



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

DG EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Social Dialogue, Social Rights, Working Conditions, Adaptation to Change
Social Dialogue, Industrial Relations

Social Dialogue in the construction sector EFBWW-FIEC

Working Group on Safety and Health

Minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2010 in Brussels (09.30-13.00)

1. Welcome and introduction

The meeting is chaired by Mr Gascon (FIEC). He welcomes the participants and reads out the agenda which is adopted without changes.

2. Approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 26.03.2010

The minutes are approved unanimously.

3. Report from the European Commission – inter alia:

- Revision of the carcinogenic directive
- Mid-term review of the New Strategy on OSH
- Action regarding the Nanotechnologies

Mr. Gehring (EFBWW) explains that unfortunately nobody from the European Commission is available to join this meeting. He makes reference to the message he has received from Mr Angelidis (European Commission, F4 – Health and Safety):

"New OSH Strategy 2013-2020:

November 2010: Adoption of the Commission Communication on the mid-term review of the current strategy.

2011: Study on a) Evaluation of the current strategy and b) Impact Assessment of the new one to be presented - Final report expected in the 1st half of 2012.

End 2012: Adoption of the Commission Communication on the new EU OSH Strategy 2013-2020.

Nano-technology:

DG EMPL is involved in the wider range of Commission activities on Nano-materials which concern several Commission services.

In practice the Commission is currently involved in

- 1) working on an internal agreement on a common definition;
- 2) drafting a 2010-2015 Nano-technology Action Plan
- 3) supporting test methods development under the auspices of the OECD.

Eventually the Commission will also have to review its legal framework in the various concerned sectoral areas; however, in order to achieve this review, it will need data provided by the several activities mentioned, together with additional data obtained from ongoing and future studies such as the one briefly described below.

More specifically from a DG EMPL perspective, discussions will have to be initiated within the WPC (**Working Party on Chemicals**) on the form structure and content of a guidance document, aimed at providing the national authorities, employers, workers and other relevant stakeholders with the necessary information which should ultimately help them take targeted risk management measures, bearing in mind the characteristics of Nano-materials. The drafting of this guidance document is now in its inception stage and it is hoped that it will be adopted by the ACSHW (Advisory Committee on Safety and Health at Work) at the end of 2011.

Moreover, DG EMPL envisages to publish in 2011 a study with the goal to have a study report elaborated aiming to fill various information gaps in terms of risks and approaches suited to the characteristic of nano-materials in the workplace.

DG EMPL investigates the possible topics to be covered in the study such as:

- a) The types, uses and likely exposures and which workers are more likely to be exposed as well as future exposure trends based on current knowledge.
- b) The information requirements for risk assessment and what are the more significant gaps relative to workplace risk assessment needs.
- c) Identify types and effectiveness of risk management measures relevant in this context.
- d) Identify whether the mode of action of nano-materials is similar or different from traditional work based chemicals, e.g. is there an increased risk to the dermal and inhalation exposure routes.
- e) What is the state of the art regulating measurement and monitoring e.g. have national or other Occupational Exposure Limits setting bodies any standards in place?

The launching of the study is envisaged in the second quarter of 2011."

The chair makes reference to the study which is scheduled to be published in 2011 and raises the question whether the social partners will be consulted.

4. Project: Nano-Technologies in Construction

- Dissemination of the project-results
- Discussion with national prevention bodies regarding good practices

Mr Kristensen (DTI – Danish Technological Institute) presents the activities of the DTI with regard to nano-technologies. His presentation can be downloaded here:

http://circa.europa.eu/Public/irc/empl/sectoral_social_dialogue/library?l=/construction/2010/20100928_arbeitsgruppe/cons_20100928_enpdf/EN_1.0_&a=d

In answering a question from Mr Pelegrin (FIEC), Mr Kristensen (DTI) explains that the DTI is dealing with construction issues in a general and not in a specific way. Mr Gehring (EFBWW) points out that the social partners could provide some input with regard to the specific working conditions in the construction industry.

Mr Campogrande (FIEC) asks whether some progress has been made in terms of measurements, as until 2 years ago the equipment available could detect with precision the amount of nano-particles but it was unable to determine their riskiness. Mr Kristensen (DTI) explains that one of the project partners is dealing with these questions.

Ms Ziegler (BG Bau - Berufsgenossenschaft Bau) presents the activities of the BG Bau with regard to nano-technologies. Her presentation can be downloaded here:

http://circa.europa.eu/Public/irc/empl/sectoral_social_dialogue/library?l=/construction/2010/20100928_arbeitsgruppe/cons_20100928_dep/EN_1.0_&a=d

Mr Dijkman (FIEC) insists upon the need for coordination at the European level. In answering questions from Mr Campogrande, Mr Pelegrin (both FIEC) as well as Mr Spannow, Mr Eisenbach, Mr Jans, Mr Nielsen and Mr Gehring (all EFBWW), Ms Ziegler (BG Bau) explains that the "Berufsgenossenschaft Bau" is a paritarian organization and that the list has been presented to the social partners. Concerning the nano-technologies, the BG Bau is not yet in contact with other European organizations, but this will be the case in the near future.

It is not difficult to obtain the necessary information by the manufacturers, but it is not possible to verify if this information is exact. The producers are aware of their duties with regard to the REACH regulation. One of the problems in relation with nano-technologies is that the workers do not wear masks and gloves – which should be necessary even if one does not know exactly if certain nano-products are dangerous or not.

The next steps for the social partners could be:

- to develop practical information and to provide it to the stakeholders
- to work on risk assessment
- to develop a sort of inventory.

