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President to deliver EFCA progress report at Budapest conference

EFCA is dealing with an array of subjects that are relevant to the daily business practice of European engineering consultancy firms of all sizes, and with specific needs and wide-ranging activities. The federation's strategy and results will be highlighted in Budapest on 26 and 27 September 2006.

At the annual meeting 'Main concerns of the European industry - Report on Committees', Committee Chairs will explain the relevance and impact of EFCA's actions on the key concerns facing European engineering consultancy firms.

This meeting will provide a forum for EFCA's stakeholders and colleagues from the European engineering consultancy services sector to share information and to maintain

the dialogue between EFCA representatives and national delegates.

EFCA president Yann Leblais will report on the federation's achievements and review the main areas of activity at the General Assembly Meeting (GAM). He will also give details of the progress towards the federation's goals that are set out in the 2005–2008 Forward Plan.

Both meetings are held as part of the first ever tripartite international consulting engineering conference, organised by FIDIC, EFCA and AHCEA-Hungary.

The first meeting (Report on EFCA Committees) is scheduled on 26 September (16:00 - 18:00); the second (EFCA GAM) on 27 September (11:30 – 13:00).

<http://www1.fidic.org/conference/2006/>

Harmonising engineering consultancy services in Europe

The Commission welcomes the project proposal for a feasibility and opportunity study on harmonisation of engineering consultancy services in Europe.

The main purpose of the opportunity and feasibility study is to check whether the conditions of success for a European harmonisation of consultancy engineering practices are met; and if the answer is yes, in which specific countries, sectors and areas. The study will thus highlight current differences, and conclude with indicators for moving forward increased harmonisation. The French Standards Institution, AFNOR, is currently finalising its project proposal to

take account of the European rules that regulate the recognition of professional qualifications (Directive 2005/36/EC) and the upcoming Services Directive. Such an approach ties in with the general objectives to reduce regulatory and administrative barriers and to encourage and facilitate growth in cross-border service provision.

Through its Standardisation Working Party, EFCA is actively supporting the project for regular reviews of the AFNOR project findings, progress and difficulties. The study project is expected to formally start in November 2006.

EFCA highlights key role of consultants in delivering Public-Private Partnerships

The EFCA position paper clarifies the relevance of PPPs for our services sector, highlights the concerns of European engineering consultancy and gives EFCA's views on current and future EU procedural requirements concerning the use of PPPs for project delivery.

The paper highlights the key role of engineering consultancy in the success of a project in defining needs and objectives, in proposing solutions, and in providing innovation and creative ideas. It emphasises the need for fair remuneration.

The Position Paper, prepared by the chair of EFCA's Project Financing Committee, Panos Panagopoulos, and approved by the Board of Directors, is available on the EFCA web site at: www.efcanet.org/news.html (Click: 3. EFCA Position Papers)

Register now for Constructing for Safety & Health in Europe event

EFCA and the co-signatories of the 2004 Bilbao Declaration, together with representatives of the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, the European Economic and Social Committee, the European Parliament, the European

Commission, the EU labour inspectorates, the Finnish EU Presidency, and other Member State representatives will revisit the issues raised in the Declaration and measure progress made to date.

In November 2004, representatives of the European construction industry signed the Bilbao Declaration, committing themselves to address and improve health and safety issues.

The signatories of the Declaration, including EFCA, formed the European Construction Safety Forum (ECSF) in order to implement relevant measures.

These measures concern:

- Procurement – building in safety;
- Enforcement – improving compliance;
- Guidelines – sharing good compliance practice;
- Designing for safe and healthy construction work; and
- Improving safety and health performance through social partner commitment.

The event *Constructing for Safety & Health in Europe* will be held in Brussels on **21 September 2006**.

Attendance and conference packs are free with prior registration.

Contact Julia Ridsdale at the EFCA Secretariat for full details.



