



**EPSO
ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT 2006**

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1. POLICY RESULTS IN 2006

1.1. Level of policy area

While meeting the objectives set out in its 2006 annual management plan, EPSO continued to initiate and develop policies and to build on earlier achievements, in order to improve the quality of service rendered to both Institutions and candidates or potential applicants. Key results included honouring the agreed timetable for publication of competitions; the selection of Contract Staff; further integration of the computer based testing (CBT) system for EPSO admission tests; the continued application of best practice in selection (network of experts in selection and recruitment techniques), implementation of the interinstitutional reflection group meetings and approval of its report by the Management Board, creation of an evaluation function; organisation of third language assessment for officials with a view to their first promotion after recruitment; organisation of the selection procedures within the Certification procedure.

For as far as **competitions** are concerned, in 2006 several EUR 10 and EUR 2 competitions plus a high number of EUR 15 competitions were either completed (**56**) or launched (**18**), thereby providing a supply of laureates to cater for the Institutions needs. A total of **2.887** laureates were placed on reserve lists during the year. EPSO also launched competitions for administrators, lawyer-linguists and secretaries in the context of the planned enlargement of Bulgaria and Romania and by finalising competitions for translators and interpreters from these countries provided thereby the institutions with laureate lists before the end of 2006. A competition for translators with Irish was published in May 2006 and closed in December 2006 and the reserve list was published before the end of 2006; interpreting needs were addressed in competitions published in September 2006 where there is an option for use of Irish. Following the Forward Planning (established on a semester basis) of end 2005, all competitions, EUR 11, EUR10 and EUR 2 were launched on time.

On other **selection procedures**, the Europe-wide call for expression of interest (CAST 25) for contract staff addressed to citizens of all Member States was finalised after testing of candidates and a database of potential contract staff to be recruited by the Institutions in all function groups was established.

On **technical aspects**, the on-line registration and communication with candidates has been improved allowing candidates to chose their date and time for their pre-selection Computer Based Test. The system now allows for adaptable confirmation screens which improve data integrity and communication with candidates.

On **communication strategy**, EPSO has continued to give greater access to available information to both internal and external users. Internally, staff has access to a range of strategic information, via the *EPSOonly* intranet web-site, while EPSO's Extranet web-site gives the Institutions timely and flexible access to a wider range of information on the activities of the Office. The publication of EPSO Facta, has continued with great success throughout 2006 each edition concentrating on areas of up to date information for its readers. Improvements to EPSO's site for the general public (<http://www.europa.eu.int/epso>) have been undertaken throughout the latter part of 2006.

In its continuous search for best practice, the established Network of National Expert in Selection held its third plenary meeting in Austria in June 2006. The themes of this meeting included e-recruiting and assessment of performance and personality.

The new task under article 45(2) of the Staff Regulations - assessment of the capacity to work in a third language before the first promotion after recruitment - was implemented for the first time during the second semester of 2006 by EPSO, albeit under specific transitional modalities due to the non-adoption of the inter institutional implementing rules at that time. On the basis of these specific modalities approximately 100 diplomas/certificates have been assessed by EPSO under very tight time constraints in order to verify if the Officials concerned already fulfilled the requirements of knowledge of a third language. The assessment on the basis of language tests have been delegated exceptionally to DG ADMIN during this transitional period in 2006.

Conclusion:

EPSO has reached its overall objectives, even if in some particular areas results were short of expectations. It has also provided the European Institutions with the first laureate lists in the linguistic fields for the two new member states Romania and Bulgaria.

1.2. Section – Level of the ABB (operational activities)

EPSO was able to complete on schedule most of the competitions it launched in 2005. The remaining few competitions published in 2005 but which were unable to be completed in 2006 and for which provision was made in the Annual Management Plan of 2006 (notably 4 of the major graduate entrance competitions) EPSO/AD/25/05 (European Public Administration), EPSO/AD/26/05 (Law), EPSO/AD/28/05 (Financial resource management) and EPSO/AD/29/05 (Economics/statistics) and the EPSO/AST/7/05 will be finalised in the Spring of 2007. Indeed on 9 March 2007 candidates for EPSO/AD/29/05 were informed of their final results, on 29 January 2007 candidates for EPSO/AST/7/05 (field 2) were informed as were on 12 February 2006 those candidates for EPSO/AD/28/05. The principle reason for the above mentioned provision lies in the fact that, in accordance with the Institutions' wishes, priority was being given to the running and completion of EUR 10 competitions.

For some competitions the number of laureates fell short of expected targets – typically this was the case for specialised (interpreting, scientific fields and audit) competitions as well as for some EUR 10 AST3 competitions. Reasons for this can be found for the most part in the low number of applications received from the outset and this, largely due to limited resources found in such specialised areas. Nevertheless, in the majority of fields there were an amply sufficient number of laureates to meet the recruitment needs of the Institutions in 2006 and once again the overall figure (2.887) represents a considerable achievement by EPSO. Shortfalls were addressed in the new forward planning agreed by the EPSO Management Board on 21.10.2006 and which was presented again with further requests from the Institutions on 23 January 2007.

EPSO's priorities and main objectives for 2006, as reflected in the Management Plan, consisted of:

a) Completion of ongoing EUR 10 competitions

Progress against this objective is measured in terms of timeliness, number of competitions completed and number of qualified laureates produced.

Competitions	Laureates	Date of availability of reserve lists	Laureate target	Success rate to target
EPSO/AD/42/05 (AD7) – Lawyer Linguists PL	29	Dec. 06	35	82,86
EPSO/AD/30/05 (AD6) – Lawyer Linguists CS	13	Apr. 06	35	37,14
EPSO/AD/24/05 (A*9) – Senior auditors	5	Jul. 06	25	20
EPSO/AD/23/05 (A*5) – Junior auditors	54	Jul. 06	90	60
EPSO/AD/22/05 (A*12) Heads of Unit (5 fields)	37	Jul. 06	56	66,07
EPSO/AD/21/05 (A*9) Heads of Unit (5 fields)	51	Jun. 06	123	41,46
EPSO/AD/8-16/05 (A*9) – Senior Conference Interpreters	11	Sep. 06	15 X 9 languages	8,15
EPSO/AD/7/05 (A*12) – Heads of linguistic division in translation	13	Jun. 06	51	25,49
EPSO/AD/6/05 (A*9) Heads of linguistic division in translation	35	Jun. 06	11 X 9 languages	35,35

Competitions	Laureates	Date of availability of reserve lists	Laureate target	Success rate to target
EPSO/AD/5/05 (A*5)–Translators	739	Jun-oct.06 according to languages	125 X 9 languages	65,69
EPSO/AD/4/04 (A*7) – Administrators in the field of European Public Administration	351	May-Jul.06 according to citizenships	360	97,5
EPSO/AD/24/04 (A*6)– Administrators in the field of research (4 fields)	59	Feb. 06	90	65,56
EPSO/AST/3/04 (B*3) – Assistants in the field of IT	70	May 06	300	23,33
EPSO/AST/2/04 (B*3) – Assistants in the fields of European Public Admin/HR and financial management	221	Jul. 06	655	33,74

b) Completion of on-going EUR-15 competitions

Competitions	Laureates	Date of availability of reserve lists	Laureate target	Success rate to target
EPSO/AD/45/06 (AD5)– Irish translators	19	Dec. 06	30	63,33
EPSO/AD/41/05 – (AD7) Lawyer Linguists FR	30	Dec. 06	45	66,67
EPSO/AD/40/05 (AD7) – Lawyer Linguists DA	8	Oct. 06	35	22,86
EPSO/AD/32/05 (AD6) Lawyer Linguists PT	29	Apr. 06	34	85,29
EPSO/AD/31/05 (AD6) Lawyer Linguists EN	13	May 06	35	37,14
EPSO/AD/27/05 (AD5) Administrators in the field of Audit	112	Nov. 06	125	89,60
EPSO/A/17/04 – (A7/A6) – Administrators in the field of Research	106	Apr. 06	180	58,89
EPSO/AD/3/04 – (A*6) Lawyer Linguists - SV	6	Feb. 06	30	20
EPSO/AD/2/04 (A*6) – Lawyer Linguists NL	8	Mar. 06	30	26,67
EPSO/AST/6/05(C*1) Assistants in the Buildings sector	24	Mar. 05	30	80
EPSO/AST/5/05(B*3) Assistants in the Buildings sector	31	May 05	30	103,33
EPSO/AST/4/05 (C*1) – French speaking secretaries	351	June 06	350	100,29

c) Completion of EUR-2 competitions

Competitions	Laureates	Date of availability of reserve lists	Laureate target	Success rate to target
EPSO/AD/44/06 (AD7) – lawyer linguists RO	41	Dec. 06	51	80,39
EPSO/AD/43/06.(AD7)– lawyer linguists BG	32	Dec. 06	51	62,75
EPSO/AD/36/05 (AD5) – Translators - RO	157	Dec. 06	150	104,67
EPSO/AD/35/05 (AD5) – Translators - BG	145	Dec. 06	150	96,67
EPSO/AD/34/05 (AD5) – Conference interpreters - RO	16	Dec. 06	100	16
EPSO/AD/33/05 (AD5) – Conference interpreters- BG	9	Dec. 06	100	9

c) Organisation of new competitions to meet the priority needs of the Institutions

