EUROPEAN MEDICINES AGENCY
SCIENCE MEDICINES HEALTH

7 February 2011
EMA/68023/2011

EMA Policy on training and career development

POLICY/0038
Effective date: 7 February 2011
Review date:
Supersedes: N. A.

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Table of contents

1. Introduction and purpose 4

2. Legal background 4

3. Scope 4

4. Definitions 4

4.1. Career development 4
4.2. Career advancement 5
4.3. Continuous professional development 5
4.4. Training and professional development 5
4.4.1. General training 5
4.4.2. Individual training 5

5. Main principles of EMA training and career development policy 5

6. Access to training and staff development opportunities 6

7. Amount of training and professional development 6

8. Types of training and professional development 6

8.1. Training organised by the Training Section 6
8.1.1. Contracted Training providers 6
8.1.2. Bespoke/specialised training provided by Agency staff 7
8.1.3. External speakers 7
8.2. Training organised by other Sections 8
8.2.1. Information and awareness sessions 8
8.2.2. On-the-job training 8
8.3. Independent study 8
8.3.1. Library and Intranet resources 8
8.3.2. Long-term training of shared interest 8
8.4. Fellowships 8
8.5. Secondment 9
8.6. Other job enrichment opportunities 9

9. Specific areas of staff development 9

9.1. Integration of new starters 9
9.2. Scientific training 9
9.3. Article 45 language training 10

10. Career development and advancement 10

11. Planning and implementation of training and staff development 10

11.1. Identification of training needs 10
11.2. Training application 11
11.3. Decision about approval of training and staff development 11
11.4. Identification and follow-up on training objectives 11
11.5. Training profiles and plans 12

11.6. Attendance to training courses 12

12. Quality assurance 12

13. Roles and responsibilities regarding staff development 13

13.1. Individual staff 13
13.2. Reporting Officers 13
13.3. Heads of Sector/Heads of Unit 13
13.4. Training Section 14

14. Recording and Reporting 15

14.1. Records 15
14.2. Reports 15
14.3. Data protection 15

15. Training budget 15

15.1. General training budget 15
15.2. Unit allocations 15
15.3. Fellowships 15
15.4. Telematics 16
15.5. Budget monitoring reports 16

16. Communication about training and development opportunities 16

17. Future developments 16

18. Related documents 17

19. Changes since last revision 17

1. Introduction and purpose

This policy describes the Agency's approach to staff development through formal and informal training/learning (formal training means training organised by the Training Section or other Sections, informal training is on-the-job training and learning through attending meetings etc), job enrichment, career development and advancement.

Its purpose is to ensure a consistent approach throughout the Agency and to provide guidance to individual staff members and their managers in relation to training and career development in line with the Agency's overall goals and objectives.

2. Legal background

Article 24a of the Staff Regulations states that 'the Communities shall facilitate such further training and instruction for officials as is compatible with the proper functioning of the service and is in accordance with its own interest. Such training and instruction shall be taken into account for purposes of promotion in their careers'. This article is applicable by analogy to Temporary Agents under Article 11 of the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants.

The 'Implementing rules regarding training for EMEA staff' cover the enrolment, approval and appeal procedures, training in the interest of the service, training of shared interest, special leave entitlements and entitlements for language training.

According to the Agency's guiding principle 'to promote the well-being, motivation and ongoing professional development of every member of the Agency', professional development is provided to Agency staff as required and appropriate in line with the staff member's competence requirements during the duration of his/her assignment at the Agency.

'The Agency is committed to maintaining an environment that enhances the skills and experience of its staff through the creation of learning opportunities and provision of training and development' (Equal Opportunities Policy).

3. Scope

The scope of this policy is staff members, i.e. Temporary agents, Contract agents, as well as other persons working at the Agency, i.e. National experts on secondment, Interims, Trainees and Visiting experts. The policy does not cover training for contractors or training provided to member states' representatives (e.g. assessors' training).

