

BETTER TRAINING for SAFER FOOD

Newsletter

August 2014

IN THIS ISSUE

Chafea's mission: Excellent service, underpinned by high standards of management and transparency

European Commission adopts Financing Decision for future BTSF training

Contract from final 2013 Financing Decision call set for conclusion

BTSF INFO DAY

Save the date

9 September 2014

Brussels

This year Info Day for the Better Training for Safer Food Initiative will take place on 9 September 2014 in Marriott Renaissance Hotel, Rue du Parnasse 19 - 1050 Bruxelles - from 9:00 to 17:00.

You will have the opportunity to ask questions on the published calls as well as on operational and technical matters of the BTSF Initiative.

Put a date in your calendar!

The event is organised by Chafea

BTSF

Chafea's mission: Excellent service, underpinned by high standards of management and transparency



Luc Briol has been the Director of the Consumers, Health and Food Executive Agency – Chafea, since it started work as the Public Health Executive Agency (PHEA). We spoke to him about the work Chafea does, both on BTSF and in the other areas for which it is responsible.

BTSF: Could you give us an overview of what Chafea is and what it does?

Luc Briol: Chafea is one of six executive agencies set up by the European Commission which execute EU programmes, thereby allowing the Commission to focus on policy making. It was set up as PHEA to implement the EU Health Programme. In 2008 it became the Executive Agency for Health and Consumers, at which point its mandate expanded to include tasks related to the Consumer Programme and BTSF. We perform all operations necessary for the management of the programmes for which we are responsible, in

particular those linked to the award of contracts and grants and management of projects, and provide feedback on project results to the Commission to support policy making. We also help to disseminate know-how and best practices, support the organisation of technical meetings, studies, seminars and conferences, and foster the development of networks of European experts.

BTSF: That sounds like quite a workload.

Luc Briol: Indeed it is. We currently employ some 50 staff at our offices in Luxembourg and together, they managed over 800 public health projects, operating grants, conferences, joint actions and international agreements, involving more than 3400 partners and a budget of about EUR 244 million. The beneficiaries of these activities are highly diverse and include non-governmental organisations, public sector bodies and public administration, universities and higher education establishments, and companies from all EU Member States. In all of this, we keep our mission statement firmly in mind, 'To deliver excellent service, underpinned by a consistently high standard of technical and financial management, as well as transparency'.

BTSF: Turning to the individual programmes, what can you tell us about the Health Programme?

Luc Briol: The second EU Health Programme ran from 2008-13 and had three main aims: improving health security, promoting health and reducing health inequalities, and generating and disseminating health information and knowledge. The third Health Programme, for 2014-20, has

now begun and the scope has broadened. It aims to improve citizens' health and reduce health inequalities, encourage innovation and make health systems more sustainable, address current health issues across Member States and support cooperation between Member States. Specifically, this means promotion of health, prevention of disease, fostering of environments conducive to healthy lifestyles, protection against cross-border health threats, ensuring innovative, efficient and sustainable health systems and increased access to good healthcare. The programme has a budget of EUR 449.4 million which will be allocated to projects, joint actions, operating grants, conferences and tenders. Allocations are made on the basis of an annual work programme, but we have the flexibility to reallocate funds in order to respond to specific public health emergencies which may arise.

BTSF: And the Consumer Programme?

Luc Briol: As with the Health Programme, a new Consumer Programme has now been launched for the period 2014-20. It has a budget of EUR 188.8 million, up from EUR 156.8 million in 2007-13, to be made available to government entities, public bodies and national and EU consumer organisations. The Programme aims to ensure a single market of safe products, good representation for consumers by professional consumer organisations, consumers who are aware of and able to exercise their rights, and effective collaboration between national bodies to support enforcement of consumer rights. It will build on the achievements of the 2007-13 programme. It helped to raise levels of consumer protection by increasing availability of consumer-related data and improved representation of consumer interests through support for such organisations as the European consumer voice in standardisation and the European Consumers' Association. It also contributed to improving application of consumer protection rules by promoting cooperation between national enforcement authorities through joint actions and exchanges of officials and by working to ensure that consumers could get redress if their rights were infringed. Furthermore, it helped consumers to become more aware of their rights through consumer rights information campaigns across the EU and support for the European Consumer Centres Network, and supported provision of consumer education material via the DOLCETA and Europa Diary websites.