In 2006 EPSO launched competitions which reflect the priorities agreed by the EPSO Working Group and endorsed by the EPSO Management Board. A large number of competitions were launched which reflect the needs expressed by the Institutions and which can be laid out as follows:

EUR10

Competitions	Publication	Closing date	Candidates	Laureate target	Indicative date of reserve list
EPSO/AD/53-62/06 (AD5) 4 fields	25/07/2006 C172A	07 Sept 06	10274	845	Jul-Oct. 07 according to citizenships
EPSO/AST/16-25/06 (AST1) Assistants in the Secretarial field	25/07/2006 C172A	07 Sept 06	3525	675	Jun-Jul. 07 according to citizenship
EPSO/AD/66/06 (AD7) Lawyer Linguists SL	14/09/2006 C221A	17 Oct 06	60	30	Jun-Jul.07 according to channel/ citizenship
EPSO/AD/65/06 (AD7) Lawyer Linguists LT	14/09/2006 C221A	17 Oct 06	114	32	Jun-Jul.07 according to channel / citizenship
EPSO/AD/64/06 (AD7) Lawyer Linguists LV	14/09/2006 C221A	17 Oct 06	50	32	Jun-Jul.07 according to channel/ citizenship
EPSO/AD/63/06 (AD7) Lawyer Linguists EE	14/09/2006 C221A	17 Oct 06	43	30	Jun-Jul.07 according to channel/ citizenship
EPSO/AD/85/06 (AD7) Lawyer Linguists SK	30/11/2006 C291A	04 Jan 07	115	25	Jul. 07
EPSO/AD/84/06 (AD7) Lawyer Linguists MT	30/11/2006 C291A	04 Jan 07	53	28	Jul. 07
EPSO/AD/83/06 (AD7) Lawyer Linguists HU	30/11/2006 C291A	04 Jan 07	248	28	Jul. 07

EUR2

Competitions	Publication	Closing date	Candidates	Laureate target	Indicative date of reserve list
EPSO/AD/44/06 (AD7) lawyer linguists RO	11/04/2006 C87A	22 May 06	1080	51	Dec 06
EPSO/AD/43/06.(AD7) lawyer linguists BG	11/04/2006 C87A	22 May 06	530	51	Dec 06
EPSO/AD/47/06 (AD5) Administrators 4 fields	21/06/2006 C145A	20 July 06	9213	215	Jul-Sep.07 according to field and citizenship
EPSO/AD/46/06 (AD5) Administrators 4 fields	21/06/2006 C145A	20 July 06	5937	110	Jul-Sep.07 according to field and citizenship
EPSO/AST/15/06 (AST1) RO Secretaries	21/06/2006 C145A	20 July 06	2606	225	July 07
EPSO/AST/14/06 (AST1) BG Secretaries	21/06/2006 C145A	20 July 06	1235	165	July 07

EUR11

Competitions	Publication	Closing date	Candidates	Laureate target	Indicative date of reserve list
EPSO/AD/52/06 (AD7) Lawyer Linguists FI	13/07/2006 C162A	12 Sept 06	100	28	May 07
EPSO/AD/51/06 (AD7) Lawyer Linguists DE	13/07/2006 C162A	12 Sept 06	900	28	May 07
EPSO/AD/45/06 (AD5) Irish language translators	03/05/2006 C104A	8 June 06	441	30	Dec. 06
EPSO/AST/26- 36/06 (AST1) Assistants in the Secretarial field	26/07/2006 C173A	07 Sept 06	16366	970	Oct. 07/ Mar. 08 according languages
EPSO/AD/76/06 (AD7) Interpreters PT	28/09/2006 C233A	14 Nov 06	49	35	Jul. 07
EPSO/AD/75/06 (AD5) Interpreters PT	28/09/2006 C233A	14 Nov 06	59	20	Jul. 07
EPSO/AD/74/06 (AD7) Interpreters IT	28/09/2006 C233A	14 Nov 06	83	35	Jul. 07
EPSO/AD/73/06 (AD5) Interpreters IT	28/09/2006 C233A	14 Nov 06	536	20	Jul. 07
EPSO/AD/72/06 (AD7) Interpreters FR	28/09/2006 C233A	14 Nov 06	60	35	Jul. 07
EPSO/AD/71/06 (AD5) Interpreters FR	28/09/2006 C233A	14 Nov 06	159	20	Jul. 07
EPSO/AD/70/06 (AD7) Interpreters EN	28/09/2006 C233A	14 Nov 06	51	35	Jul. 07

EUR11

Competitions	Publication	Closing date	Candidates	Laureate target	Indicative date of reserve list
EPSO/AD/69/06 (AD5) Interpreters EN	28/09/2006 C233A	14 Nov 06	82	20	Jul. 07
EPSO/AD/68/06 (AD7) Interpreters DE	28/09/2006 C233A	14 Nov 06	56	35	Jul. 07
EPSO/AD/67/06 (AD5) Interpreters DE	28/09/2006 C233A	14 Nov 06	153	20	Jul. 07
EPSO/AD/82/06 (AD7) Lawyer Linguists SV	29/11/2006 C290A	03 Jan 07	166	25	Sept. 07
EPSO/AD/81/06 (AD7) Lawyer Linguists EN	29/11/2006 C290A	03 Jan 07	185	28	Sept. 07
EPSO/AD/80/06 (AD7) Lawyer Linguists DA	29/11/2006 C290A	03 Jan 07	43	25	Sept. 07
EPSO/AD/79/06 (AD5) Translators NL	15/11/2006 C277A	19 Dec 06	1579	60	Oct. 07
EPSO/AD/78/06 (AD5) Translators FI	15/11/2006 C277A	19 Dec 06	430	40	Oct. 07
EPSO/AD/77/06 (AD5) Translators EL	15/11/2006 C277A	19 Dec 06	2748	45	Oct. 07

d) Aid to Institutions in the organisation of specialised competitions to meet specific needs

In conformity with its mandate, EPSO has continued to provide throughout 2006 technical and administrative support to individual institutions with specific competition requests. As for the previous year, this concerned principally the European Parliament and three competitions for Heads of Unit – CS, LT and FI at AD9 level for their offices in Prague, Vilnius and Helsinki.

1.3. Section – Main policy and core business results

1.3.1. Presentation to the EPSO Management Board of the third forward planning of competitions, prepared in consultation with the Institutions.

Following inter-institutional consultations within the framework of the EPSO Working Group, on 21 October 2006 the EPSO Management Board endorsed the third EPSO Forward Plan covering the period last semester 2006 – 1st semester 2008.

1.3.2. Setting up of a database for contract agent staff (Function groups I-IV) (CAST 25)

Following EPSO's Call for expression of interest (CAST 25) addressed to the citizens of all 25 Member States to establish a database of potential contract agents to be recruited by the Institutions and pursuant to the General Implementing Provisions of these latter, EPSO was asked to administer to all candidates a series of tests of both a general and a job specific nature, so that the Institutions may have the guarantee that those successful candidates will have proved to possess the aptitudes and competencies to fill positions in their ranks.

To do so EPSO had recourse, for the first time, to Computer based testing (see below): candidates were asked to sit verbal, numerical and EU knowledge tests (Function group specific) in 33 different test centres spread all over the Member States between the end of November 2005 and the beginning of January 2006. Competency tests (job profile specific) were administered during 2006, and final results were made available to the Institutions, profile by profile, from March to November 2006. (The procedures have been completed for all but 5 profiles, for which the final results are expected early in 2007).

In terms of participation, EPSO registered more than 32.000 applications and validated close to 29.000 of them, inviting the candidates to register for the tests. Nearly 19.000 candidates did so, 16.000 were actually tested and more than 6.000 were successful.

1.3.3. Develop selection methods and techniques on the basis of best practice

1.3.3.1. Computer-based preliminary tests

EPSO, in line with provisions made in 2005 for the extension of implementation of computer-based tests from Contractual Agent testing to open competitions indeed used such tests for several open competitions in 2006 and has continued to develop its database of questions throughout the year. Added to this, a separate entity was created in 2006 within EPSO to deal with the management of the CBT database bank of questions (see point 1.3.3.2).