4. Definitions

4.1. Career development

Career development is development of long-term staff, i.e. Temporary Agents, within the Agency in order to expand the staff members' skills to help them fulfill their potential and to prepare the staff member for increased responsibilities as appropriate within the Sector or elsewhere in the Agency.

4.2. Career advancement

Long-term staff can advance in their career through mobility and lateral transfer, internal vacancies, inter-agency, inter-institutional and external selection procedures or change between expert and managerial career paths (EMA policy on specialist/expert (non-managerial) career path and use of titles, ref. EMA/97694/2009). A change of function group is only possible through a selection procedure.

4.3. Continuous professional development

Continuous professional development (CPD) is necessary to ensure that our staff members keep up-to-date with the latest developments and techniques. The training budget allocations provide funds for participation in scientific conferences or other scientific training fora/mechanisms and workshops for scientific staff, IT courses for IT professionals, training for legal staff and any other specialist training as required.

4.4. Training and professional development

Training and professional development involves the development of knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours in order that individuals and teams are efficient and effective in response to both current and future demands and build competencies to meet the Agency's overall goals and objectives.

4.4.1. General training

General training is the range of courses that the Training Section organises and advertises to all staff members in the yearly training catalogue and by email. This overview of training offered for the whole year allows staff members to plan participation in courses and/or activities well in advance.

4.4.2. Individual training

For specific training needs (e.g. scientific conferences, IT training for IT professionals etc.), each unit has a yearly budget allocation to provide for the relevant courses.

5. Main principles of EMA training and career development policy

The main principles of the Agency training and career development policy are as follows:

- Our staff need to receive the training that allows them to build the competencies the Agency requires to meet its goals and objectives.
- The choice of staff development should be guided by the service needs, the individual's potential and their specific assignment at the Agency.
- Development opportunities should be offered to staff in the spirit of fairness and equal treatment.
- Continuous learning is encouraged in view of keeping knowledge and skills up to date and prepare for future organisational challenges.

6. Access to training and staff development opportunities

The criteria for access to training are in line with the staff member's assignment and job description. Thus, Temporary agents, Contract agents and National experts on secondment may attend all types of training courses. Interims and Trainees may attend the training they need in order to have the necessary skills for doing their job during their assignment (Implementing rules regarding training for EMEA staff, Art.2). Visiting experts receive training they need in order to work at the Agency (e.g. Health and Safety training, DS easy).

7. Amount of training and professional development

The Agency is benchmarking in line with the Commission's Strategic Learning and Development Framework 2010 and the Agency policy is an average of 10 days of training per staff member per year as required and as appropriate in the interest of the Agency and the staff member. Of these 10 days, 2.5 days are considered to be (not recorded) informal on-the-job training. As these 10 days of training are an average, not the yearly limit, in general, new staff members might require more in the first years of service, whereas experienced staff members might require less.

8. Types of training and professional development

Staff development can take a variety of forms, such as classroom training, on-the-job training, coaching, involvement in cross agency projects, independent study, e-learning, fellowships, job-shadowing. The choice of staff development and investment in training should be in line with the needs of the individual, the service and the interest of the Agency.

The types of staff development opportunities available at the Agency are listed below.

8.1. Training organised by the Training Section

Training organised by the Training and Professional Development Section is listed in the training catalogue and contains general training such as personal development training, management training, IT desktop training etc. The catalogue is published at the beginning of the year and available on the training microsite.

Training organised by the Training Section can be off-the shelf courses, tailor-made courses (i.e. off the shelf courses adapted to Agency needs) or bespoke courses (i.e. courses specially developed for the Agency by contracted companies or Agency staff, such as the scientific in-house training).

The training offer is constantly revised and adapted to the Agency's needs.

8.1.1. Contracted Training providers

The following legal agreements are in place for the provision of general training:

- Four-year framework contracts as a result of a tender in areas such as personal development, management, language training, IT desktop training and others
- Contracts signed by DG HR on behalf of Agencies for specific training courses that are not covered by the contracts mentioned above (Decision-Making and Human Relations)
- Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with DG HR for training in specific procedures provided by Commission internal trainers (retirement training, training on grants)

- Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with the European Administrative School (EAS) for senior management training in Brussels or Luxembourg

All contracted providers including their trainers are bound by a confidentiality undertaking.