E F C A A G E N D A

Public Procurement Committee	Brussels	14.09.2006 [11:00 – 16:00]
'Constructing for Safety & Health in Europe'	Brussels	21.09.2006
AHCEA, EFCA & FIDIC 2006 Conference www.consulting2006.org	Budapest	24-27.09.2006
BoD meeting	Budapest	24.09.2006 [14:00 – 17:00]
Reports on Committees	Budapest	26.09.2006 [16:00 – 18:00]
EFCA GAM	Budapest	27.09.2006 [11:30 – 13:00]
Project Financing Committee	Budapest	27.09.2006 [14:30 – 18:00]
Partnership for Development Committee	Brussels	10.10.2006
Standardisation Working Party	Brussels	11.10.2006 [11:00 – 16:00]
EIB – EFCA – FEACO SEMINAR	Brussels	30.11.2006 or 14.12.2006 (tbc)
BoD meeting	London	06.12.2006
2007 EFCA GAM & Conference	Greece (Rhodes)	06-10.06.2007

C o n f e r e n c e s , s e m i n a r s

Public hearing on the Strategic EU Energy Review http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/ipm/forms/dispatch?form=energyreview	Brussels	22.09.2006
European Week of Regions and Cities 2006 "Investing in Europe's Regions and Cities: Public and Private Partners for Growth and Jobs" www.opendays.europa.eu	Brussels	9-12.10.2006
Conference 'Towards an EU external energy policy to assure a high level of supply security' http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/energy/energy_conference_2006/index.htm	Brussels	20-21.11.2006



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INTERNAL MARKET

Services Directive: positions of Council, Parliament and the Commission on a path towards convergence

The text adopted by the Council on 24 July is substantially in line with the text adopted by the European Parliament at first reading and with the Commission's amended proposal.

The key features of the Common Position are:

- the scope of application of the Directive has been slightly modified,
- it clarifies the services that are excluded from application of the Directive,
- it includes the provisions relating to the freedom to provide services (with a

screening procedure for restrictions) and on administrative cooperation and,

- it extends the period of transposition of the directive from two to three years.

The proposed mandatory requirement to carry professional indemnity insurance, which was our industry's major concern, is dropped.

Also, financial security refers to the recipient only and not third parties. Health and safety refers to third parties.

Meanwhile the Commission has adopted a communication on the common position of the Council stating that it approves the text as a whole and the various amendments that were made to it.

After the EP plenary vote (on 14 November or 12 December 2006 at the latest) the Commission will give its views on any amendments adopted.

The Council then has a maximum of 4 months to decide whether it can accept the European Parliament's amendments, which means that it is possible that the Directive could be adopted by the end of this year under the Finnish Presidency.

It is, however, more likely that the final adoption will occur in early 2007 under the German Presidency.

Better comparability of qualifications in terms of knowledge, skills and competences

The Commission adopted a proposal for a Recommendation on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (EQF). The EQF will provide a common language to describe qualifications which will help Member States, employers and individuals compare qualifications across the EU's diverse education and training systems.

The EQF shifts the focus from input (length of learning experience, type of institution) to what a person holding a particular qualification actually knows and is able to do. It describes levels of qualifications in

terms of learning outcomes. The awarding of qualifications will remain a matter for national qualifications bodies.

The EQF Recommendation does not apply to situations covered by the Directive on the mutual recognition of professional qualifications (2005/36/EC). This Directive establishes rules that Member States are obliged to respect when they receive an application for recognition by a migrant holder of another Member State's qualification, with a view to exercising a profession which is regulated in their territory.

http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/eqf/index_en.html

Commission guidance on award of contracts to which the procurement Directives do not apply

The Communication suggests best practices which may be applied in order to comply with the internal market requirements confirmed by the European Court of Justice (ECJ) case-law.

The guidance provided by the Commission addresses two groups of contracts:

- on the one hand, it concerns low-value contracts to which the European procurement Directives do not apply as their contract values are below the thresholds for application of these Directives;
- on the other hand, it provides guidance for the award of service contracts which, due to their contract value, fall under the European procurement Directives but for which these Directives only provide a limited number of rules.