1.3.3.2. Evaluation, Certification and management of the Multiple-choice questions' database for CBT

The evaluation function was set up by mandate of the Director dated 28 April 2006, and transformed into a sector reporting to the Director on 1 October 2006. The sector coordinates evaluation activities related to EPSO procedures, conducts in particular ex-post evaluations of competitions and selection procedures and ensures that the results of such evaluations contain operational conclusions which can be useful in improving the quality of policies and activities. The sector defines a rolling evaluation programme in conjunction with the Director.

In the first half-year of operation, evaluation reports have been completed on several open competitions covering specific nationality performance to gender balance.

The sector also organises the written and oral examinations within the Certification procedure enabling Assistants to qualify for posts in the Administrator function group. In compliance with article 6(1) of the general implementing rules for article 45a of the Staff Regulations, the sector prepared the practical modalities and content of the testing procedures for those candidates selected by the Institutions. The written exams were drafted and marked on computer.

The CBT Task Force promotes the use of computer-based testing within the context of competitions and selection procedures, assists in identifying and assessing appropriate actions and coordinates their implementation in conjunction with the operational units. This initiative will continue to be pursued actively with a view to further streamlining and modernising procedures in line with the principles of e-Commission. The Task Force is furthermore in charge of databases used in IT-delivered admission tests. The two databases consist of the multiple-choice questions in EU knowledge and in verbal and numerical reasoning. The aim is to further develop the databases in conjunction with our service providers. Such development shall be in line with principles of best practice, in particular concerning equality proofing, harmonization and updating of content, the timely provision of reports and ensuing operational follow-up. In this context an inter-institutional advisory quality board is currently being setup.

1.3.3.3. Consolidation of on-line registration and communication with candidates

Following the success of the on-line system and communication with candidates via candidate profiles, competition management has become more efficient, improving accessibility, communication and providing real-time statistics on the number of applications received. The system is more personalised, as candidates may now visualise their online details, change their personal data (when these changes do not conflict with the running of the competition at that stage) such as languages chosen, preferred test centre etc. An electronic – searchable - Curriculum Vitae has been developed: candidates are required to fill it in if successful in the preliminary tests for access to the written tests (7,596 completed CVs in the calendar year 2006). The system now also includes an online system (activated at the end of December 2006 – 1,925 candidates have completed these online forms) whose aim is to collate all necessary data on those candidates concerned for possible reimbursement of travel costs. Added to this is the self-assessment elements incorporated into the EPSO website whereby candidates may assess themselves at the following address http://europa.eu/epso/competitions/test_sample_en.htm from tests used in previous competitions.

The website is undergoing an overhaul and the improved site is to be launched in the first quarter 2007.

EPSO has continued to improve and homogenise the IT system and has begun the project of replacing the legacy of the "Nouvelle Application Concours" NAC which is the cornerstone of competition management. The Vision and Analyses are complete and progress is ongoing.

Throughout 2006 EPSO has also provided technological support to other European Institutions and services of the Commission, e.g. Parliament NAC and Pe-RL (a joint venture with the Parliament and Council on the exploitation of spontaneous CVs and Trainee enrolment), ITER and RELEX selection procedures.

EPSO pursued its efforts in 2006 in order to comply with the provisions of Regulation n° 45/2001 on data protection, by formally notifying to the EDPS several data treatment processes (open competitions, temporary agents, contract staff, certification,...) and by giving the appropriate follow-up to these issues.

1.3.3.4. Triennial Report

Following submission of the Triennial Report to the Council and the European Parliament in December 2005, the report was approved by the Groupe Statut at the Council on 19 April 2006 with no amendments.

1.3.3.5. Reflection Group of Human resources directors

On the initiative of the Director of EPSO, an ad hoc working group (chaired by EPSO) composed of resource Directors from the different institutions was created in 2006. The mandate of the group was to reflect upon the strengths and weaknesses of the selection and recruitment system and provide concrete proposals for improvements. In particular, the group was to explore means to further improve quality and quantity of laureates available for recruitment. Main themes addressed in the report were: exploitation of reserve lists; organisation and different stages of the competition procedure; questions pertaining to Selection Boards (the setting up of a database of Selection Board members was taken on board in line with the Annual Management Plan of 2006, but put back for further reflection to the meeting to take place in March 2007); wide-ranging questions concerning reserve lists and the nature of selection tests chosen. The report has been adopted and the implementation of the various recommendations, as well as reflections on further specific issues related to management of open competitions, will be part of the new mandate of the reflection group in 2007.

1.3.3.6. Further development of the EPSO communication strategy

EPSO Internet/Intranet: These sites have been updated on a regular basis throughout 2006 and continue to provide useful documentation for all Institutions and for members of EPSO.

A communication strategy document was submitted to the Director for approval at the end of 2006 for action in 2007.

EPSOonly not only continues to publish information such as minutes of EPSO Directorate meetings, the vademecum for Selection boards, speeches, service-level agreements but also publishes Ombudsman decisions, the evaluation reports of competitions, and elements pertaining to the protection of data as adopted by the European Parliament and the Council on 18/12/2000 (CE) N° 45/2001.

The EPSO Extranet platform continues to be expanded by the IRM team in order to facilitate for EPSO end-users the utilisation of the "online-helpdesk" and its management tool the NICS.

External Communication

The EPSO web site, hosted by the Europa server and accessible to the public at <http://europa.eu/epso> offers the following information:

a) Information on working for the EU institutions, competitions (planned, published, ongoing, tests, preparatory courses), general information (contacts, frequently asked questions,

selection boards, press releases), and other key issues (in EN, FR and DE). Multilingualism is ensured by the EPSO brochure being available in 20 languages on the EPSO web site.

Following the introduction of the online registration system and according to statistics, the web site is the most efficient means of divulging information, at least to certain categories of the public. Experience acquired so far has proved that this on-line system allows applicants to follow their applications more easily and accelerates the competitions' procedure.

Restructuring of the EPSO web site in terms of contents and appearance is an ongoing task. A working group (formerly seen as a Quality-style committee), now a Web evaluation team and which exists for this purpose has been updating the website regularly throughout 2006, (major developments to be made visible in first quarter of 2007).

Publications

The new pamphlet constituting a shorter guide to careers within the EU institutions has now been published in 23 languages.

1.3.3.7. Network of experts in selection and recruitment techniques across the member states

For the first time since the EPSO Network of National Experts in Selection was set up in 2003, the plenary meeting was hosted by a Member State – Austria, which at that time, held the Presidency of the EU. More than 30 representatives from almost all Member States took part in this meeting in Vienna on 23 June 2006. Two subjects were on the agenda: e-recruiting and assessment of performance and personality. Presentations were made by EPSO, Belgium, Austria and the United Kingdom. For the first time, a presentation by an expert from the private sector, a Human Resources consultant, was given which allowed for an exchange of views between the public and private sectors. Given that these meetings are purely geared towards exchanging information between members, no formal conclusions to the meeting are established.

1.3.3.8. Identification and implementation of measures to improve forecasts on attendance levels at test centres

In line with its commitment to best practices, it is EPSO's policy to routinely survey the reasons for non-attendance at all pre-selection tests. The results of each survey are evaluated and compiled to produce regular Reports for the Management Board of EPSO.

These reports show a high level of consistency in the reasons for non attendance at the traditional paper-based tests. A number of specific reasons outside the candidate's own control (non-availability due to work, illness or being abroad on the day of the tests) consistently account for in excess of 50% of all non-attendance.

The successful introduction of CBT offering new flexibility to candidates in choosing their test dates and time is already proving successful in reversing this trend. Encouragingly, results from CAST 25, which hailed the launch of CBT, show a remarkable reduction in non-attendance levels. As CBT admission tests are delivered by the external company Thomson Prometric (TP) it is now a matter for TP to monitor the issue surrounding non-attendance.

1.3.3.9. Ongoing rationalisation of test procedures to ensure that they are realistic and effective in the context of the enlarged Union

The EPSO Management Board decided in April 2006 to extend the linguistic arrangements for EPSO competitions by one year: admission tests (formally pre-selection tests) for enlargement competitions will continue to be organised in the candidates' second language to be chosen among EN/DE/FR, while for EUR15 competitions the second language may be chosen from among the 11 'former' EU languages. As has been the case for the past three years, these arrangements continue to be crucial to EPSO's ability to process the very heavy competition workload generated by the requirements of the Institutions and also bearing in mind the enlargement of Bulgaria and Romania. However, and on a purely experimental basis, the competitions organised for EUR 15 Assistants in the Secretarial field (EPSO/AST/26-36/06) were organised with the same linguistic regime as for the EUR 10 Assistants in the Secretarial field competitions published at the same time. Following a request from the Commission, EPSO intends to ask for a scientific study on cognitive abilities combined with linguistic skills.