8.1.2. Bespoke/specialised training provided by Agency staff

Bespoke training is required on subjects that are specific to the Agency and for which training courses by other providers are not sufficiently relevant. There is a range of in-house training courses, such as scientific in-house training, regulatory affairs training for non-scientists, basic statistics training, training on linguistic check forms, financial training, procurement training, training on policies and procedures for newcomers, access to documents and other training on business processes. This offer is constantly being increased in line with business needs.

A Section/Sector/Unit who would like to develop and offer a new training course should contact the Training Section well in advance to clarify the following:

- Training cost: availability of funds, procurement rules, venue cost (if applicable)
- Logistics: room and equipment requirements
- Training format and methodology: training or lecture, maximum number of participants
- Content and target audience: pre-requisites, training objectives
- Frequency: number of courses, course dates, deadlines
- Trainer and back-up trainer
- Training advertisement: content, target audience, method (training catalogue, email)
- Creation and distribution of training material
- Forms: participants list, evaluation forms
- Support from the Training Section
- Follow-up meeting

8.1.3. External speakers

External speakers can be brought in to provide one-off specialist training or lectures on specific topics that cannot be covered by a contracted company or by an in-house trainer. In respect of the rules on procurement, their remuneration is decided on a case-by-case basis (e.g. travel and subsistence in line with the relevant rules). The Training Section provides guidance and information on how to proceed. Before making any arrangement or giving a commitment to any external speaker, the Training Section should be contacted to establish how best to proceed. A reasonable timeframe (i.e. three months advance notice) to arrange the training should be considered.

Prior to the training, all external speakers have to sign a confidentiality undertaking and a declaration on absence of conflict of interest.

8.2. Training organised by other Sections

8.2.1. Information and awareness sessions

A range of information and awareness sessions are offered to staff members, such as sessions on new scientific legislation and guidelines, business continuity, Health & Safety training, joint sickness insurance scheme, pension scheme, staff entitlements and allowances. The offer is continuously adapted in line with business needs. For the update of the individual staff member's training records, participants lists should be circulated in these sessions and forwarded to the Training Section.

8.2.2. On-the-job training

On-the-job training is provided by Sectors/Sections for newcomers and for existing staff members to update their skills and build new competencies as a consequence of team restructuring and task redistribution.

A Traineeship is considered to be on-the-job training for recent graduates in order to familiarise them with the Agency's work and provide them with on-the-job experience.

8.3. Independent study

8.3.1. Library and Intranet resources

Both the library and the training library provide a range of study material accessible to all staff members for independent study, such as books, scientific journals and various e-resources. Videos on business related topics are available on the Intranet. This offer is constantly being revised and increased to support our staff members' continuous professional development.

8.3.2. Long-term training of shared interest

In order to help long-term staff (Temporary Agents, Contract Agents) develop their career within the Agency, the Agency may contribute to long-term courses at universities and other institutions (i.e. 'courses of shared interest', Implementing rules on Training, Art. 7). For this shared interest training, the staff member may receive financial support and special leave for study and exams. Courses or at least one subject/module of the training must relate to the job that the staff member occupies at the time of applying and must be of interest for both the staff member and the Agency.

8.4. Fellowships

A Fellowship programme is available to Temporary Agents with the objective to enhance the staff member's existing skills and to share best practice through working for one to six weeks in another organisation or institution. Fellowships are granted subject to budget availability and the number per year is based on the budget agreed and the relevance of the fellowship in the context of the Agency's overall objectives.

Knowledge gained during a fellowship is shared within the Agency through a fellowship report and a presentation/training by the fellow to Agency staff.

8.5. *Secondment*

In line with Annex X of the Staff Regulations, staff members may participate in a Staff exchange programme between the Agency and another organisation concluded by mutual agreement, e.g. with the FDA.