BTSF: And the other programme managed by Chafea is obviously BTSF.

Luc Briol: Yes. BTSF trains Member State officials involved in control activities related to food and feed law, animal health and welfare rules and plant health rules. This is to keep them up to date with EU law in these fields and to ensure that controls are performed in a harmonised way and to a consistently high standard across the EU. Responsibility for managing BTSF was outsourced to the Agency in 2009. Annual participation levels have increased from around 4000 prior to outsourcing to over 6000 today, numbers of training events have almost doubled to reach nearly 200 a year, while the number of programmes run within BTSF now stands at around 30 each year. We also support BTSF in various other ways, not least in the area of communication. We have produced a series of booklets and DVDs on different training subjects which serve as an introduction to the courses them-

selves, our website is regularly updated with the latest news, and we also publish the annual report and this newsletter. In addition, we organise regular Info Days to which interested parties are invited to come and find out more about BTSF, with the next one scheduled to take place in Brussels on 9 September 2014.

BTSF: So what kind of benefits has outsourcing to Chafea of all of these tasks brought?

Luc Briol: Our Agency brings considerable added value, both to the Commission Directorate-General for Health and Consumers (DG SANCO) on whose behalf we implement these three programmes, and to the beneficiaries of the three programmes. One important benefit concerns the high quality of the services which we are able to deliver. For instance, participant satisfaction levels with the training provided under BTSF now stand at over 85%. Another is value for money, particularly as recourse to an Agency such as ours represents a sizeable saving for the Commission in terms of outlay and also enables the achievement of economies of scale.

BTSF: Why then is Chafea able to deliver such good value for money?

Luc Briol: The first thing to remember is that DG SANCO's mandate is very broad and includes all manner of things related to health and consumer policy. Ours, on the other hand, is quite specific and allows us to focus solely on the programmes which we execute. This enables us to develop a deep understanding of the programmes and the best ways of making them a success. We examine the procedures we follow, identify means of making them more efficient and improving the ways in which they are administered and go on fine tuning them year on year. An important example is a task such as the launch of calls for tender or proposals. This is a key part of our work and we have identified ways of streamlining the process and making it easier for potential contractors to submit offers so as to attract more high-quality bids. This has included the development of online tools aimed at supporting the submission of tenders and proposals.

BTSF: Are there any other examples?

Luc Briol: There are. Our highly specialised focus allows us to add value throughout the lifetimes of the projects for which we are responsible. We are able to manage relations with both tenderers and contractors effectively in terms of such aspects as organising the evaluation of offers, development of effective working relationships and close coordination with contractors and ensuring that all payments are made quickly. We can also ensure rigorous and in-depth assessment of reports at all stages of projects and activities and provide valuable feedback on tenders, reports and contract implementation to tenderers, contractors and DG SANCO. This last aspect is of particular importance as it enables DG SANCO to integrate the results and lessons learned from our work into the wider development of EU policy on health, consumers and food and veterinary issues. Due to the strong insight we have gained into the subjects in which we work, we are well aware of prominent experts in the respective fields and thus able to provide input into the drawing up of lists and selection of experts to carry out activities within our programmes. Finally,

given its more decentralised nature, I would say that the executive agency model helps to bring our programmes closer to the people who they are intended to benefit.

European Commission adopts Financing Decision for future BTSF training



The European Commission has now adopted the Financing Decision for the launch of new BTSF training activities from 2014. The total budget covered by this Decision stands at a maximum of EUR 16 170 000. The Decision provides for training on 17 different subjects, as well as related issues, conferences, studies, assistance and other

learning and dissemination tools such as further development of BTSF e-learning.

Two new training subjects have been introduced, namely inspection of pesticide application equipment and the EU veterinary and phytosanitary framework. The technical contents of these programmes are still being defined and more details will become available in due course.

Of the other subjects, three are related to feed production and feed and food contaminants. Animal by-product (ABP) training should increase participants' expertise in feed safety issues at all stages of production, processing and distribution of ABP and will cover registration, approval and inspection of ABP establishments, and use, marketing, import and export of ABP. That on feed law is to include training on general EU feed legislation, feed hygiene rules and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point auditing. Training on control of contaminants in food and feed will cover regulatory levels of contaminants, risk assessment, relevant EU provisions and national contaminant control plans.