1.3.4. Administer and check reserve lists

During 2006, EPSO continued the development of its IT tool e-RL, which permits the consultation of all reserve lists of competition laureates. e-RL is now being used by approximately 1900 people throughout the Institutions. However, discussions between EPSO and the Institutions on the management of reserve lists and the need for improvement of both this technical tool eRL and the agreed rules for exploitation have taken place in the course of 2006. In light of these issues, and on a proposal from EPSO, the time during which an Institution may earmark a candidate has been reduced from 6 to 3 months. This will have a very positive impact on the speed with which the actual recruitment procedure takes.

At the same time EPSO has developed a search tool named CARL for the exploitation of the lists of successful candidates in the Contract Agents selection procedure (CAST 25).

2. MANAGEMENT AND INTERNAL CONTROL SYSTEMS IN 2006

2.1. Characteristics and nature of the activities

The main task of EPSO is to organise open competitions at the request of institutions with a view to drawing up reserve lists of suitable applicants for appointment as officials. Competitions are organised in compliance with the Staff Regulations, on the basis of harmonised criteria laid down in accordance with Article 6(c) of the decision of the Secretaries general of the Institutions concerning the organisation and the running of the Office and in compliance with the work programme approved by the Management Board.

In this framework EPSO cooperates closely with the institutions in order to assess the future staff needs indicated by them and to prepare and implement a programme of competitions to meet those needs in a timely manner. The work programme of competitions for the period 2nd semester 2006 - first semester 2008 (see above) has been established and approved by the management board on 21 October 2006.

EPSO also administers and checks the use of the reserve lists established at the end of all competitions.

Moreover, the Staff Regulations of 2004 have entrusted EPSO with responsibilities in the following fields:

- the definition and organisation of the assessment of linguistic abilities of officials prior their first promotion after recruitment¹;
- the determination of the content of the tests organised in the context of the training programmes in the framework of certification procedures²;
- on demand, the assistance to institutions, their offices and agencies, in the selection of candidates for temporary and contract staff posts³.

¹ Art 45 § 2, Art 7 § 2.d) Annex III

² Art 45bis §1.c) and Art 7 § 2.c) Annex III

³ Art 7 § 4 Annex III and Art 12 points 3 and 4, and Art 82 point 5 of the Conditions of employment of other servants of the European Communities

2.2. Management and internal control systems

Most of the Baseline requirements 31 December 2006 are implemented: out of a total of 79 baseline requirements, 71 are fully implemented, 4 partially so and 4 are not applicable.

<p>Control environment</p>	<p>Although documentation about procedures does exist at unit's level, there is no single operational manual. This issue will undergo a review during 2007.</p> <p>The procedures of the continuity plan and its critical and essential functions will be fully documented, updated and stored in easily accessible places (both electronic and hard copy) and known to staff by March 2007.</p> <p>Financial circuits are implemented according to Financial rules and modalities of application. EPSO uses Model 2 (partially decentralised) circuits.</p>
<p>Planning, programming, monitoring, reporting</p>	<p>The annual management plan after endorsement by the management board has been communicated to all EPSO staff. Its implementation has been undertaken in its entirety by all units. Nevertheless given the interinstitutional nature of the Office, the work programme has been prepared according to the needs and requirements of the Institutions (multi-annual competitions planning).</p>
<p>Selection Process (of beneficiaries, intermediaries...)</p>	<p>In the context of computer based testing (CBT) used for preliminary tests for open competitions and other selection procedures and following an open call for tender published in the Official Journal of the EU, EPSO has chosen two contractors. Monitoring of services provide is ongoing via a well documented procedure (CBT rules of procedures) for each competition.</p>
<p>Communication and information (financial management)</p>	<p>Financial circuit and sub-delegation are established and documented.</p> <p>Circulation sheets for commitments and payments including a check list for each actor have been updated.</p> <p>Training courses have been provided by the Budget/Financial sector to all the staff of the office.</p>

<p>Detective and corrective controls (initial phase, competitions)</p>	<p>Implementation of the work programme is discussed each week at the management level meeting. In this context potential problems are identified and corrective solutions discussed, e.g. availability of Selection Boards members.</p> <p>There are also weekly coordination meetings of operational units A and B.</p>
<p>Detective and corrective controls (final/closure phase, competitions)</p>	<p>Indicators of the objectives (number of target laureates, time table) are measured against final results of competitions and corrective actions are undertaken. For instance, when decisions are taken concerning the forward planning, i.e. the planning of which new competitions should be published and when, high priority is given to those areas where shortfalls have occurred.</p> <p>The reflection group is to address the strengths and weaknesses of the selection and recruitment system and provide concrete proposals for improvements.</p> <p>In 2006 EPSO created an evaluation function with the role to coordinate and carry out evaluations on EPSO activities – mainly the open competitions – and provide support in the formulation of policies and also in management processes based on those conclusions drawn. The evaluation function will be given additional resources in 2007 in order to allow it to fully assume its task.</p>
<p>Preventive and corrective controls and audit</p>	<p>For the core activity of EPSO and in line with the CBT rule of procedures, regular meetings with the contractor are taking place. A planning of the ongoing planning of competitions as organised by CBT is continually updated.</p> <p>EPSO has a common IAC with DG ADMIN and other Offices. There was no material deficiency in the internal control (note D(2007)3767).</p> <p>In the context of the new accountant correspondent function and ABAC accountancy, new controls and verifications will be undertaken.</p>

2.3. Supervision and monitoring of the internal control system and audit follow-up

Verification	This verification is done by the ICC of EPSO/EAS on an annual and mid term review basis. Results of these verifications are reported to the Director of the Office.
Monitoring of performance	<p>At the end of 2005 and in 2006 an audit exercise (limited review) was run by IAS. Issues for consideration have been established by the IAS and an action plan has been prepared by EPSO. The main issues of concern are met in the report on the work of the group of Directors of Human Resources of the Institutions, and with the setting up of the evaluation function.</p> <p>At the end of 2006, the Court of auditors has carried out a preliminary study on the EPSO's activities.</p> <p>In its working program for 2007-2009 and in the spirit of a single audit concept (IAC, IAS) an audit of EPSO in the field of Human Resources Management is planned in 2009 (IAC) and on the Internal Control Standards (IAS).</p>
IAC, IAS, ECA recommendations and their follow-up	<p>The implementation of the issues for considerations by the IAS is progressively taking place and a report on its state of play is provided for in the tracking database of IAS.</p> <p>Following the results of the ECA study (not yet received) this Institution will decide to carry out a complete audit or not.</p>
High level management reporting	<p>Meetings of the management board of EPSO/EAS take place 3 to 4 times a year. In this context the director reports on the main ongoing issues. Minutes of these meetings are drafted, recorded and published on the intranet site.</p> <p>In 2006 an information note: "EPSO: Facts, figures and perspectives" has been transmitted to the directors general and heads of services of the Commission and to its management board. This provides a general presentation on EPSO's activities as they stand at the end of its 4th year of existence.</p>

2.4. Key indicators supporting reasonable assurance

Identification of residual risks after remedial actions have been taken

Selection procedures:

- Delay or non availability of selection board members / assessors preventing from recruiting personnel in a timely manner.
- Insufficient quality of the work performed due to reasons such as a lack of information to the selection board, suitability of the members, their availability, etc.
- Lack of candidates applying and participating in the exams due to requirements, competition, and advertising made.
- Fraud in or cancelled selection procedures due to a breach of confidentiality.
- Transfer of management to DIGIT (Service Level Agreement), although EPSO bear the consequences of failure, they do not have to manage it.
- Resources issue - EPSO is turning into a very IT heavy organisation which requires a continuous willingness of EPSO staff to learn and adapt.
- The outsourced contractor was not used to its full extent and some failures resulted in the context of the first exercise for contract agents. However technical problem have been resolved and the exercise was successfully completed. Computer Based Testing (CBT) is now extended to the access tests of open competitions.
- With the introduction of Computer Based Testing, a large database with test items has been set up. This database is being subject to regular maintenance and expansion. Under the old paper and pencil competition system, candidates were allowed to leave the test centre with a copy of the questions, this is no longer possible under the new modus operandi (CBT) as the database is being used on a permanent basis and therefore has to be protected by confidentiality.

Based on case law generated from the previous system (paper and pencil), the Legal Service has expressed reservations on this point, indicating that the non-communication of the questions/test items, could be considered a lack of motivation.

In order to alleviate this argument, EPSO has strengthened the quality control and is setting up a quality control board with the specific task to evaluate the functioning of the database on a permanent basis. This board will also be able to act as an independent appeal body for candidates who introduce complaints relating to the quality of test items.