8.6. *Other job enrichment opportunities*

There is a range of staff development opportunities available as part of the Agency's day-to-day activities, such as representing the Section/Sector in meetings and missions, being involved in cross Agency projects or tender evaluation committees, rotation of the tasks within the team, participating in Selection Procedures, standing for election to the Staff Committee, volunteering as a First Aider or Fire Marshal or Listening Point, working as an auditor assisting with ex-post controls, learning from colleagues by sharing experience and knowledge within the Section/Sector.

9. Specific areas of staff development

9.1. *Integration of new starters*

In order to facilitate a quick and efficient integration and retention of new staff members, the following is provided:

- Support from the Personnel Section
- Nomination of a welcome partner: The welcome partner is the main contact point for the new staff member during his/her first weeks at the Agency. The welcome partner introduces the new staff member to the colleagues in the Section/Sector/Unit, helps him/her to find the relevant documents, policies and procedures, gives practical advice about living in London and recommends other colleagues who could provide assistance as required.
- Information briefings on entitlements, probation and code of conduct
- Health and Safety briefing
- Induction training on the activities of the Agency's units, training on EMA policies and procedures (e.g. IQM), training on internal IT applications. The purpose of this mandatory training is to make new staff members aware that the acquisition of the skills is crucial for them in order to be competent in Agency specific processes, procedures and IT systems.
- Identification of training needs and training profile/plan with the new staff member's Reporting Officer
- Induction training programme provided by the Section/Sector
- On-the-job training provided by the Section/Sector

9.2. *Scientific training*

In line with the Agency's objective to 'improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Agency's core activities' (Planning directives 2009-2010, ref. EMEA/450740/2008 and EMEA work programme 2009), a scientific in-house training programme is in place to enhance the existing scientific competence. The Agency's scientific staff require knowledge from a broad range of scientific disciplines. The programme aims at 'filling the individual staff member's knowledge gaps' (Basic Scientific Programme for EMEA staff, ref. EMEA/364697/2007). It contains 22 modules that are spread over two years. In conjunction with the Reporting Officer/Head of Sector the scientific administrator identifies the modules that are relevant for him/her in order to broaden his/her individual scientific knowledge.

In addition, every unit has an allocation for specific training needs and continuous professional development activities, such as participation in scientific conferences and workshops. Awareness sessions, training in business processes and a wide range of on-the-job training opportunities provided by the Sectors in the scientific units complete the scientific training offer.

9.3. *Article 45 language training*

The Agency provides additional support to staff members who have to comply with Article 45 of the Staff Regulations before their first promotion. The level to be achieved is B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), corresponding to level 6 classes of the Agency's in-house language training programme.

In-house language training in several languages and EMA level 6 exams in all EU languages are provided annually at Agency premises. Alternatively, staff members my sit an exam at an institution approved by the Association of language testers in Europe (ALTE).

Staff members receive financial support and special leave for attending training in their third language (Implementing rules for training, Art. 7 and 10)

For new staff members who already have a certificate in their third language, a list of approved language certificates is available on the Training microsite. Certificates not contained in this list can be sent to the European personnel selection office (EPSO) for official validation.

10. Career development and advancement

Staff members are responsible for their own career planning and should discuss it annually with their Reporting Officer during probation reviews, at performance evaluation reviews when identifying short- and long-term training needs or during other periodical meetings as required. A variety of development options is available to suit individual needs. Career advancement options are stated under 4.2.

