

**RULES OF PROCEDURE**  
**OF THE HIGH LEVEL GROUP OF INDEPENDENT STAKEHOLDERS**  
**ON ADMINISTRATIVE BURDENS**

THE HIGH LEVEL GROUP OF INDEPENDENT STAKEHOLDERS ON ADMINISTRATIVE BURDENS,

Having regard to the Commission Decision of 31/08/2007 setting up the High Level Group of Independent Stakeholders on Administrative Burdens<sup>1</sup>, and in particular Article 1 thereof,

Having regard to the standard rules of procedure published by the Commission<sup>2</sup>,

HAS ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING RULES OF PROCEDURE:

*Article 1*

**Convening a meeting**

1. Meetings of the group are convened by the Chair, either on its own initiative, or at the request of a simple majority of members.
2. Should the Chair be unable to head a meeting of the group, the eldest member present will be acting Chair for that meeting and for the duties relating to it as set out in the Commission Decision of 31 August 2007 setting up the group<sup>3</sup> and in these Rules of Procedure.
3. Joint meetings of the group with other groups may be convened to discuss matters falling within their respective areas of responsibility.
4. The group will operate within the framework set by the Commission Decision of 31 August 2007, setting up the High Level Group of Independent Stakeholders on Administrative Burdens.

*Article 2*

**Agenda**

1. The secretariat shall draw up the agenda under the responsibility of the Chair and send it to the members of the group.
2. The agenda shall be adopted by the group at the start of the meeting.

*Article 3*

**Forwarding of documents to group members**

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<sup>1</sup> Decision C(2007)4063 of 31 August 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Annex III of document SEC(2005)1004.

<sup>3</sup> Decision C(2007)4063 of 31 August 2007.

1. The secretariat shall send the invitation to the meeting and the draft agenda to the group members no later than fourteen calendar days before the date of the meeting.
2. The secretariat shall send drafts on which the group is consulted and all other working documents to the group members no later than fourteen calendar days before the date of the meeting.
3. In urgent or exceptional cases, the time limits for sending the documentation mentioned in 1 and 2 may be reduced to five calendar days before the date of the meeting.

#### *Article 4*

### **Opinions of the group**

At the Commission's request or at its own initiative, the Group shall adopt opinions by a consensus or, if not possible, on the basis of a simple majority, each member having one vote. Dissenting opinions may be recorded in the minutes.

#### *Article 5*

### **Sub-groups**

1. The group may set up sub-groups to examine specific questions on the basis of terms of reference defined by the group; they shall be disbanded as soon as they have fulfilled those terms of reference.
2. The sub-groups shall report to the group.

#### *Article 6*

### **Admission of third parties and relations with existing groups of stakeholders**

1. The Commission or the Chairperson may invite experts or observers<sup>4</sup> with special expertise on a matter on the draft agenda to participate in the group's or sub-groups' work where appropriate and/or necessary.
2. Invited experts or observers are not present when the group adopts an opinion or report.
3. Where appropriate, the group may seek the opinion of existing stakeholders groups with sectoral expertise.

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<sup>4</sup> The status of an observer can be used to invite representatives of other European or international institutions to participate in the group's deliberations.

## *Article 7*

### **Written procedure**

1. If necessary, the group's opinion on a specific question may be delivered via a written procedure. To this end, the secretariat sends the group members the drafts on which the group is being consulted and any other working documents.
2. However, if a member asks for the question to be examined at a meeting of the group, the written procedure shall be terminated without result and the Chair shall convene a meeting of the group as soon as possible.

## *Article 8*

### **Secretariat**

The Commission (Directorate General for Enterprise and Industry) shall provide secretarial support for the group and any sub-groups created under Article 5(1) above.

## *Article 9*

### **Summary minutes of the meetings**

Summary minutes on the discussion on each point on the agenda and the opinions delivered by the group are drafted by the secretariat under the responsibility of the Chair. These are adopted by the group.

## *Article 10*

### **Attendance list**

At each meeting, the secretariat shall draw up, under the responsibility of the Chair, an attendance list specifying, where appropriate, the authorities, organisations or bodies to which the participants belong.

## *Article 11*

### **Prevention of conflicts of interest**

1. At the start of each meeting, any member whose participation in the group's deliberations would raise a conflict of interest on a specific item on the agenda shall inform the Chair.
2. Members appointed in a personal capacity shall sign a declaration certifying that their participation will not result in conflicts of interest.
3. In the event of such a conflict of interest, the member shall abstain from discussing the items on the agenda concerned and from any vote on these items.

## *Article 12*

## **Correspondence**

1. Correspondence relating to the group shall be addressed to the Commission, for the attention of the Chair.
2. Correspondence for group members shall be sent to the e-mail address which they provide for that purpose.
3. Correspondence intended for group members and documents shall be sent in the working language of the Group.

### *Article 13*

## **Transparency**

1. The principles and conditions concerning public access to the group's documents are the same as laid down in Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001<sup>5</sup>. It is for the Commission to take a decision on requests for access to those documents.
2. The deliberations of the group are confidential.
3. In agreement with the Commission, the group may, by a simple majority of its members, decide to open its deliberations to the public.

### *Article 14*

## **Protection of personal data**

All processing of personal data for the purposes of these rules of procedure shall be in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001<sup>6</sup>.

### *Article 15*

## **Entry into force**

The decision shall take effect on the day of its endorsement by the High Level Group of Independent Stakeholders on Administrative Burdens.

Done at Brussels, 17 January 2008.

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<sup>5</sup> Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents (OJ L 145, 31.5.2002, p. 43).

<sup>6</sup> Regulation (EC) 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data. (OJ L 8, 12.1.2001, p. 1).