2007 discharge: European Aviation Safety Agency EASA

2008/2266(DEC) - 23/01/2009

Based on the observations contained in the revenue and expenditure account and the balance sheet of the European Aviation Safety Agency for the financial year 2007, as well as on the Court of Auditor’s report and the Agency’s replies to the Court’s observations, the Council recommends that the Parliament grant the Director of the Agency discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2007.

In doing so, the Council confirms that EUR 17 million (88%) of the appropriations carried over from 2006 to 2007 (EUR 19.2 million) were used, that the appropriations carried over from 2007 to 2008 amount to EUR 35 million and that a total of EUR 1.4 million was cancelled.

Recalling that the Court of Auditors was able to obtain reasonable assurance that the Agency’s annual accounts were, in all material aspects, reliable, the Council believes that there is a certain number of observations that must be taken into consideration when granting discharge in respect of the implementation of the 2007 budget, particularly regarding the following points:

- **Carry-overs**: the Council reiterates that certain practices, namely increasingly high carry-over rates for operating expenditure and a high number of vacant posts, require further improvements in the Agency's financial, budgetary and human resources management and calls on the Agency to remedy this situation without delay;
- **Recruitment**: the Council takes note of the Court's finding that the decision of the Agency, in agreement with the Commission, to slow down recruitment was taken without amending the establishment plan accordingly. In this context, the Council calls on the Agency to comply with the provisions of the Financial Regulation;
- **Budgetary planning**: the Council notes with concern that in application of the new fees and charges regulation the Agency has overestimated the amounts of assigned revenue which should cover future certification costs. Therefore, the Council calls on the Agency to carefully check the consistency of its forecasts and work more on its financial and operational planning;
- **Procurement**: the Council regrets the serious deficiencies in the procurement procedures carried out by the Agency, as identified again by the Court, particularly as regards the choice of the appropriate type of procedure, the financial evaluation method as well as the information on the award criteria. The Council reiterates its call on the Agency to comply strictly with the applicable rules thus ensuring correct and transparent procurement practices.