The Commission's Interpretative Communication provides guidance to contracting authorities to help them comply with standards of transparency and fair competition.

http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/publicprocurement/key-docs_en.htm

Pre-accession Assistance: 11.47 billion euro over 7 years

A total of 11.47 billion euro EU funding will become available to Croatia, Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, as well as to Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Serbia during the next seven years.

A new Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) will, as of 1 January 2007, replace the five existing instruments (PHARE, ISPA, SAPARD, Turkey pre-accession instrument and CARDS).

It will cover all EU pre-accession actions, both for candidate and potential candidate countries, and will provide financial assistance through a single and more coherent tool.

Assistance under IPA will include institution-building (e.g. approximation to EU laws and standards, and management capacity) and support investment projects and infrastructure. Measures would initially be piloted by the Commission, but the final objective would 'also be for the country to get ready to manage assistance by itself in due time'.

http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/financial_assistance/ipa/index_en.htm

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2006/l_210/l_21020060731en00820093.pdf

5.6 billion euro to develop trans-African connections

Commissioner Michel proposed 5.6 billion budget from the 10th European Development Fund (2008-2013) to support Africa's efforts to identify and address missing links in existing networks, harmonise transport policies, develop integrated water management, develop cross-border and regional energy infrastructure and promote efforts to bridge the digital gap.

The Commission sees the lack of basic infrastructures as a key obstacle to attracting economic investment in the area and consequently to development.

The first priority is transport networks and establishing major road and railway communication corridors, defined in conjunction with regional African organisations. The second priority is energy and the promotion of network interconnections, electrical equipment and renewable energy sources. Water and telecommunications are the third and fourth pillars.

In the short term, the Commission will allocate 60 million euro from the 9th EDF. The European Investment Bank (EIB) will initially allocate 260 million euro in loan financing.

http://www.europe-cares.org/africa/partnership_en.html

3 billion euro earmarked to support progress towards better governance

The Commission proposes measures to foster reforms and calls on the Member States to harmonise their work in promoting democratic governance in the interest of development.

The most important features of the proposed measures to encourage developing countries to step up their reform efforts are enhanced political dialogue, a common approach and a higher level of more effective assistance.

Programming of the 10th European Development Fund (EDF) for the ACP countries will include an incentive envelope of 3 billion euro for this purpose for the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries.

Governance is also a priority in the EU's relations with its neighbours and with the countries of Asia and Latin America.

http://www.europe-cares.org/africa/governance_en.html

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2006/com2006_0421en01.pdf

Fourth call for proposals for Marco Polo programme

In order to address increasing congestion problems and demand from the markets the budget for the 2006 call was increased to 35 million euro, compared to 30.1 million euro in 2005.

The general aim of the Marco Polo programme is to help companies initiate new services for shifting freight off the road and on to short-sea shipping, rail and inland waterways during the high risk start-up phase.

http://ec.europa.eu/transport/marcopolo/guide_proposers/call_2006_en.htm

EIB support to energy projects in Africa

The European Investment Bank's approval for co-funding of three electricity infrastructure projects in Africa, drawn from the New Economic Partnership for the Development of Africa (NEPAD) list, appears imminent.

The first project on the table concerns the Felou hydroelectric dam on the River Senegal in western Mali. The second project concerns a 190 km high-tension electricity line connecting the Zambian and Namibian grids. The third project aims to connect Malawi and Mozambique via a high-tension power line with a transmission capacity of between 50 and 100MW.

Some 30 other projects are also examined, notably with a view to funding under the new Energy Facility for ACP countries.

