2006 discharge: European Railway Agency

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PURPOSE: presentation of the final accounts of the European Railway Agency for the financial year 2006.

CONTENT: this document sets out a detailed account of the implementation of the 2006 budget, including the revenue and expenditure and the balance sheet for the year concerned.

The European Railway Agency was created by Regulation (EC) No 881/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004. It became autonomous on 1 January 2006. The Agency's aim is to enhance the level of interoperability of railway systems and to develop a common approach to safety in order to contribute to creating a more competitive European railway sector with a high level of safety.

During 2006 the programmed activities were not fully implemented as the Agency was still in its start-up phase. In 2007, the Agency shall proceed to an in-depth analysis of the programming of its activities, the resources required and the budget to be allocated together with a plan for calls for tenders.

According to this document, the final budget for 2006 amounted to **EUR 14.4 million.**

As regards the staffing policy, the Agency (which is located in two cities: its administrative seat is in Valenciennes whereas its meetings have to be held in Lille) officially set out 95 posts in its establishment plan. 80 posts are currently occupied + 5 other posts totalling 85 posts assigned to operational and administrative duties. Staff expenditure amounted to EUR 6.668 million in 2006.

The activities carried out in 2006 are as follows:

Safety:

- recommendation to the Commission on harmonised formats for safety certificates and harmonised application forms to be used by railway undertakings and national safety authorities;
- recommendation to the Commission on notification of national safety rules following a request from the Commission related to other measures in the field of safety;
- annual progress reports to the Commission for: Interoperability: recommendation on registration of rolling stock and report on specifications on the National Vehicle Register;
- ERTMS (European Rail Traffic Management System): recommendation to the Commission to update Annex A of the technical specifications for interoperability, Control Command and Signalling for high speed and conventional rail systems.

Economic Evaluation:

- methodology guidelines for impact assessment, applicable to all Agency recommendations, have been supplied to the Commission. Applied guidelines have been derived for various draft recommendations. Impact assessments are being prepared in parallel with recommendations. At the request of the Commission, an impact assessment for improved cross-acceptance of rolling stock (locomotives) has been provided.

The complete version of the final accounts may be found at the following address: www.era.europa.eu