regarding HR services and activities, the smooth operation of which are crucial for the Agency to function.

The situation has now reached an unacceptable level due to the HR staff shortages which has serious negative impact on activities and staff motivation. A reduction of more than 40% of the staff has occurred by comparison with the situation decided by PDR when he established 2 Units (PFO and POD), additionally, the level of absence in DR continues to increase due to the unacceptably stressful situation caused by the increased workload on staff present.

We have the impression that the issue of staff shortages in the HR area is being neglected by DR. Motivated staff cannot be expected to continue to work efficiently, at an appropriate level of quality, in such circumstances. We insist that the strict KPIs currently in place are temporarily suspended and that management assumes its responsibility to address the problem and avoid a negative impact upon the whole Agency with the potentially serious consequences.

Hereunder, some examples for your information:

- ❖ The recruitment section is simply unstaffed since the Head of section was transferred to DG/SEC; another staff member moved to DATM and not replaced; and the two remaining staff are on long term sickness leave;
- ❖ The basic administrative services provided by the PFO unit: the acting Head of unit has been transferred; the previous Head of people support has also been transferred; and the HR graduate assigned as full time support to the former acting Head of Unit has now been reassigned to another Directorate;
- ❖ The sickness insurance scheme unit: staff numbers in this service have been intentionally reduced by more than 50% compared to the previous years and we are now seeing the impact in increased delays in the reimbursement to staff of sickness expenses, most acutely in Maastricht, but also across the other Agency sites. In addition to their normal workload, the managers of this section have been asked to conduct additional tasks to assess the outsourcing possibilities.
- ❖ The absence of adequate financial or human resources for the HR IT area, despite this being one of the major success factors of our administrative services. The previous HIRIS support cell is unstaffed and only a single staff member on DYRA doing her best to offer a basic service is present. This is far from the appropriate staffing level in terms of reporting;


- ❖ The increasing number of recoveries of undue payment indicates an increasing error rate in payments to staff due to inadequate staffing levels;
- ❖ Social dialogue unit: Mrs DEPICKER, previously in charge only of Rules and Regulations (RR), is expected to ensure important regulatory support to the social dialogue process whilst also being in charge of PFO and POD units, simultaneously replacing the social dialogue officer who has now been absent for almost one year. She must be replaced in her role RR officer by a staff member at the appropriate level allowing her to be dedicated to HR coordination and strategy. We currently find ourselves discussing important rules with trainees and temporary staff, who although they are very dedicated, do not have the necessary experience and understanding of the politically delicate matters under review;
- ❖ The people development function (PD): Mrs. DEPICKER should be dedicated to the establishment of the HR strategy in this area but there are no resources allowing HR services to put into place an appropriate PD programme. Since 2009, no tangible projects have been delivered. We understand that a first draft of an HR strategy has been developed and a list of PD projects has been established but the current staffing level does not allow HR services to put them into place, in particular for staff development in the context of the administrative Reform (staff development programme, assessment of the AST in transition, etc.);
- ❖ Internal tax on pensions and new transfer of pension rights agreements: these important projects also require knowledgeable staff in RR to progress and discuss with the Member States. No such staff is available to perform the necessary work.
- ❖ Some HR sections clearly require more resources in order to meet a minimum level of effectiveness but this has been refused by DR. At the same time, DR continues to use an external consultant, now in place for many years, to analyse and to help DR for another new reorganisation or "re adaptation". Today we see no changes in the staffing levels of key administrative services and no consolidated structure but there appears no shortage of budget to be spent on an expensive external consultant, and in the current difficult economic situation, we do not understand why this external consultant is still in DR?

In view of the examples listed above, we must conclude that the HR area is being intentionally neglected by DR. This situation is deteriorating on a daily basis and it is now completely unacceptable. An attempt to discredit the current heads of services by not providing sufficient support to deliver the necessary level of service seems to be part of a political plan to put in place "good soldiers" and this move, as seen by the trade unions, will not be accepted." It becomes clearer that there is a plan to downgrade services for specific reasons.

As the situation is critical and unsustainable, we invite you to take urgent and appropriate action to address the staff shortages in HR services in order to provide effective administration and avoid staff becoming more demotivated so that we may continue to provide excellent HR services of high quality, and to avoid an imminent crisis in the Agency (serious damages) and social conflict.

We hope to have a visible and positive outcome with corrective measures in HR services; otherwise the trade unions will reconsider their positions in ongoing and future consultations meetings.

Yours sincerely,



Benoît BAMS
President FFPE



Volker DICK
President TUEM



Georges TSOLOS
Vice-President US



María AGUILERA
President USEF