11. Planning and implementation of training and staff development

11.1. *Identification of training needs*

At the Agency, training needs are identified as follows:

1. The staff member and his/her Reporting Officer discuss training needs during probation meetings. If the staff member has been transferred within the Agency, training is discussed and documented at an initial meeting with the Reporting Officer. Two months before a new staff member arrives, the Training Section sends the staff member's training profile to the Reporting Officer. This generic profile reflects the training needs for the first four years of service. The Reporting Officer revises the training profile and indicates in the profile which training courses the staff member should attend and adds further courses to the profile if required. The Reporting Officer sends the profile back to the Training Section for follow-up.
2. During performance evaluation reviews, the staff member and his/her Reporting Officer discuss and document training needs according to individual work plans/objectives which are aligned to objectives and work plans at Section, Sector, Unit and Agency level. The Reporting Officer is

responsible for 'taking an interest in their career aspirations', 'smoothing the path to training and development opportunities' and 'identifying staff's development needs' (Briefing note 2008-002, 'The role and responsibilities of the Reporting Officer' (EMEA/42348/2008)).

3. Staff members are encouraged to report to and discuss with their Reporting Officer whenever they identify a training need.
4. Training administrators meet Heads of Sector individually in order to collect feedback on the existing training provision and to identify specific needs of their Sectors.
5. A group of staff/a Sector/Section may contact the Training Section to request specific group training.

11.2. Training application

A training application should be submitted to the Section Head/Head of Sector/Head of Unit (in line with the delegation rules) for approval and sent to the Training Section one month prior to a training course/conference. Any travel associated with the training is to be booked in line with the mission rules.

As training is an absence from work, it should be planned well in advance, taking into consideration the staff member's and the Section's workload. An appropriate backup should be nominated to replace the staff member during his/her absence.

11.3. Decision about approval of training and staff development

The decision to approve staff training and development has to be considered in the context of the needs of the service, the professional development of the staff member, the duration of the staff member's contract and the purpose of his/her assignment.

Training is subject to the availability of funds and has to be in compliance with the Implementing rules regarding training for EMA staff.

A fair distribution of training opportunities among all staff within the section is recommended.

Staff members attending conferences or any other training events should share the knowledge gained within the Section/Sector/Unit (as appropriate) by circulating a report about the event, holding a presentation or offering a training for their colleagues.

Where a training event incurs a considerable travel cost and/or a registration fee (e.g. conferences), the number of staff attending this training should be limited in order to enable participation to a broad range of training events, thus ensuring the most efficient use of available resources.

11.4. Identification and follow-up on training objectives

Training needs should be identified in a discussion between the staff member and his/her Reporting Officer. Clear objectives for an individual training course should be stated in the application form which can be followed up upon after the training by the Reporting Officer.

As of September 2010, the impact of training is measured for a range of personal development training courses. Three to six months after the course, the trainer holds a brief telephone conversation with both the training participant and his/her Reporting Officer to establish if the participant's personal training objectives have been implemented in the workplace. Periodic reports on the impact of training are provided to the Training Section for appropriate follow-up.

This approach might be extended to other training courses in the future.

11.5. Training profiles and plans

The purpose of a Training Profile/plan is to help Reporting Officers and staff members to identify training needs, plan training and have an overview of the training the staff member should receive within a certain period of time. These template profiles/plans provide a guide for the first four years of service and ensure consistency across the Agency in that staff members in similar functions acquire the same generic competences in addition to the job- and Sector specific competences. If needed, the profile/plan can be accomplished over five years of service.

A revision of these profiles is planned and the introduction of a competency framework will be investigated.

11.6. Attendance to training courses

As there is a cost to any training, i.e. the cost of a staff member's absence from work and the cost of the training itself, training has to be planned well in advance (see 11.2 Training applications).. It is the responsibility of the staff member to be present at the training.

The Training Section follows up on non attendance by re-inviting staff members whenever possible. After two non-attendances at the same training course, the Training Section will follow-up with the staff member's Section Head.

