



## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities DG

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

### SECTORAL SOCIAL DIALOGUE COMMITTEE INLAND NAVIGATION

#### **Plenary meeting 10 November 2006 Minutes (adopted on 5 February 2007)**

#### **1. Adoption of the agenda and approval of the minutes of the previous plenary meeting**

The meeting was chaired by Mr Koning (Employers). The agenda was adopted. The minutes of the previous plenary meeting (9 June 2005) were approved.

#### **2. Occupational profiles and vocational qualifications**

The planned working group had not yet met<sup>1</sup>. The Dutch study on occupational profiles in Europe was expected for the end of December. The first stage in the joint work was to harmonise the occupational profiles in order to facilitate mobility. This might subsequently also lead to harmonisation of vocational training courses and to mutual recognition of qualifications. It was agreed to consider this issue at the next meeting.

#### **3. Working time**

EBU presented a paper (provisionally agreed internally) as a basis for discussion (see Annex), which had not yet been agreed with ESO, however. Mr Dütemeyer explained that it was based on the Seafarers Agreement but had not taken it over in full. It took account of special features of inland navigation, e.g. in paragraph 5 (maximum 14 hours' working time, corresponding to operating form A.1).

ETF complained that the paper did not deal with certain matters, such as the reference period. The weekly working time should average not more than a total of 48 hours over the whole year. ESO too doubted that the proposed working times would make it possible to continue to allow work organisation systems currently in use (1 week on/1 week off).

---

<sup>1</sup> The following had been proposed as members of this group in March: Mr Leininger, Ms Lamers, Mr Kerkhofs, Ms Hertogs and Mr Bramley for the workers and Mr Koning, Mr Veldman and Mr Dütemeyer, plus possibly a representative from the Danube region, for the employers.

In the workers' opinion, the question of checking compliance was also of crucial importance. ETF criticised the fact that the last sentence in paragraph 5.2 ("These exceptions [from the restrictions laid down] must as far as possible comply with the set standards but may take account of more frequent or longer periods of leave or the granting of compensatory leave or fewer working hours on account of stand-by duty.") could not be monitored or clearly defined. EBU understood this concern, but referred to the proposal that such exceptions should be possible only by means of collective agreements.

It was agreed that the concept of "working time" should be defined first before agreeing on figures. Working time (of seafarers) and operating time (of vessels) were not to be regarded as equivalent. The social partners were using the ETF's draft text of December 2005 to try to find a common viewpoint about the concept of "working time". The biggest problem for the workers was that the EBU text counted stand-by time as rest time and not as working time. ESO suggested using three definitions: rest time, stand-by time, working time. The concept of "compulsory stand-by time", which ought to be counted as working time, was also discussed.

It was agreed that a small group contact each other by e-mail in order to come up with a common definition of working time. Moreover, the document presented by the employers should be revised by the workers once comments had been received, and then be presented as a compromise text. These texts should be sent two weeks before the next meeting<sup>2</sup>.

#### **4. Next meetings**

The next ordinary meetings for 2007 were scheduled for 5 February and 27 March. In addition, the Commission representative reiterated that, on the basis of a clear negotiating mandate and on a joint written request from the social partners, it was possible in principle to organise extra negotiation meetings.

---

<sup>2</sup> Next meeting scheduled for 5 February 2007 – giving a deadline of 22 January 2007.

*List of participants 10.11.2006*

<p><u>Employers:</u></p> <p><b>EBU:</b> DÜTEMEYER, Gunter KONING, Michiel</p> <p><b>ESO:</b> BECKSCHÄFER, Andrea VAN LANCKER, Christiaan VELDMAN, Jan</p>	<p><u>Workers:</u></p> <p><b>ETF:</b> BEYER, Udo BRAMLEY, Nick HERTOGS, Beatrice JERABEK, Milan KERKHOF, Joris LEHNINGER, Gunter WEICKER, Raymond</p> <p>KARAVATCHEV, Rossen (observer)</p>
<p><u>European Commission:</u></p> <p>DIETER, Rolf (DG TREN/G.2) DURST, Ellen (DG EMPL/F.1)</p>	