- Since the launching of the first EUR10 competitions for which the EPSO Management Board adopted a 3-language regime for a major part of the selection procedures, EPSO has actively pursued a policy of convergence towards a single language regime for all general open competitions, with the logical exception of competitions for linguists. The objective in this respect is two-fold: firstly to ensure that candidates have sufficient linguistic skills to meet the needs of the institutions in terms of internal communication, secondly to maintain a high

quality of test content (by limiting the need for translation) and to ensure organisational feasibility. By launching an EUR27 competition with a single linguistic regime for all candidates, this process of convergence can be considered complete. For reasons of effectiveness and efficiency, it is essential that this policy be maintained. It is estimated that should this policy be substantially called into question, it would seriously damage EPSO's capability to effectively and efficiently meet its' overall objectives. This appreciation essentially concerns general open competitions as well as other major selection procedures, whereas for smaller sized and more specialised or targeted competitions, this linguistic arrangement can be adapted to address specific needs.

2.5. Conclusion on the effectiveness of the internal control system

The effectiveness of the internal control system concerning the main activity of the Office has reached a satisfactory stage. Controls have been implemented at all levels of planning and for management activity of the competitions.

A forward planning of two years competitions is regularly set-up, discussed by the **working group** and approved by the **EPSO management board**. The notices of competitions are drafted with contributions from the inter-institutional **working group** and submitted for opinion to the **common joint committee**.

The daily management of the competitions are ensured by the operational units. In this context weekly **coordination meetings** take place. On top of this, a reporting back on the state of play of the ongoing competitions is ensured at the weekly **management meetings**.

The preliminary tests organised by CBT adhere strictly to the **CBT rules of procedures** set-up for each competition. Regular **meetings with the contractor** who administers the tests in all EU member states take place in order to ensure ad equation between objectives and realisations.

Evaluation of the results of the competition is done by the **internal evaluation function** of the Office.

The current setup of the **Inter-Institutional advisory board on quality control** of test items shall be in line with the principal of best practise, in particular concerning equality proofing, harmonization and updating of content, the timely provision of reports and ensuring operational follow-up.

The **Inter-Institutional reflection group** is to address the strengths and weaknesses of the selection and recruitment system and provide concrete proposals for improvements under the mandate of the management board.

3. RESERVATIONS AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE DECLARATION

3.1. Materiality criteria used

Criteria for materiality used were the nature of activities, the risk environment, the context and expectations of the stakeholders.

3.2. 2006 Reservations

There is no reservation in the Annual Activity Report 2006.

3.3. Overall conclusion on combined impact on the reservations on the declaration as a whole

There is no indication of any material deficiency in the internal control of EPSO that should lead to a reservation in the annual Activity Report

4. DECLARATION OF THE AUTHORISING OFFICE BY DELEGATION



European Personnel Selection Office

Director

I, the undersigned, Erik HALSKOV, Director of EPSO

In my capacity as authorising officer by delegation

Declare that the information contained in this report gives a true and fair view¹.

State that I have reasonable assurance that the resources assigned to the activities described in this report have been used for their intended purpose and in accordance with the principles of sound financial management, and that the control procedures put in place give the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions.

This reasonable assurance is based on my own judgement and on the information at my disposal, such as the results of the self-assessment, the work of the internal audit capability, the observations of the Internal Audit Service² and Financial Control² and the lessons learnt from the reports of the Court of Auditors² for years prior to the year of this declaration.

Confirm that I am not aware of anything not reported here which could harm the interests of the institution.

Brussels, 28 February 2007

Signed
Erik HALSKOV

¹ True and fair in this context means a reliable, complete and correct view on the state of affairs in the service.

² Delete if not applicable.



**DRAFT 2006 ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT OF THE EUROPEAN
ADMINISTRATIVE SCHOOL (EAS)**

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PART 1 POLICY RESULTS

1.1 General objectives

2006 was the first full year of operations for the European Administrative School. During this period, the School continued to pursue its objective of providing learning and training opportunities for staff from the institutions that fell into one of the three core target groups set out in the mandate conferred by the Secretaries-General⁴ when the School was set up. These target groups are:

- New recruits
- Staff occupying management positions or with the potential to do so
- Officials in the assistant function group selected in the certification procedure⁵ as having the potential to become administrators

The priorities set out in the Annual Management Plan (AMP) in relation to these objectives were:

- To continue successful delivery of the existing induction course and put in place a new programme by January 2007. This objective was met.
- To continue successful delivery of the existing Management Training Programme (MTP) and to develop a strategy to meet training and developmental needs of managers at all levels. The first part of this objective was met: the second will have been by the end of March 2007.
- To design and ensure successful delivery of the training programme for the first certification procedure and contribute to the organisation of the corresponding examinations, so that results would be available by the end of the year. This objective was met.

In total, 2138 people attended the School's training programmes, representing 15,440 participant days of training. The average satisfaction rate for all programmes combined was 85%.

The School also organised a highly successful inauguration ceremony on 10 February that was attended by nearly 200 people from all the institutions. In 2006, it also continued to develop an open and ongoing dialogue with its stakeholders in the institutions, allowing it to work on an entirely consensual basis. It practised a culture of service towards its customers and provided wide-ranging and up-to-date information through its websites (one on Intracomm open to all institutions, and one on the Europa server). Finally, it introduced a number of innovative working methods to ensure that its staff's potential was fully realised and that delivery of quality services and products was its prime concern.

⁴ Decision 2005/119/EC of 26 January 2005 (OJ L37/17)

⁵ Article 45a of the Staff Regulations

The School believes that in fulfilling the objectives set out in its AMP it has contributed significantly to the development of staff in all the institutions – and hence to the performance of the institutions themselves – and that it has provided an example of best practice in terms of inter-institutional cooperation.

The next section examines in detail the activities, outputs and indicators that enable the EAS to make this bold assertion.

1.2 Specific objectives

A table showing the quantitative and qualitative results together with the corresponding indicators is to be found in annex 1 to this part of the Report. Annex 2 contains statistics relating to participants on the School's three main training programmes. The following sections concentrate on the major achievements of 2006.

1.2.1 Certification training programme and examinations

Successful delivery of this programme was the School's number one priority in 2006 and was the one area identified in the AMP as a potential critical risk. The certification procedure is a key element of the institutions' staff policy. It marks a major shift in philosophy from the system of internal competitions that it de facto replaces, in that it provides for the institutions to actively contribute to the development of officials who have been identified as possessing the potential to become good administrators. If the School had failed to deliver a high-quality training programme and to provide adequate content for the examinations⁶, its credibility would have been called into question and the institutions would have been placed in a very difficult position.

In the event, the training programme and the examinations were highly successful in terms of both quality and organisation. Overall satisfaction rates from participants for the "common core" skills-based part of the programme (about 70% of the total), were 98%, a figure that will be hard to match in the future. The thematic specific modules, which were much more complex to organise and deliver, still attracted an overall satisfaction rate as high as 71%. Both these figures exceeded the target of 70% that the School set itself in the AMP.

The examinations contained a number of innovative features by comparison with competitions and three of the four focused on testing candidates' skills, as opposed to their knowledge. This is in line with the philosophy of the certification procedure which is designed to identify officials who possess the ability to become effective administrators in any post in any of the institutions. To ensure that only deserving candidates were successful, and for the credibility of this new procedure, it was important that the examinations were as demanding as those in a competition. The fact that 31% of candidates failed one or more examination bears testimony to this.

⁶ Although EPSO is ultimately responsible for the organisation and content of the examinations, the EAS provided the detailed material for these in order to ensure a link between the training programme and the questions set for candidates.

1.2.2 Management training

The School exceeded its quantitative and qualitative objectives in relation to the MTP and was able to start making arrangements for additional programmes.

As regards the highly successful MTP, the School organised 4 more courses than originally planned. Participant satisfaction rates exceeded targets – 87% against a target of 80% and 75% in 2005. This reflects the positive effects of the changes introduced by the School since it took over responsibility for this programme in mid-2005. The target of at least 2 non-Commission participants on every programme was reached, although this will not unfortunately be the case in 2006. The inter-institutional character of the programme intensified with 31% of total participants coming from institutions other than the Commission (20% in 2005).

Attendance rates remained at nearly 91% against a target of 85%. The School adopted a limited "overbooking" policy to ensure that this phenomenon did not lead to any significant wastage of funds. By comparison with non-attendance rates in many organisations, this is in fact a very healthy situation.

A number of important changes were made to the programme. Much of the content was reviewed and updated during the year, and topics such as handling diversity, harassment and equal opportunities were introduced for the first time. In addition, new delivery formats were offered in response to participant demand and a follow-up session has now been integrated into the programme. This should not only help participants continue their learning process but also assist the School in evaluating the programme's impact on performance over time.

The School was also asked by the European Parliament for a tailor-made training programme to accompany its initiative to increase the number of women in management posts. In order to maximise the benefit from this, the School's call for tenders was widened to include proposals for programmes for all staff with management potential, as a number of institutions had expressed interest in these. The programmes, including the one for the Parliament, will be available from May 2007.