<http://www.eib.org/acp>

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/europeaid/projects/energy/news_en.htm



DOCUMENTS & WEB SITES OF INTEREST

EU LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

Proposals & Regulation

Guidelines for trans-European energy networks

The Council of Ministers approved in second reading the guidelines on Trans-European Energy Networks (TEN-E). 'Projects of European interest' will top the list of projects for co-financing through the TEN-E budget and the European Investment Bank (EIB). An implementation timetable will be agreed between the member states and the Commission.

Projects encountering difficulties will be taken up by European coordinators who will coordinate efforts to ensure that the projects advance.

The EU will spend about 25 million euro a year on these projects, essentially on feasibility studies. A separate budgetary decision addresses financing procedures. Future investment is estimated at 20 billion in the EU and 8 billion in non-EU countries over the period 2007-2013.

Following the signing of legislative acts by the President of the European Parliament, the President of the Council and the Secretaries-General of both institutions, the legislative act will be published in the EU's Official Journal.

http://ec.europa.eu/ten/energy/index_en.htm

Legislative package on the new cohesion policy (2007-2013)

The legislative package includes general regulations defining a common set of rules applicable to all the instruments as well as specific regulations for the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF) and the European Grouping of Cross-Border Co-operation (EGCC). The Regulations were adopted by the Council and the European Parliament in July 2006.

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/regulation/newregl0713_en.htm

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:210:SOM:en:HTML>

The Commission will shortly publish the list of countries and regions eligible for the different objectives of the European Structural Funds, and the breakdown of funding allocated to each. The Regulations regarding the execution, which will clarify certain clauses in the general regulation on the Structural Funds, also still need to be adopted by the Commission.

The Council of Ministers still has to adopt the EU's strategic guidelines.

This will complete the implementation of the legislative framework for the next programming period, allowing the states and regions to finalise national strategy frameworks and operational programmes, based on which individual projects can be financed.

Establishing an Environment Strategy for the Mediterranean

Commission proposal for a long-term environmental strategy for cleaning up and protecting the Mediterranean Sea.

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2006/com2006_0475en01.pdf

Memoranda for new cohesion policy initiatives JASPERS, JEREMIE and JESSICA

The three initiatives are JASPERS (Joint Assistance in Supporting Projects in European Regions), JEREMIE (Joint European Resources for Micro-to-Medium Enterprises) and JESSICA (Joint European Support for Sustainable Investment in City Areas).

The memoranda present the way the joint approach and work of the partners will be organised regarding each of the three new initiatives to deliver more investment, growth and jobs in the regions. The initiatives were prepared under the new regulations for Structural Funds in the programming period 2007-2013.

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/funds/2007/jjj/index_en.htm

REPORTS

Report of the European Anti-Fraud Office

Sixth Activity Report for the period 1 July 2004 to 31 December 2005.

Once a year, the European Anti-Fraud Office issues a report on its independent operational activities during the previous year. During the year 2005 OLAF recovered a total of 203 million euro that had been lost through fraud and other irregularities, the highest yearly amount recovered so far. At the end of 2005 OLAF was investigating 452 cases.

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/anti_fraud/reports/olaf/2005/en.pdf

This report is separate from the European Commission's annual '**Report on the Protection of the financial interests of the Communities - fight against fraud**', which is being published at the same time.

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/anti_fraud/reports/commission/2005/EN.pdf

Report on the implementation of Structural Funds

A total of 285.9 million euro was withdrawn from the EU's Cohesion Policy budget in 2005 under the 'n+2 rule' for the de-commitment' of Structural Funds.

Under the 'n+2 rule', funding awarded to a programme is lost definitively if it is not used by the end of the second year following the year in which it was allocated.

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/library/documents/revenue_expenditure/expenditure/sf_implem_rep_2005_en.pdf

Internal Market Scoreboard – 18.07.2006

EU member states are named and shamed for their deteriorating performance in implementing EU law. The percentage of Single Market Directives not transposed into national law on time has risen from 1.6% to 1.9% since November 2005.

The number of infringement cases opened against the EU15 for incorrectly applying EU Directives remains high. Infringements against the EU10 are still put in a separate category, yet even here, the picture is not so positive.

