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RULES OF PROCEDURE
OF THE HIGH LEVEL GROUP
ON ADMINISTRATIVE BURDENS

THE HIGH LEVEL GROUP ON ADMINISTRATIVE BURDENS,

Having regard to the Commission Decision of 31/08/2007 setting up the High Level Group of Independent Stakeholders on Administrative Burdens¹, and in particular Article 1 thereof,

Having regard to the Commission Decisions of 17/08/2010 and 05/12/2012² amending the Commission Decision of 31/08/2007 setting up the High Level Group,

Having regard to the standard rules of procedure published by the Commission³,

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, after the Commission service has given its agreement.
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 as amended by the Commission Decisions of 17 August 2010 and 5 December 2012 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. Meetings of the group shall normally be held on Commission premises.

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.

¹ Commission Decision C(2007)4063 of 31 August 2007.

² Commission Decision of 17 August 2010 (2010/C 223/03), Commission Decision C(2012)8881 of 5 December 2012.

³ Annex IV of document SEC(2010)1360 final.

Article 3

Documents to be sent to group members

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

Article 4

Opinions of the group

1. As far as possible, the group shall adopt its opinions, recommendations or reports by consensus.
2. In the event of a vote, the outcome of the vote shall be decided by a simple majority of the members present. Any dissenting opinion will be published alongside majority opinion at the request of the dissenting member.

Article 5

Sub-groups

1. In agreement with the services of the Commission, the group may set up sub-groups to examine specific questions on the basis of terms of reference defined by the group; such sub-groups shall be disbanded as soon as their mandate is fulfilled.
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 once the Commission service has given its agreement, may invite on an ad hoc basis experts from outside the group with specific competence in a subject on the agenda to participate in the work of the group or sub-groups. In addition, the Commission or the Chairperson once the Commission service has given its agreement, may give observer status to individuals and organisations as defined in Rule 8(3) of the horizontal rules on expert groups.
2. Where appropriate, the group may seek the opinion of existing stakeholders groups with sectoral expertise.

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

document(s) on which the group is being consulted and any other working documents.

2. However, if a simple majority of group members 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 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 shall be drafted by the secretariat under the responsibility of the Chair. The minutes shall be 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

Conflicts of interest

1. Should a conflict of interest in relation to an expert arise, the Commission services may exclude this expert from the group or a particular meeting thereof or they may decide that the expert in question shall abstain from discussing the items on the agenda concerned and from any vote on these items.
2. At the start of each meeting, any expert whose participation in the group's work would raise a conflict of interest shall inform the Chair.
3. Conflicts of interest shall be reported in writing, e.g. in the summary minutes of the group's meeting.
4. Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 shall also apply to deliberations taken by the group in written procedure.

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.

Article 13

Access to documents

Applications for access to documents held by the expert group will be handled in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001⁴ and detailed rules for its application⁵.

Article 14

Confidentiality of deliberations

1. The group's deliberations shall be confidential.
2. In agreement with the Commission's services, the group may, by a simple majority of its members, decide to open its deliberations to the public.

Article 15

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 45/2001⁶.

Article 16

Entry into force

These rules of procedure shall take effect on the day of their adoption by the High Level Group on Administrative Burdens.

Done in Berlin, 31 January 2013.

⁴ 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, 31.5.2001, p. 43).

⁵ Commission Decision 2001/937 of 5.12.2001. OJ L 345 of 29.12.2001, p. 94.

⁶ 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).