1.2.3 Training for new staff

The School's objective to have a new programme in place by January 2007 was achieved as were its targets for delivery of the previous programme throughout 2006.

45 courses were organised as foreseen, and again there were no waiting lists at the end of the year. Average satisfaction rates were up by nearly 7% at just under 85%. This was well above the target of 80%. The inter-institutional character of this programme was underlined by the presence of 33% of participants from institutions other than the Commission.

Attendance rates rose very slightly to nearly 89%, just below the School's target. As with the MTP, the School practised a prudent policy of overbooking in order to keep wastage of resources to a minimum. From November, all but one of the institutions agreed that the School could take over responsibility for dealing with participants direct once they had

communicated the names of new arrivals.⁷ This has had an immediate positive impact in reducing non-attendance which it is hoped will be maintained throughout 2007.

1.2.4 Other objectives

Draw up a medium-term strategy for training and development programmes for managers at all levels and plan implementation

Discussions took place on this but were postponed partly due to the School's other priorities and partly to the need for some institutions to reflect further on the matter. However, in the light of recent increased interest and in view of the need to replace the current MTP by early 2008, the School intends to launch a call for tenders with a view to offering programmes for managers at various levels which will complement what already exists in some institutions. This will enable programmes to be organised either inter-institutionally, for a group of institutions, or even on an institution-specific basis (against payment). It will be of particular interest to smaller institutions and will enable considerable savings to be made.

Organise official inauguration of School for 10.02.06.

This objective was achieved and a highly successful inauguration took place as planned. It was attended by just under 200 people from all institutions and the network of schools of public administration in the EU. It was chaired by Mr Grass, the Chairman of the School's Management Board, speeches were given by Parliament Vice-President Roth-Behrendt and Commission Vice-President Kallas, and the keynote address was delivered by Professor Manzoni, an eminent expert in organisational development. Whereas the School had only estimated that 30% of its invitations would be accepted, the actual figure was 38%, testimony to the considerable interest in the School's activities.

Promote "off-course" learning opportunities.

This objective was partially achieved in that extensive material was acquired for the Resources Centre and an on-line loan system devised. Ad hoc use was made of the centre's facilities but uncertainty about whether the School would have to change premises (it almost certainly will in 2007) meant that the official opening of the centre was postponed.

Assist Inter-institutional committee for interpreting and translation (CITI) to complete its study of areas for possible synergies in the training of linguists.

The CITI drew up the study with assistance from the School and a number of recommendations have been made to improve inter-institutional cooperation in this field. It will be up to the Management Board and Secretaries-General to take this into account in any review of the School's mandate (see point 1.2.5 below).

Develop effective communication policy with stakeholders and customers.

This objective has been achieved thanks to the School's working methods, policy of continuous dialogue and adherence to sound principles of customer service. What it intends to do now that it is fully-staffed, is to reinforce its contacts with all the institutions in order to

⁷ This arrangement is not needed for Commission staff who can register directly in Syslog

deepen its knowledge of developmental and training policies and thereby be more proactive in anticipating their needs. The School has paid particular attention to providing an attractive, easy-to-use, up-to-date website. It also went to great lengths to ensure effective channels of information for candidates in the certification procedure through briefings, information during the training programme, details about the nature of the examination, responses to individual requests etc.

Ensure EAS provides quality in all it does.

This objective has been largely achieved as the School's assessment of its level of compliance with the internal control standards confirms.

Provide effective assistance to stakeholders.

This objective was achieved. The contract for training rooms was signed as foreseen and 11 DGs from the Commission made use of it (so far none of the other 2 participating institutions has done so). The School also responded positively to requests for specific training courses from the European Data Protection Supervisor and the Translation Centre, as well as responding to a number of requests to present its activities both inside and outside the institutions.

Improve evaluation of courses

This objective was achieved. A revised, on-line evaluation form was introduced in the autumn for the induction training programme – completion rates have barely changed by comparison with the previous paper-based form, a highly satisfactory outcome. It is hoped to progressively automate all the School's evaluation sheets. As regards more in-depth evaluations, the School will examine what is feasible with the resources it possesses – it may prove possible to conduct these in relation to tailor-made programmes such as that for potential women managers in the European Parliament.

1.3 Future prospects

The School's mandate can be re-examined by the Secretaries-General on the basis of a proposal from the Management Board after a period of three years. This expires in February 2008. At the same time, the School's administrative attachment to the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) must be re-examined.

The School believes that the logic that led to its creation means that there is scope for an extension of its mandate in the interests of efficiency and economy, wherever the training needs of staff are similar, irrespective of the institution to which they belong. There would also be clear gains in terms of guarantees about quality standards. At the same time, it is clear that there will always be a need for each institution to have robust training units capable of meeting their staff's specific developmental needs. The partnership approach that has characterised the School's dealings with all the institutions must therefore continue.

The Management Board has agreed to the School's suggestion that soundings be made on this point and that the issue be subsequently discussed in the EAS inter-institutional working party with a view to providing the Board with an options paper by the summer.

PART 2 – MANAGEMENT AND INTERNAL CONTROL SYSTEMS

Section 2.1 Inherent nature and characteristics

2.1.1 Preliminary considerations

As the School is attached administratively to EPSO, this section will concentrate on those areas of management and internal control that are specific to the School, in order to avoid duplication. For the same reasons, it was EPSO that drew up the overall assessment of the state of internal control but with input from the School's assessment of its degree of compliance with the baseline requirements.

2.1.2 The inter-institutional environment

Any body that operates, as does the School, on an inter-institutional basis is presented with a number of opportunities and challenges.

The opportunities for the School are illustrated in its founding texts and are at the heart of its activities. They include harmonising training programmes where needs are the same or similar; extending the range of learning opportunities on offer; the promotion of inter-institutional cooperation and the spread of common values; and the gains and synergies that should be possible in the use of human and financial resources. This non-exhaustive but already impressive list is a striking illustration of the contribution to School can make and has indeed already made.

On the other hand, working in an inter-institutional environment presents a number of challenges. Inter-institutional cooperation is a theme that waxes and wanes. Its prime driver is a more rational use of resources and the need to present a common face to the outside world. However, at any given time, the level of desire for inter-institutional cooperation depends to a large extent on the views of a particular moment or the commitment of a particular group of people. So any body with an inter-institutional mandate is probably more exposed to unexpected changes of direction than a department in an individual institution.

A concomitant challenge is that in endeavouring to move inter-institutional cooperation forward in practice, the result can sometimes be that of the lowest common denominator. This can mean not only that progress is less than expected but that any progress at all requires a disproportionately high investment in time and effort.

At the time of writing, the School believes that it has successfully negotiated these challenges and made a major contribution to inter-institutional cooperation. It operates in an area which does not inherently give rise to conflict and where win-win situations are often available. As reported elsewhere, it has deliberately pursued a policy of openness and dialogue with its stakeholders whose own training departments may have been tempted to see it as a threat. Finally, the institutions do perceive the added value that the School can bring in the area of training and the indispensable role the School has played in the certification procedure.

But the environment within which the EAS operates and the future direction it is to take, however pro-active it may be and whatever the quality of its work is ultimately beyond its control.

2.1.3 An original administrative structure

The School is part of EPSO and EPSO is part of the Commission but both EPSO and the EAS are inter-institutional.

One of the risks facing the EAS was therefore that it would be regarded as "Commission" and perhaps even "Brussels Commission". It has made considerable efforts to prove its inter-institutional credentials and its sensitivities to the specific needs of all institutions. It has also devoted much time to establishing and maintaining contacts in Luxembourg and created its antenna there for that specific purpose. It will therefore continue its efforts to operate in an institutionally balanced way, confident that it can indeed satisfy all of its stakeholders and customers most of the time.

As regards the School's attachment to EPSO, there are clearly sound reasons for this, given its small size. The School has however created a separate identity from EPSO which is important for reasons of clarity so that staff of the institutions can understand the difference in missions and tasks between the two.

This attachment does however have consequences in terms of internal control systems which will be examined in more detail in the next section.

Section 2.2 Management and control systems

2.2.1 The control environment and performance management

As a result of being attached to EPSO, the School receives a good deal of day-to-day support in respect of the administration of procedures and management systems that EPSO has set up for itself. This is particularly true for procedures in the field of staff management, general administration, and especially IT support. As regards budgets and financial management, responsibilities are shared. The Head of the School is authorising officer by sub-delegation and he and School staff are responsible for running procurement procedures, issuing legal commitments and processing payment requests. On the other hand, EPSO staff undertake the financial initiation and verification tasks in its central resources unit.

In applying the control standards – or quality standards as the School prefers to regard them - it has taken account of its small size so that the measures it has put in place are proportionate to the risk factors. For example, it does not need such elaborate supervisory or reporting procedures as might be necessary in a larger department. Nor does it require complex arrangements for ensuring information flows.