Movement of feed, food and animals

Four programmes concern movement of and import controls on feed, food and animals. Training on checks at Border Inspection Posts (BIP) will comprise workshops focusing on food safety and veterinary controls to be carried out at airport, seaport, road and rail BIPs. That on import controls on food of non-animal origin will deal with controls on specific types of food and include documentary, identity and physical checks. Workshops on the Trade Control and Expert System (TRACES) for ensuring traceability of

traded and imported animals, plants and derived products will explain the functioning of and latest updates to the system and related legislation and import control rules. Those on movement of dogs and cats are to look at rules for dog and cat movement within the EU and from third countries into the EU, border controls and relevant diseases.

Two programmes cover microbiology and food-borne outbreak management. The first is on microbiological criteria in foodstuffs and will look at the role of microbiological criteria in EU law, implementation of microbiological criteria by food businesses and its verification by authorities. The second is on food-borne outbreaks and is to cover outbreak preparedness, investigation, management and reporting.



BTSF Animal welfare training will focus on welfare on the farm for species such as poultry, including laying hens and broiler chickens, and pigs, and welfare during transport and at slaughter. Courses on food information and composition are to cover general and specific labelling rules, nutrition and health claims, food fortification and supplements and labelling controls. Food testing workshops will deal with sampling and analysis methods related to issues such as mycotoxins, microbiology and pesticide and veterinary drug residues.



The plant health controls programme will comprise courses on such topics as the EU plant quarantine regimes for potatoes, imports and wood packaging, the EU internal plant quarantine regime and controls under emergency decisions for forested and non-forested areas. Courses on zoonoses and antimicrobial resistance will look at surveillance and control of diseases such as salmonella and campylobacter, the public health impact of such diseases, monitoring of antibiotic use and antimicrobial resistance. Those on food contact materials will deal with inspection of food and food contact material production premises and the setting up of food contact material control plans.

Contract from final 2013 Financing Decision call set for conclusion

Chafea has published the final call for tender arising from the 2013 BTSF Financing Decision and is well on the way to concluding a contract related to the call. It concerns training on sustainable use of plant protection products.

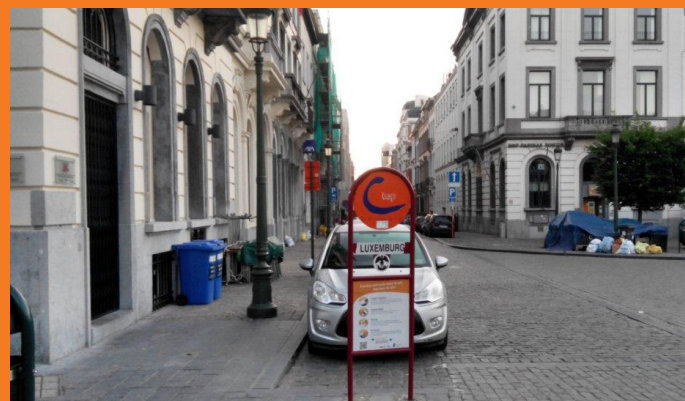
The main aim of the training is to increase knowledge of relevant EU requirements among trainers of plant protection product users, distributors and retailers, and among staff implementing training certification systems at national and regional levels. On this basis, Member State and regional training programmes should be adapted and harmonised, leading to enhanced recognition of training certificates issued under national schemes. Given that the final targets of the expertise conveyed during the training are professional users, distributors and retailers, workshops will be designed to enhance knowledge transfer.

In all, 14 three-day workshops are planned for 30 participants each from EU Member States and candidate, potential candidate and European Free Trade Association countries, with a second phase of 14 workshops also envisaged. Workshops comprise three modules of one day each on: legal requirements for plant protection products and their use; safe use of plant protection products; and environmental aspects and sustainable use of plant protection products.

For more information, please visit:

<http://ec.europa.eu/chafea/food/tenders.html>

Do you know where this is?



Send your answer with the reference
«May 2014 newsletter»
to CHAFEA-BTSF-PROJECTS@ec.europa.eu
and participate to win a BTSF USB key.

**ANSWER FROM THE MAY 2014 EDITION:
Rovinj, Istria peninsula , Croatia**

