

RESOLUTION
on Communication and reporting (including the Communication Plan)
CC-R-2006-03

The Contact Committee,

Applauds the successful launch of the EU Contact Committee website on 1 December 2006 (www.contactcommittee.eu).

Adopts the Communication Plan (including the Status Outline of Contact Committee Activities) Appendix 1 to this Resolution

Recognises that both the web-site and the Status Outline make significant additions to the transparency and clarity of the information and communication framework available to Contact Committee members in carrying out their work both individually and together

Decides to actively pursue their further development in line with the Communications Plan and, with that aim in view,

Asks the Liaison Officers and Task Force to identify and assess areas for further development, including assessments of the technical and strategic implications of each proposal and to present their analysis and proposals to the 2007 Contact Committee

Warsaw, 12 December 2006

SAI Rapporteur: SAI of the United Kingdom

Original language: EN

Communication Plan for the EU SAI Contact Committee
(Version November, 2006)

Background – answering the resolution on a communication plan

At their 2005 meeting in Stockholm the Contact Committee decided to "actively pursue the development of a website with a view to making it more widely available within 2006" and asked the EU SAI Liaison Officers and the Task Force, as a priority, to "formalise a communications plan including arrangements for approval of contents, management and administration, accessibility and a timetable for an external launch (of a Contact Committee website)". This Communication Plan answers to the resolution mentioned above.

The Contact Committee strives to improve the framework and conditions for the co-operation in the EU field among Member State SAIs and the European Court of Auditors, and for the audit of EU funds and other matters concerning good governance for the benefit of the EU citizens. The members of the Contact Committee share a commitment to openness and sharing information. This implies sharing information about the Contact Committee activities and results. European Union authorities and interested others are the main targets for the communication from the Contact Committee.

This Communication Plan outlines a framework for present and future means of communication of the Contact Committee. The Communication Plan comprises the initiatives taken by the Contact Committee as regards communication. The Communication Plan has one overall objective to be reached and two primary messages to be communicated:

Objective

To share information, views and results with interested others outside the Contact Committee.

Messages to be communicated

The Contact Committee fosters the exchange of professional knowledge and experiences on the audit of EU funds and other EU-related issues.

The Contact Committee promotes contacts and exchanges information with European Union authorities and interested others.

Target groups:

Information on the work of the Contact Committee should reach the below mentioned institutions/organs and hopefully interested others:

The European Parliament
The European Parliaments Committee on Budgetary Control
The Council of the European Union

COSAC (Conference of Community and European Affairs Committees of Parliaments of the European Union)

The European Commission
National Parliaments
National Audit Institutions
EU Citizens

National Parliaments' Public Accounts Committees and other Parliamentary Committees that have similar contacts with SAIs

Public Sector Internal Audit Bodies

Means of communication

The current means of the Contact Committee communication – as of December 2006 - comprises

1. The Status Outline of Contact Committee Activities,
2. The Contact Committee website, and
3. Other means of Contact Committee communication.

The Status Outline of Contact Committee Activities

The Status Outline of Contact Committee Activities (see Annex (i)) is updated once a year in the autumn before the Contact Committee meeting. The Status Outline currently informs of the status and activities of the current seven working groups including purpose/activities, participants, activities this year, links to reports and relevant documents, results this year, activity plan for the year to come and name and e-mail address of contact person/working group chair. The Status Outline is a document under further development and will comprise more features in the future. The Status Outline is made public on the Contact Committee website.

The EU Contact Committee Website

The Contact Committee website will be the Contact Committee's main vehicle for communication with the outside world. The address of the website will be www.contactcommittee.eu. The Contact Committee website will be launched in December 2006 when this Communication Plan is finalised.

The Contact Committee has three aims in developing its website:

- to inform and communicate its activities to a wider audience beyond the members of the Contact Committee themselves;
- to improve the co-operation between the members of the Contact Committee, the Liaison Officers and the members of the working groups by providing a site for exchange of information.
- to improve relationships (technical, professional) with the wider audience

The website will have two distinct parts reflecting these two purposes – a public part and an internal part.

Website contents

Public part

The 2005 Contact Committee agreed on a preliminary range of areas that it might wish to inform a wider audience about. The categories include:

- General introduction (history, context, Mission Statement, members, objectives, meetings, Contact Committee statements and resolutions). Historical resolutions and Decisions having topical significance should be listed separately.
- The Status Outline of Contact Committee Activities which provides an overview of Contact Committee working group activities and is updated once a year when approved by the Contact Committee (please find a model of the Status Outline in Annex (i))
- Information on national SAI's EU related audit reports.
- Links to the Contact Committee's members websites etc.
- Other relevant links
- Information on meetings but not minutes or internal discussion documents
- Electronic Databases of Working/Expert Groups

The Public part of the website is accessible to all.

Internal part

The internal part includes the following categories:

- Information per country (basic information on how the individual SAI works in the EU field)
- Working group activities (work in-progress oriented: meetings, agenda, minutes, documents being developed and an area for discussing problems/experiences related to working group activities)
- Policy developments in EU financial management (updates, quotes from relevant publications, speeches etc.)

A link in the public part leads to the internal part of the site. The internal part is identical to Circa, which is the electronic communication tool that has already since 2003 been made available to Liaison Officers by the European Court of Auditors. In the future the site will be developed further.

It is accessible for members of the Contact Committee, Liaison Officers, working group members, other SAI staff and other interested parties authorised by the Contact Committee.

Management and administration of website

Public part: The European Court of Auditors will administer the website. The management of the website remains with the Contact Committee. All draft Contact Committee papers and resolutions should contain an explicit proposal for approval by the Contact Committee, as to whether they can be published on the public part of the website.

The Contact Committee also delegates authority to an Editorial Board to review any requests for information to be published on the website between Contact Committee meetings and where, in the opinion of the Editorial Board, the case clearly complies with the criteria for publication contained in this Communications Policy, to authorise the European Court of Auditors to publish that information.

The Editorial Board will comprise members of the SAIs of the Acting Chair, of the preceding Acting Chair and the forthcoming Acting Chair, each Board member being appointed by their Head of SAI. The European Court of Auditors will provide administrative support to the Editorial Board and will present a summarised report of the Board's decisions to the Contact Committee meeting each year.

Internal part: Members of the Contact Committee, Liaison Officers and working group members will be able to upload documents on the internal part of the website.

Other means of Contact Committee communication

The Contact Committee may in exceptional circumstances experience the need to communicate in other ways than through the Status Outline of Contact Committee Activities and the Contact Committee website. In such cases, with the agreement of all of its Members, the Contact Committee can, for example, issue press releases or distribute letters.

SAIs are also encouraged to publicise Contact Committee activities through, for instance, their own Websites (also providing Link to the Contact Committee Website) and through Reports (such as Annual Reports) published by them.

Status Outline of EU SAI Contact Committee Activities

Working Groups
Working Group on National SAI Reports on EU Financial Management
Working Group on Procurement
Working Group on Structural Funds
Working Group on Value Added Tax
Expert Group on Audit Quality
Joint Working Group on Audit Activities
Agricultural Network Working Group

Name of WG	
Purpose/Mandate	
Status/Outcome/ Results in 2006	
Links to relevant working group reports/ documents*	
Activities this year (meetings etc.)	
Working group members and observers	
Name of contact person/chair of working group*	
Activity Plan for 2007*	

* Added to the Status Outline after the Contact Committee meeting in Stockholm