5. Bilbao Agency Campaign: "Safe Maintenance"

- Discussion on the current campaign

After a short introduction by Ms O'Brien (OSHA), Ms Wintermayr (OSHA) gives an overview about the OSHA Maintenance Campaign. The Campaign started in April 2010 and will last for two years. She explains that 15 – 20 % of all accidents are maintenance-related. Currently there are 30 official campaign partners, including FIEC. 50 organizations have applied to become campaign partners. The new campaign website:

<http://osha.europa.eu/en/campaigns/hw2010/>

has already been visited about 100,000 times.

An EU presidency event will take place on 25 November. Case studies will be presented at the "European Week" of the campaign in the end of 2010.

In 2011 a good practice prize will be awarded. The closing event will take place in November 2011.

Mr Gehring (EFBWW) explains that the EFBWW will also participate in the campaign.

Mr Campogrande (FIEC) makes reference to the specific information material concerning 5 sectors (including construction).

Mr Munar (OSHA) presents the online interactive risk assessment tool:

<http://www.oira.osha.europa.eu/>

His presentation can be downloaded here:

http://circa.europa.eu/Public/irc/empl/sectoral_social_dialogue/library?l=/construction/2010/20100928_arbeitsgruppe/cons_20100928_enpdf_1/EN_1.0_&a=d

Mr Gehring (EFBWW) thanks for all the presentations and wants to know more about the resources which will be needed, the timetable and what kind of support the agency could provide to the social partners. Mr Munar explains that the calendar is up to the social partners and that there is no fixed delay. The social partners have to set up a project team. The role of the agency is to help and to guide the social partners in their work.

Mr Campogrande (FIEC) makes reference to several existing tools in most of the member States, which are tailored to national specificities, and wants to know what would be the added value of a new EU tool compared to what companies already do.

Mr Munar (OSHA) insists upon the need for such an online tool because there is still a lack of information in several sectors and countries. Moreover, the new tool is more user-friendly.

Ms O'Brien (OSHA) makes reference to the financial side of this tool of a new generation, which is very helpful especially for SMEs.

7. Guide for OSH-Management System

- Dissemination
- Translations

The chair gives a short overview about the current situation concerning the dissemination of the guide and the translations. The aim is to disseminate the text in all Member States and therefore Mr Gehring (EFBWW) suggests submitting a common request for a grant from DG EMPL to finance the publication and its translation into various language versions. He insists upon the necessity to put the emphasize on the new Member States.

8. EFBWW-Asbestos Campaign

- General information
- Seminar on 8 October

Mr Nielsen (EFBWW) reports on the EFBWW asbestos campaign. In March 2010, the campaign has been launched which is to last two years. He explains that asbestos has been banned in Europe, and therefore construction workers have not been in touch with asbestos for the last 20 years and do not know how to tackle it. He insists upon the need for information for workers on the impact of asbestos.

Mr Gehring (EFBWW) briefly reports about the event in the European Parliament in March 2010 when the EFBWW campaign has been launched and makes reference to 5 aspects with regard to asbestos:

- 1) the registration of asbestos
- 2) safe working conditions
- 3) the need for qualification of workers
- 4) the recognition of asbestos related diseases
- 5) the compensation of these diseases

On 8 October a seminar on this topic will be held in Brussels in order to find alliances and to check who is doing what. The intention of the EFBWW is to start a discussion with the

European Commission and to agree on specific goals. The asbestos and the maintenance campaign could be combined.

Mr Spannow (EFBWW) insists upon the necessity for this campaign to be supported by all stakeholders in order to make sure that it is implemented in practice.

9. Miscellaneous

- next meetings

The suggested dates for the SSDC Health and Safety working group meetings in 2011 are 21/22 March 2011 and 10/11 or 17/18 October 2011. These dates are to be confirmed.

Mr Gascon (FIEC) announces that this meeting was the last one he was to chair because he will be in early retirement at the end of 2010. He thanks the members of the working party and wishes them a successful work. Mr Nielsen (EFBWW) thanks Mr Gascon on behalf of the EFBWW for his excellent work for the sectoral social dialogue committee during the last years.

The chair thanks all the participants and the interpreters and closes the meeting.

List of participants:

FIEC:

Mr Ulrich Paetzold, EU
Mr Domenico Campogrande, EU
Mr Gascon y Marin, ES
Mr Ricardo Cortés Sánchez
Mr Martin Sonnberger, AT
Mr Robert Rosenberger, AT
Mr André Pelegrin, BE
Mr Vincent Detemmerman, BE
Mr Sebastian Richter, DE
Ms Mette Nielsen Møller, DK
Ms Ann Karlslund, DK
Mr Christian Lesouef, FR
Mr Pasquale Ialongo, IT
Mr Ewald Dijkman, NL
Mr José Costa Tavares, PT
Mr Constantin Balinisteanu, RO

Guest:

Mr Riccardo Viaggi, EBC

EFBWW:

Mr Rolf Gehring, EU
Mr Bernard Jans, BE
Mr Dario Mordasini, CH
Mr Bernd Eisenbach, DE
Mr Jørn Erik Nielsen, DK

Mr Ulrik Spannow, DK
Mr Gyula Pallagi, HU
Mr Piero Leonesio, IT

Experts:

Mr Henrik Vejen Kristensen, DK
Ms Corinne Ziegler, DE

OSHA:

Ms Brenda O'Brien
Ms Irene Wintermayr
Mr Lorenzo Munar