

### Proposal for the financial compensation of Liaison Officers

#### Introduction

At the 10 SC Meeting on 27 January 2009 in Zagreb, EIPA proposed to replace the previous “Option B Resources” with so-called Liaison Officers to take over at least some, if not all, of the functions previously provided by the Option B persons.

All recognised the importance of having a person, who is well aware of the functioning of the administration to cover at least a part of the functions, which are required of the liaison officers, including in particular support to the SC members to invite, identify and select appropriate participants to the training activities. Apart from this, there are a number of functions which may require a specific expertise or extra work. Several options were considered: some administrations consider having third parties to carry out at least part of the work while other administrations put emphasis on having this expertise in-house.

As for the future of **liaison officers** it was agreed that the Secretariat will draft a proposal for approval by the SC. Prior to being circulated to the SC, the proposal will be consulted with the Commission to ensure compliance with transparency requirements and the EU’s financial regulation.

#### 1. Liaison Officer Tasks

During Phase 1 of the ReSPA project, “option B resources” were used for the following tasks:

- drafting/writing contributions for an annual ReSPA publication
- drafting articles for the ReSPA news letter
- providing information and news for and in other ways contributing to the update of the ReSPA website
- organisational and administrative support to the ReSPA SC members related to identifying participants for ReSPA activities

Under Phase 1, the number of ReSPA training activities and corporate events were limited (five training events in 2008, ca. 750 participant days (including the annual conference) and four corporate events). For this reason, it appears that the contributions of the option B resources focused more on the first three mentioned actions than on organisational support tasks.

Under Phase 2 of the ReSPA project launched on 1 January 2009, while contributions to ReSPA publications, news letter and website will continue to be needed, the scope and amount of work involved with preparing and implementing ReSPA training and corporate events will be increased considerably: There will be more than 30 training events providing for ca. 2.500 participant days and seven corporate events.

The SC members will not be able to contribute personally to the same degree to the work of inviting, selecting and co-ordinating participants to the ReSPA training activities as in the past, and there is an increased need for administrative and logistical support by the Liaison Officer to the SC members in this respect. To this comes the (co-ordination of) contributions to ReSPA publications and updates of the website.

## **2. Placement of Liaison Officers**

In most (if not all) cases, the option B resources included persons working or recruited to work within the ReSPA members' administrations to thus better support the SC members with inviting participants for and implementing ReSPA activities and co-ordinating the other contributions to ReSPA activities (articles, website updates, etc.), which might have been prepared by other officials or independent experts. In other cases, the SC member managed all activity related co-ordination and option B resources were used mainly to prepare contributions for ReSPA news letters, publications, etc.<sup>1</sup>

In view of

- i. the increased importance of the administrative and organisational support due to the increased number of ReSPA training activities and corporate events,
- ii. the SC members' explanations of the importance of having a person, who is well aware of the functioning of the administration to provide this support,
- iii. the differences in local practices and rules of the ReSPA partners with respect to contracting, access to personal information of staff working within the public administration, payment of persons working in/for the public administration, etc., and
- iv. the variety of functions to be provided by the Liaison Officers (i.e. administrative and co-ordination support functions on the one hand, and intellectual work on the other)

it would appear that there is not one solution with respect to the placement of the Liaison Officers that will meet all the needs.

With respect to the administrative and co-ordination support, in particular, support to the SC members with inviting, identifying and selecting appropriate participants as well as with other logistical and organisational issues, the SC appears to be unanimous in the view that most efficient solution is that the Liaison Officer is physically located within the service to which the SC member belongs.

For the other contributions (preparing articles to the ReSPA newsletter, publications and website), in some cases the Liaison Officer will prepare the contributions, in others it will be an external expert, who is contracted for a particular contribution.

## **3. Financial and Contractual Arrangement**

In view of the differences in nature and scope of the tasks to be provided by the Liaison Officers (or other external experts, see below), we propose that the overall amount for these services remain within the initially proposed budget, i.e. up to 10.000 Euro per ReSPA member. With regard to the weighting of the different tasks in terms of time, and based on EIPA's experience with organising training and preparing articles, etc., we estimate that this amount be divided among the different tasks as follows:

<b>Task</b>	<b>% of work/funds</b>
◦ Organisational and administrative support to the ReSPA SC members related to identifying and co-ordinating participants for and implementing ReSPA activities	40%
◦ Articles for four ReSPA news letters	30%
◦ Contributions for an annual ReSPA publication	20%
◦ Information and other updates of the ReSPA website	10%

Moreover, based on all of the above, and in particular bullets iii. and iv. above in Section 2, it would appear that there simply is not a "one-size-fits-all solution" with respect to the contractual arrangements. We will need to consider offering different solutions for different tasks, as already discussed during the 10<sup>th</sup> SC Meeting:

1. A direct contract between EIPA and the Liaison Officers. Irrespectively of what task the Liaison Officer is contracted to do (administrative/co-ordination work or intellectual contributions (for the website or newsletter), proportional payment of the allocated share of the Liaison Officer amount

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<sup>1</sup> Croatia was the exception to the rule, in that the person providing the support was paid by the State budget.

will be made by EIPA directly to the expert based on the timely receipt of the deliverable in question and an invoice.

2. In this scenario, the work (and thus the costs) are split: co-ordination and administrative support on the one hand and intellectual input for website/newsletters/publications on the other. The co-ordination/administrative work is foreseen delivered by an official already working in or recruited especially by the local partner institution for this purpose, while the intellectual work will be delivered by external experts. In this case, a contract will be entered
  - between EIPA and the local partner institution for the co-ordination/administrative work. In this case we need in written a statement of the institute that at least 50% of the Liaison Officer's working time (when employed full time) is allocated to ReSPA.<sup>2</sup>
  - between EIPA and (different) external experts for the provision of intellectual work. In this case, the external experts will be paid directly by EIPA upon the timely receipt of the deliverable in question and an invoice from the expert.
3. In this scenario, the local partner institution recruits or allocates a person to work in the partner institution, and this person will be responsible for delivering all the tasks in question (i.e. co-ordination/administration as well as intellectual tasks). To the extent that the partner institution requests an external to deliver intellectual contributions to the website or newsletter, the institution in question contracts/arranges this with such external persons. EIPA has only one contract, namely with the local partner institution. The same formal requirements as mentioned in the first bullet point under scenario 2 above applies.

Specifically as regards options 2 and 3 above, in order to satisfy Commission financial regulatory requirements, ReSPA members choosing one of these solutions may be requested to submit documentation in terms of employment contract or job-descriptions, which include the ReSPA related activities, and salary slips or other payments documentation.

The amount to be paid for the different support/intellectual contributions, will be paid on the basis of the relevant deliverable and subject to a) the deliverable having been provided in a timely fashion, b) the deliverable meeting pre-determined quality criteria, and c) submission of required documentation according to the previous paragraphs.

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<sup>2</sup> The tasks included in these 50% include the organisational and administrative support related to training and corporate events, regular updates of website and co-ordination of intellectual contributions by local experts. If the support of the Liaison Officer is less, e.g. does not include providing information to update the website, etc., the percentage of the work in the contract may be less, but of course also the amount for Liaison Officer services will be proportionately reduced.