The School has paid particular attention to developing a clear strategy with staff commitment; ensuring this was reflected in the School's mission statement, objectives and annual management plan; putting in place a system of ongoing dialogue with staff about their own tasks and objectives; putting in place a staff development strategy; ensuring sound financial management; and examining potential risks and dealing with them. It has been results-oriented, as was expected of it, and it has delivered.

Overall, the EAS believes it has been successful in defining a clear mission and in setting out objectives and activities with clear outputs and indicators. At the individual level, staff must be flexible to respond to rapidly-changing situations. As a result, job descriptions and objectives are kept under regular review. The School's main area of risk here is in not being able to find enough staff with appropriate experience. To mitigate this it pursues an active programme of personal development of existing staff.

The EAS also believes it has been successful in terms of its accountability to the Board, reporting to its stakeholders and informing its customers. Documents have been produced on time for the Board and always been approved. Regular meetings and bilateral contacts have been put in place with stakeholders at various levels. And information to customers has been ensured through the School's user-friendly and up-to-date website.

The School has also identified a number of risks it faces, ranging from those common to all services (e.g. loss of IT data) to very specific ones (e.g. last-minute unavailability of trainers) but concluded that it faces no critical risk factor at present.

2.2.2 Control activities

The area of training and development is no more inherently risky than any area which is subject to outsourcing through public procurement procedures. The main feature is that training delivery involves people, so perceptions about its quality may well be subjective. Individual learning and its transfer to the work place, which is where the true effectiveness of training should ultimately be measured, is also affected by many influences and constraints beyond the School's control. What the School can and does do is to make sure that relevant knowledge and experience of issues pertinent to staff in the institutions feature as important award criteria in its tender specifications and that it then provides adequate briefings to trainers. As a matter of policy it has regular meetings with the management teams of its external trainers and holds at least an annual meeting with the trainers themselves. It involves all institutions in the tendering process and invites them to briefings with trainers. These ex ante and ongoing measures should ensure that as far as possible the training activities delivered by the School are relevant and of high quality.

In terms of specific control standards, the School has put in place with EPSO a system of financial circuits that fully respects the principles of segregation of duties. The School does face a potential problem of back up (and would face a similar problem of continuity in the event of staff departures) on account of its small size.

On the other hand, the small size of the School does mean that those involved in financial matters, and particularly the Authorising Officer by subdelegation, are able to check all aspects of financial and legal operations in detail ex ante, thereby obviating the need for random sampling and extensive ex post mechanisms.

Further progress needs to be made in the documentation of the School's operational procedures.

2.2.3 Audit, evaluation and follow-up

The School is not concerned by this at present. It should be noted however that an evaluation plan is attached to its 2007 AMP.

ACTIVITY:		
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	Results achieved - Indicator	Main outputs completed in year n to meet the objective
<p><i>1. Deliver certification training cycle to a high standard in such a way as successful candidates can be certified before the end of 2006.</i></p> <p>Output: about 28 days of “common core” training and 12 days of specific training for about 180 participants from all institutions.</p> <p>Impact: a new pool of well-qualified administrators capable of assuming a wide range of tasks throughout the institutions.</p> <p>Indicators: on-time delivery of training; participant satisfaction (target of 70% satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of the training), taking into account that this is the first year; pass-rate at examinations (target of 80%). Depending on the cost-effectiveness of such an approach, the School may subsequently endeavour to monitor the relative performance of successful candidates after appointment to verify the relevance of the training cycle.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Satisfaction rates met for BXL and LUX. - Common core: 98 % - Specific modules: 71% - Exam indicators: Pass rate of 69.43% (partially outside EAS control) 	<p>27 days of “common core” training and 10 days of specific training for 157 participants from 8 institutions.</p>
<p><i>2. Continue to deliver existing induction training course</i></p> <p>Output: 45 4-day courses (induction)</p>		<p>BXL : 33 courses / 1228 participants. LUX: 12 courses / 446 participants.</p>

<p>Impact: New staff integrate more successfully and rapidly.</p> <p>Indicators: Participant satisfaction (target of 80% satisfied or very satisfied); participation rate of 90% by comparison with places available; no-one on waiting list for more than three months after application.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Satisfaction rates met : 84.8% - Participation rate not quite met: 89% - no waiting lists - indicator met. 									
<p><i>3. Re-design the present inter-institutional induction training course and ensure delivery from 1 January 2007</i></p> <p>Output: New course in place 01.01.07 with, in principle, some in-house delivery.</p> <p>Impact: New staff integrate more successfully and rapidly.</p> <p>Indicators: Higher satisfaction rates than previously; number of in-house facilitators (target a pool of 10).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Indicators can only be measured as of mid 2007 to take into account both parts of the course. The level of satisfaction should be equal or higher than for the old course. Possibly adding rate of participation from the institutions other than Commission and/or rate of participation in the virtual learning environment - Courses will not be co-facilitated due to insufficient internal capacities. 	<p>New course as of January 2007</p>								
<p><i>4. Continue to deliver MTP and examine the possibility of putting in place a follow-up course.</i></p> <p>Output: 18 4x2 day MTP modules.</p>		<table border="0"> <tr> <td><u>Classic</u></td> <td><u>New Format</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>BXL : 13 (4*2)</td> <td>BXL : 2 (3*2+2),</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>BXL : 1 (1*5+2)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>LUX: 5 (4*2)</td> <td>LUX : 1 (1*5+2)</td> </tr> </table>	<u>Classic</u>	<u>New Format</u>	BXL : 13 (4*2)	BXL : 2 (3*2+2),		BXL : 1 (1*5+2)	LUX: 5 (4*2)	LUX : 1 (1*5+2)
<u>Classic</u>	<u>New Format</u>									
BXL : 13 (4*2)	BXL : 2 (3*2+2),									
	BXL : 1 (1*5+2)									
LUX: 5 (4*2)	LUX : 1 (1*5+2)									

<p>Impact: Improved managerial skills; create inter-institutional networks and promote better mutual understanding.</p> <p>Indicators: Participant satisfaction (target of 80% satisfied or very satisfied); participation rate of 85% by comparison with places available; at least 2 participants from outside Commission on each course. Even this modest target will be hard to achieve unless some institutions are more proactive in encouraging people to attend.; existence of follow-up by 30.06.06.</p>	<p>-Follow-up sessions organized from June 2006 for a majority of the MTP courses: 3 in LUX - 6 in BXL.</p> <p>- Satisfaction rat met: 87%</p> <p>- Participation rate met: 91%</p> <p>There were at least 2 non-Commission participants on all programmes</p> <p>Attendance from institutions other than the Commission on the increase. BXL/LUX: 31.09% .</p>	<p>Follow-up session to the MTP developed and successfully implemented from mid-2006.</p>
<p><i>5. Draw up a medium-term strategy for training and development programmes for managers at all levels and plan implementation</i></p> <p>Output: An agreed strategy with stakeholders by mid-2006.</p>		<p>Achieved.</p> <p>Learning and development strategy and programme for future managers prepared and discussed with the IWP during 2006, open tender in process end-2006.</p> <p>Senior management development initiative developed, prepared and presented to the IWP during 2006 and workshops will be implemented in early 2007.</p>
<p><i>6. Organise official inauguration of School for 10.02.06.</i></p> <p>Output: Inauguration ceremony.</p> <p>Impact: Raise awareness of School and its role.</p> <p>Indicators: Ceremony runs according to plan; number of participants (target of 30% of</p>	<p>- 180 participants (38% of invitations issued)</p>	<p>Ceremony ran according to plan</p>

<p>invitations issued).</p>		
<p><i>7.Promote “off-course” learning opportunities.</i></p> <p>Output: Open a resource centre that complements existing facilities in the institutions by 31.03.05.</p> <p>Impact: Promote learning opportunities among EU staff.</p> <p>Indicators: Number of visitors (target of 20 per week).</p>	<p>Opening postponed</p>	<p>Resource centre equipped and material used on ad hoc basis but general opening delayed on account of doubts over School's future location</p> <p>Acquisition of books, magazines and DVDs and collection of articles on different subjects covered in the EAS training courses</p>
<p><i>8. Assist Inter-institutional committee for interpreting and translation (CITI) to complete its study of areas for possible synergies in the training of linguists.</i></p> <p>Output: The study.</p> <p>Impact: Only potential – any action requires review of EAS mandate.</p> <p>Indicators: Study delivered by 30.06.06.</p>	<p>Achieved</p>	<p>Study completed.</p>

