



EUROPEAN RAILWAY AGENCY

GENERAL REPORT 2004

ADOPTED BY THE ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD

On 17 March 2005

The Regulation EC n° 881/2004 establishing the European railway agency entered into force on 1st May 2004. Hence, no operational activities were performed in 2004 and only preparatory measures were taken by the Commission services and the Administrative board.

The Administrative board was constituted and first met in Valenciennes on 15 July 2004. Two additional meetings of the Administrative board were held in Brussels on 28 October 2004 and 21 December 2004.

I – Measures taken by the Administrative board

During its **first meeting**, the Administrative board:

- adopted its rules of procedures in accordance with Article 25 §2 h) of Regulation n° 881/2004 ;
- elected Mr Reino Lampinen as its Chairman. It was decided to postpone the election of a Vice-chairperson to the next meeting ;
- adopted the Financial Regulation of the Agency in accordance with Article 40 of Regulation n° 881/2004 ;
- adopted the work programme 2004 and 2005 in accordance with Article 25 of Regulation n°881/2004 and decided that the adopted work programmes are made accessible to the public on the Agency web page (provisionally hosted on DG TREN website) ;
- adopted the final 2004 Agency budget and establishment plan in accordance with Article 38 §8 of Regulation n° 881/2004;
- adopted the Statement of estimates and establishment plan for 2005 in accordance with Article 38 §4 of Regulation n° 881/2004. Concerning the establishment plan, the Administrative Board expressed its concerns about the gap between the recruitment level of the Executive director (A*15) and the second level of staff (A*9) that may not allow to recruit Heads of units at the appropriate level and asked the Commission to bring this issue to the attention of the budgetary authorities in the legislative process for the adoption of the 2005 budget. Members were also asked to bring this issue to their competent authorities;
- approved the decision to rent provisional premises in Valenciennes (Building “Philippa de Hainaut”), as proposed by the French Authorities, in order to start with the preparation and equipment of these premises.

During its **second meeting**, the Administrative board:

- adopted the practical measures for implementation of Regulation EC n° 1049/2001 regarding public access to document; in application of Article 37 of Regulation EC n°881/2004;
- appointed Mr Marcel Verslype as Executive Director of the Agency in application of Article 31 of Regulation EC n°881/2004 (Mr Verslype took up his duties on 1st January 2005);

During its **third meeting**, the Administrative board:

- reviewed and adopted the Agency budget 2005;
- agreed that Mr François Lamoureux, Director general at the European Commission Directorate general for Energy and Transport, will act as Authorising officer to commit the necessary expenditures and make payments from the 2005 Agency budget line, in agreement with the Executive Director, until the Agency has its own financial system in operation;
- reviewed and approved the 2005 work programme;
- elected Mr Adam Wieladek as Deputy Chairman of the Administrative Board.

In conclusion, the Administrative board adopted all necessary decisions allowing for a quick set up of the Agency.

II – Measures taken by the Commission services

The Commission services undertook all necessary steps to set up the Agency and, in particular, the Commission services:

- organised the Administrative board meetings in close coordination with its Chairman and prepared all necessary documents;
- participated with four members to the meetings of the Administrative board and took part of its decisions;
- established a provisional webpage for the Agency;
(http://europa.eu.int/comm/transport/rail/era/index_en.htm)
- acted as Authorising officer to commit the necessary expenditures from the Commission budget line concerning the Agency;
- prepared the selection¹ of the Executive Director and submitted a shortlist of candidates to the Administrative board;
- prepared the recruitment of staff by publishing, in agreement with the designated Executive director, two series of vacancy notices on 18 november 2004 and 16 December 2004;
- undertook the necessary contacts with the French authorities to prepare the provisional premises in Valenciennes.

Following the preparatory measures taken in the second half of 2004 and with the entry in function of the Executive director on 1st January 2005 and recruitment of other staff in 2005, the Agency will be able to start its activities and be autonomous in 2005.

¹ the vacancy notice for the post of Executive Director was published in the Official Journal C 181 A from 14 July 2004