12. Quality assurance

The Training Section monitors the quality and relevance of the training provided by the following measures:

- Follow-up on evaluation forms collected from the participants
- Follow-up on trainer feedback
- Review meetings with training companies and/or trainers
- Organisation of pilot courses for a representative audience and course adjustments if required
- Continuous update of training offer in line with business requirements
- Additional training organised corresponding to particular needs (e.g. training to support restructuring)
- Follow-up on requests of Units/Sectors for specific training courses
- Tailoring of training to Agency needs by integrating information on Agency processes and procedures into training courses
- Organisation of training to support the introduction and upgrade of Agency-wide IT tools
- Expenditure forecast and budget monitoring reports to ensure efficient use of resources

13. Roles and responsibilities regarding staff development

13.1. Individual staff

Staff members are expected to take responsibility for developing their knowledge and skills in order to enhance their current and future performance and keep up to date with new knowledge and skills. In more detail, staff members are expected to

- identify their training needs proactively and discuss training and development needs with their Reporting Officer regarding their professional development
- identify training objectives when applying for training
- plan training in the context of their own and their colleagues' workload
- commit to attend the training identified by them and/or their Reporting Officer (valid reasons for non-attendance are unexpected workload, sickness, family situation)
- contact the Training Section for advice on training
- provide feedback to the Training Section on all training received
- use the training in a practical manner at work to enhance skills and competencies.

13.2. Reporting Officers

The Reporting Officer is responsible for 'taking an interest in their staff members' career aspirations', 'smoothing the path to training and development opportunities', 'identifying staff's development needs' (Briefing note 2008-002, 'The role and responsibilities of the Reporting Officer' (EMEA/42348/2008)).

All Reporting Officers (i.e, Heads of Unit, Heads of Sector, Section Heads, Reporting Officers by delegation) are responsible for the following:

- Support staff training and in particular on-the-job specific training.
- Identify training needs of their staff in probation and performance evaluation reviews and ad-hoc meetings.
- Identify the specific objective(s) to be addressed by the training planned.
- Ensure that action is taken to meet the identified training needs of Section staff.
- Ensure that necessary practical arrangements are made to enable staff members concerned to participate fully in the approved training including arranging cover for the absent staff member.
- Follow-up with staff members on training attended in order to assess the impact of training and implementation of the specific objective(s) identified.
- Support the staff member in the implementation of the objectives of the training course.

13.3. Heads of Sector/Heads of Unit

Heads of Sector/Unit are responsible for the following:

- Identify the capabilities required to meet business objectives and provide new staff members with an appropriate induction training programme so that they can be successfully integrated into the team and develop the necessary competencies for the work.

- Manage the development of people's knowledge, skills and competence by assessing needs and providing access to training.
- Ensure that Section Heads/Heads of Sector perform effectively the roles assigned to them in relation to training of staff under their responsibility.
- Provide training and guidance to the Section Heads/ Heads of Sector and as needed to Sector staff.
- Identify training needs of Section Heads/Heads of Sector in probation reviews, performance evaluation reviews and ad-hoc meetings.
- Manage the unit's training budget allocation.

13.4. Training Section

The responsibilities of the Training Section are as follows:

- Provide advice and support on training related matters to all staff members.
- Provide training for staff members with high scientific competence and other specific qualifications that reinforces and expands their existing skills in line with the Agency's overall objectives and service needs.
- Identify training needs in cooperation with Sectors/Sections to support training on internal procedures, regulatory, scientific and other specialist knowledge.
- Organise tender procedures in line with procurement procedures and Financial Regulation and manage the contracts between the Agency and the training providers.
- Follow-up with external providers in order to tailor standard courses or develop new courses (off the shelf or bespoke) as required.
- Develop new training courses with Agency staff as required.
- Manage the evaluation of the training process in order to ensure quality, value-for-money and conformity with instructions to training providers.
- Ensure that training administration follows the requirements of the Financial and Staff Regulations.
- Manage the training budget and carry out financial transactions.
- Record training attended and provide regular reports to staff on training activities.
- Revise and expand the training offer in line with the Agency's needs as appropriate.
- Support training in new business processes where required and appropriate.
- Liaise with other agencies and the European Commission on training issues where appropriate.
- Participate regularly in meetings between the Commission's and the Agencies' training administrators in Brussels.
- Make centrally organized training available to staff of other agencies in the spirit of cooperation.