The transposition deficit for the three European Free Trade Area (EFTA) countries that apply Single Market legislation - Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein - stands at 1.5%, compared to 1.6% in November 2005.

http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/score/index_en.htm

Production in the construction sector up by 2.7% in the euro area (Eurostat-euro-indicators)

In the construction sector, seasonally adjusted production grew by 2.7% in the euro area and by 1.9% in the EU25 in the second quarter of 2006, compared to the previous quarter. In the first quarter of 2006, production fell by 0.1% in the euro area and rose by 0.1% in the EU25.

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/pls/portal/docs/PAGE/PGP_PRD_CAT_PREREL/PGE_CAT_P_REREL_YEAR_2006/PGE_CAT_PREREL_YEAR_2006_MONTH_09/4-06092006-EN-AP.PDF

CONSULTATIONS

Green Paper 'A European Strategy for Sustainable, Competitive and Secure Energy'

The Green Paper is a consultation document designed to stimulate ideas on what should be done to deal with practical challenges and problems. On the basis of the responses, the Commission will develop more concrete ideas on a number of energy issues.

Closing date: **24 September 2006.**

http://ec.europa.eu/energy/green-paper-energy/index_en.htm

Promotion of Heating and Cooling from Renewable Energies

The purpose of this public consultation is to contribute to the Commission's Impact Assessment by providing a range of opinions and new and innovative ideas regarding the implementation and the impact of different types of policies and measures that promote heating and cooling from renewable energy sources.

Closing date: **6 October 2006.**

http://ec.europa.eu/energy/res/consultation/heating_cooling_en.htm

Questionnaire on the Impact of European Community Policies on Competitiveness in the Construction Sector

The Manchester Business School is undertaking a study on the 'Impact of European Community Policies on the Competitiveness of the Construction Sector' for Directorate General Enterprise. An online survey for completion by businesses in the sector is available at:

<http://www.mbs.ac.uk/EuroImpactSurvey>

International Finance Corporation: First set of draft Environmental, Health, and Safety Guidelines

http://www.ifc.org/ifcext/policyreview.nsf/Content/EHSGuidelinesUpdate_Comments

Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC) Directive - reference documents (BREFs)

The Commission adopted new documents on the 'best available techniques' with regard to waste incineration, waste treatment industries, surface treatment of metals and plastics, food, drink and milk industries, and organic fine chemicals.

<http://eippcb.jrc.es/pages/FActivities.htm>

Labour market and wage developments in 2005 – with special focus on labour market adjustment in the euro area

http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2006/eesp406en.pdf

Road freight transport 1999-2004: cabotage and transport with non-EU countries

This Eurostat publication covers data reported by EU-Member States and Norway for the years 1999 to 2004. Between 1999 and 2004, there has been a steady year on year growth in road freight transport, which went from 25,786,000 tonnes in 1999 to 49,600,000 tonnes in 2004.

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page?_pageid=1073,46587259&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL&p_product_code=KS-NZ-06-008

2005 EU Survey on R&D Investment Business Trends in 10 Sectors

This survey provides new insights into company expectations about future R&D investments and their motivations to invest in research.

<http://iri.jrc.es/do/home/portal/articuloview?IDARTICULO=26&IDIDIOMA=1&IDSECCION=2>

European Forest Fire Information System (EFFIS)

System developed by the European Commission to monitor forest fire risk in Europe and provide member states with early risk warning and damage assessment.

The European Commission has released a comprehensive overview of the impact of forest fires in Europe for 2005, the 'Forest Fires in Europe 2005' report

(<http://effis.jrc.it/documents/2006/ForestFiresInEurope2005.pdf>).

<http://effis.jrc.it/Home>

Midterm Evaluation of the **Galileo project** for the period 2002-2004 - Final Report, June 2006

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/energy_transport/evaluation/activites/doc/reports/rte/2006_06_galileo_project_2002_2004.pdf

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