2010 discharge: Community Fisheries Control Agency (CFCA)

2011/2234(DEC) - 06/09/2011 - Court of Auditors: opinion, report

PURPOSE: presentation of the EU Court of Auditors' report on the annual accounts of the Community Fisheries Control Agency (CFCA), together with the Agency's reply.

CONTENT: in accordance with the tasks conferred on the Court of Auditors by the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the Court presents to the European Parliament and to the Council, in the context of the discharge procedure, a Statement of Assurance as to the reliability of the annual accounts of each institution, body or agency of the EU, and the legality and regularity of the transactions underlying them, on the basis of an independent external audit.

This audit concerned, amongst others, the annual accounts of the CFCA.

In the Court's opinion, **the Agency's Annual Accounts fairly present, in all material respects, its financial position as of 31 December 2010** and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended, in accordance with the provisions of its Financial Regulation.

The Court also considers that **the transactions underlying the annual accounts** of the Agency for the financial year ended 31 December 2010 are, in all material respects, **legal and regular.**

The report confirms that the Agency's 2010 budget amounted to EUR 11 million, and that the number of staff it employed at the end of the year was 54.

The report also makes a series of observations on the budgetary and financial management of the Agency, accompanied by the latter's response. The main observations may be summarised as follows:

The Court's observations:

- budgetary and financial management: some of the Agency's 2010 budget commitments related to expenditure for 2011 projects, contrary to the budgetary principle of annuality;
- procurement: weaknesses were noted in the Agency's procedures for ensuring that procurement documents are duly signed and dated;
- recruitment: with regard to staff selection procedures, neither the thresholds that candidates had to meet in order to be invited to the interview nor those necessary to be put on the reserve list were fixed in advance. These practices put at risk the transparency of the recruitment procedures.

The Agency's responses:

- in order to organise operational meetings and missions planned in advance for the first quarter of 2011 the Agency committed in 2010 budget. The Agency takes note of the comment of the Court and will take measures to prevent similar circumstances in the future.
- the Agency has adjusted the templates for the selection procedures and establishes a default threshold from the beginning, which can be used by the selection committee in order to ensure transparency.

Lastly the Court of Auditors' report contains a **summary of the Agency's activities** in 2010. These may be described as follows:

- operational coordination: implementation of Joint Deployment Plan (JPD) for the cod fishery in the North Sea, Skagerrak, Kattegat and the Eastern Channel and Western Waters (West of Scotland and the Irish Sea), as well as in the Baltic Sea, and a JPD for bluefin tuna fishery in the Mediterranean Sea and Eastern Atlantic;
- capacity building;
- mapping of Member State training programmes for national fisheries inspectors;
- operation and maintenance of Vessel Monitoring System;
- setting up of the CFCA's coordination room for the JDPs.