14. Recording and Reporting

14.1. Records

Any training organised by the Training Section is recorded in a HR database. Sectors that organise awareness sessions or other training should send their participants list to the Training Section so that all training can be captured and individual training records are kept up to date.

14.2. Reports

Based on these records, the following reports and statistics are created:

- mid year and year-end training reports comprising data on training organised and attended
- statistics on non-attendance to training courses in order to improve the training offer and report on cost efficiency and logistical waste resulting from non-attendance. Logistical waste means that there is an unused spare place on the course.
- training reports for individual staff members for performance evaluation discussion, future training planning and ad hoc upon request
- reports on the achievement of training objectives (pilot in 2010)

14.3. Data protection

All collection, storage and communication of personal data is carried out in accordance with Regulation 45/2001 and stated in the Personal data processing notification number 20 of the Agency's data protection register.

15. Training budget

Training for all staff is paid from budget title 1, budget line 1120.

15.1. General training budget

The general training comprises all courses that are organised by the Training Section and training relevant for all staff, such as courses listed in the training catalogue and advertised Agency wide or language training for staff members who have to comply with article 45 before their first promotion.

15.2. Unit allocations

Each unit has a specific allocation, decided at the end of the year for the following year by the Executive Director, to cater for specific training needs. The unit allocations are monitored and administrated by the units. The decision on the use of the unit allocation is the responsibility of the Head of Unit.

15.3. Fellowships

Fellowships, described under point 8.4 of this document, are paid from a specific annual fund under budget line 1120.

15.4. Telematics

A specific Telematics fund under the training budget has been created for training related to the Telematics project. The allocation is revised annually.

15.5. Budget monitoring reports

As part of the agency budget monitoring, a report on the training budget status is created periodically. For planning purposes, any requests for increase/decrease of unit allocations should be sent by the units to the Training Section in advance of the budget monitoring reports.

16. Communication about training and development opportunities

In order to ensure transparency, training opportunities are communicated to all staff members by the following means:

- Training microsite (all information related to training)
- Training catalogue
- Emails to all staff members to advertise courses at least six weeks in advance of the course date
- Messages by the Training Section on the intranet to advertise courses and inform staff members about new and revised rules and procedures
- Involvement of staff members in the design of new courses and in the pilot phase
- Presentations about training activities on plasma screens
- Information about training in the entitlements briefing for new staff members
- Presentations on training in unit/sector meeting (especially about rules and procedures) as requested
- Regular meetings with Heads of Sector on training for their Sector
- Ad-hoc meetings with individual staff members upon request
- Training stands at General Staff Assemblies

17. Future developments

In order to provide flexible training solutions for a growing workforce, the following learning approaches will be investigated in the near future:

- introduction of e-learning and other resources (podcasts, online resources etc.)
- competence development framework
- increase of in-house business process training
- coaching and mentoring

During the past years, a number of training courses have been shortened and adapted to the Agency's needs. Further tailoring of courses is planned as required.

18. Related documents

- Implementing rules regarding training for EMA staff
- Equal opportunities policy
- Fellowship rules
- EMA policy on specialist/expert (non-managerial) career path and use of titles
- Rules on mobility and lateral transfers (EMEA/31498/03/436)
- Rules governing the contract changes in and between function groups
- Briefing note 2008-002, 'The role and responsibilities of the Reporting Officer'
- Delegation of signatures
- General procedures for training activities
- Guidelines for welcome partners to new staff members (EMEA/27198/03/4133)
- Mission rules (Guide to missions), available under http://emeaplus/EMEAPlus_WebsiteNew/Missions/html/Missions-guidetomissions.htm
- Budget monitoring reports
- Basic Scientific Programme for EMA staff
- Mid-year and year-end training reports
- Training catalogue
- Training microsite, available under http://emeaplus/EMEAPlus_Website/Personnel/html/Welcome%20to%20the%20training%20website.htm

19. Changes since last revision

New policy.

London, 7 February 2011

Andreas Pott

Acting Executive Director