<p>9. <i>Develop effective communication policy with stakeholders and customers.</i></p> <p>Output: Regular reciprocal information, especially through programme of meetings with those responsible for training at various levels in all the institutions Up-to-date and expanded website.</p> <p>Impact: Greater awareness of School's activities, thereby helping its goals to be achieved; greater awareness of key developments in the institutions to ensure content of School's training activities remains relevant.</p> <p>Indicators: Feedback; number of visits / page views on website, number of meetings held.</p>	<p>- Number of visits / page views on 2 web sites (since mid February 2006)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Europa: more than 60,000 visits and 130,000 page views * Intracomm: more than 8,000 visits and 15,000 page views <p>- In 2006, the Director of EAS had 4 meetings with COFOS/REFOiS, 12 meetings in the Institutions, made 9 presentations and had 34 contacts with high level stakeholders.</p> <p>Messages in 3 functional mailboxes answered as follows: 0-2 days for Tenders and Certification; 10 days for information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular email exchanges with course/training coordinators in Institutions. - Regular meetings of IWP: 6 meetings held in 2006. - One info session May 2006 for Certification candidates + 6 feedback sessions. - 31 visitors at EAS Info Stand (Learning Day). - 18 articles about the EAS in various internal publications and online (Consilium, Newshound, Commission en Direct) - 26 major updates in 2006 on website with key information on training courses, publication of
<p>10. <i>Ensure EAS provides quality in all it does.</i></p> <p>Output: Put quality standards in place, ensuring as a minimum, respect of the Commission's 24 internal control standards (ICS). Special attention will be paid to those standards relating to optimising the School's</p>	<p>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All ICS relevant to school, and all main risks identified at start of the year. One critical risk was notified to BUDG. No follow-up action as of yet. Self-assessment of ICS : done mid-February 2007

<p>human potential, to ensuring sound financial management and to the identification and management of risk.</p> <p>Impact: Excellence of service and management of resources.</p> <p>Indicators: Effective compliance rate of 85% by 31.12.06; feedback from stakeholders, customers and external contractors (questionnaires); no findings of maladministration from Ombudsman; all payments to contractors made within prescribed time limit; no irregularities found by internal or external auditors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compliance rates met - No complaints to Ombudsman - Sample of payment indicates average payment delay of 13-18 days. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal audit report on local circuits at EPSO raised no concerns. - 213 days of training for the team in 2006 (± 11.83 days pp)
<p><i>11. Provide effective assistance to stakeholders.</i></p> <p>Output: Consulting and logistical support (especially training rooms)</p> <p>Impact: Improved training services across the Institutions</p> <p>Indicators: Availability of sufficient training rooms to meet needs of institutions participating in call for tender after School's own needs have been satisfied; response to requests for advice and services according to agreed terms and where appropriate service level agreements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requests for use of the EAS framework contracts for training rooms from 11 DGs. There is no feedback as to the realisation of these interests in concrete actions. - Satisfaction rate of EAS contractor rooms : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * CERT : 98% very satisfied * MTP : 88% satisfaction rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Call for tender for training rooms signed on 8/03/2006. - Specific training programmes in 2006: CDT, EDPS, DG ECFIN. - 6 SLAs signed in 2006 (with EDPS; EMCDDA; ERA; CDT; EU-OSHA; EACEA).

<p><i>12. Improve evaluation of courses</i></p> <p>Output: Revised evaluation forms where appropriate; automated system for processing feedback</p> <p>Impact: Better quality feedback for improving courses; improved information to stakeholders</p> <p>Indicators: Distribution of regular summaries to stakeholders; introduction of electronic system for processing feedback.</p>	<p>- Percentage of forms filled in by comparison with the number of participants: *Induction: BXL: 47%, LUX: 50% (01/12/06) * MTP: BXL: 92,86% LUX: 90% * Certification: Common core overall 85% Spec Modules overall 96%</p>	<p>- ICT-supported evaluation of Induction course in operation since January 2006 with fully revised forms.</p> <p>- MTP paper evaluation form revised</p>
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Management Training Programme (MTP)

GENERAL STATISTICS 2006		
Total number of courses	22	(170 days)
Total number actual participants	309	
Percentage of courses by site		
Brussels	73%	(16)
Luxembourg	27%	(6)
Percentage of participants by site		
Brussels	79%	(245)
Luxembourg	21%	(64)
Average number of participants		
Both sites	14,0	
Brussels	15,3	
Luxembourg	10,7	
Participation rate		
Both sites	90,62%	(309)
Brussels	95,70%	(245)
Luxembourg	75,29%	(64)

DROP-OUT RATE BY INSTITUTION				
<i>(actual participation compared to registrations for courses carried out)</i>				
	registered	actual	absences	drop-out rate
All institutions	341	309	32	9,38%
EP	46	41	5	10,87
Council	15	15	0	0,00
Commission	235	210	25	10,64
CdJ	6	5	1	16,67
CoA	10	10	0	0,00
EESC	19	19	0	0,00
CoR	4	3	1	25,00
EO	0	0	0	0,00
Other	3	6	-3	0,00

STATISTICS ON PARTICIPATION BY INSTITUTION		
<i>(on the basis of actual participation)</i>		
All institutions	309	100,00%
EP	41	13,27
Council	15	4,85
Commission	210	67,96
CdJ	5	1,62
CoA	10	3,24
EESC	19	6,15
CoR	3	0,97
EO	0	0,00
Other	6	1,94

MTP courses in Brussels																				
Course information	Number of registered participants										Number of actual participants									
	EP	COUNCIL	COM	CdJ	CoA	EESC	CoR	EO	OTHER	TOTAL	EP	COUNCIL	COM	CdJ	CoA	EESC	CoR	EO	OTHER	TOTAL
	30	15	180	1	2	19	4	3	2	256	30	15	170	1	2	19	3	0	5	245
Total number of courses	16																			
Total number of actual participants	245																			

MTP courses in Luxembourg																				
Course information	Number of registered participants										Number of actual participants									
	EP	COUNCIL	COM	CdJ	CoA	EESC	CoR	EO	OTHER	TOTAL	EP	COUNCIL	COM	CdJ	CoA	EESC	CoR	EO	OTHER	TOTAL
	16	0	55	5	8	0	0	0	1	85	11	0	40	4	8	0	0	0	1	64
Total number of courses	6																			
Total number of actual participants	64																			

Induction Training

GENERAL STATISTICS 2006

Total number of courses	45	(180 days)
in EN	33	
in FR	12	
Total number actual participants	1672	
in EN	1242	(73,75%)
in FR	432	(25,83%)
Percentage of courses by site		
Brussels	73%	(33)
Luxembourg	27%	(12)
Percentage of registered participants by site		
Brussels	75%	(1426)
Luxembourg	25%	(471)
Average number of registered participants		
Both sites	42,2	
Brussels	43,2	
Luxembourg	39,3	
Participation rate		
Both sites	89,38%	(1674)
Brussels	86,12%	(1228)
Luxembourg	94,69%	(446)

STATISTICS ON PARTICIPATION BY INSTITUTION

(on the basis of actual participation)

All institutions	1672	100,00%
EP	259	15,49
Council	143	8,55
Commission	1113	66,57
CdJ	78	4,67
CoA	22	1,32
EESC	26	1,56
CoR	28	1,67
EDPS	2	0,12
CPVO	1	0,06

DROP-OUT RATE BY INSTITUTION

(actual participation compared to registrations for courses carried out)

	registered	actual	absences	drop-out rate
All institutions	1874	1672	199	10,62%
EP	323	259	64	19,81
Council	199	143	56	28,14
Commission	1168	1113	55	4,71
CdJ	84	78	5	6,02
CoA	22	22	0	0,00
EESC	41	26	15	36,59
CoR	34	28	6	17,65
EDPS	2	2	0	0,00
CPVO	1	1	0	0,00

INDUCTION - Courses in Brussels

Course information	Number of registered participants											Number of actual participants												
	EP	COUNCIL	COM	CdJ	CoA	EESC	CoR	EO	EDPS	CPVO	TOTAL	EP	COUNCIL	COM	CdJ	CoA	EESC	CoR	EO	EDPS	CPVO	TOTAL		
	208	199	917	0	0	41	34	0	2	1	1426	151	143	874	1	0	26	28	0	2	1	1228		
	EN		FR																					
Total number of courses (carried out)	33		25																				8	
Total number of actual participants	1228		920																				308	

INDUCTION Courses in Luxembourg

Course information	Number of registered participants											Number of actual participants												
	EP	COUNCIL	COM	CdJ	CoA	EESC	CoR	EO	EDPS	CPVO	TOTAL	EP	COUNCIL	COM	CdJ	CoA	EESC	CoR	EO	EDPS	CPVO	TOTAL		
	115	0	251	83	22	0	0	0	0	0	471	108	0	239	77	22	0	0	0	0	0	446		
	EN		FR																					
Total number of courses (carried out)	12		8																				4	
Total number of actual participants	446		322																				124	

