



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
CONSUMERS, HEALTH, AGRICULTURE AND FOOD EXECUTIVE AGENCY

Director

Luxembourg,
Chafea VW/SM/JJA/Ares(2017)

**To the representatives of the Member States and EEA Countries
in the Committees established by
Regulation (EC) N° 2006/2004 and Directive 2001/95/EC
and of third countries referred to in
Article 7 of the Consumer Programme 2014-2020**

Subject: 2017 exchange of enforcement officials in the areas of consumer safety (GPSD) and consumer protection cooperation (CPC)

Dear Sir or Madam,

The Consumer Programme 2014-2020 aims to build on the previous Programme by focusing on empowering the consumer through safety, information and education, rights and redress and enforcement actions.

The Consumer Programme also envisages to continue providing support to the enforcement of consumer rights by strengthening cooperation between national enforcement bodies through the exchange of officials. This confirms that the exchange of officials remains an important tool also to support and reinforce the cooperation between market surveillance authorities.

In 2016, the level of participation to the programme experienced an increase of more than 10%, with a total of 93 visits. It has to be mentioned that more and more workshops are organised in the context of the Exchange of Officials.

In this respect, we would like to remind you that the website of Chafea (the Consumers, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency) includes a tool for applicants called "Available Offers for Exchanges" and located in the section devoted to the Exchange of Officials initiative (see http://ec.europa.eu/chafea/consumers/exchange-of-officials-index_en.html). Host authorities' offers can be uploaded through this tool and potential

applicants can use it to find available offers of exchanges. The tool is relevant for all type of visits, including workshops, which usually involve high number of participants.

As stated in Point 2.3.2 of the annex to the 2017 Consumer Work Programme, the financial contribution of the EU will take the form of indemnities paid to enforcement officials working for single liaison offices, competent authorities or other national authorities or bodies notified to the European Commission for the purposes of Regulation (EC) n° 2006/2004 and of Directive 2001/95/EC by a Member State or a third country referred to in Article 7 of the Consumer Programme 2014-2020.

The indemnities awarded to officials will cover *travel and subsistence costs* (including the hotel costs and daily allowance) incurred during the exchange. The rules on the reimbursement of expenses are described in the enclosed document.

Applications for hosting as well as for participation are encouraged, particularly now that the budget of the programme has reached the amount of € 200.000. Please note that the maximum budget available per exchange is set at € 25.000.

Participants must be staff directly employed by the enforcement authority that is bound to carry out the duties assigned to him/her objectively and impartially and thus exclude consultants. The principle of *first come first served* will continue to apply

Applications will be submitted electronically on the Chafea's website (see http://ec.europa.eu/chafea/consumers/exchange-of-officials-index_en.html) and for the sake of administrative efficiency, only the applications endorsed by the representatives of the GPSD or CPC Committee in each Member State/EEA country will be processed. A document including some complementary rules for application is enclosed.

The following timeframes must be respected for exchanges:

- Exchanges must take place between 15 March 2017 and 31 January 2018;
- Applications, duly endorsed by the representatives of the GPSD or CPC Committee must be submitted to Chafea by the exchange of official programme contact point of the official's authority, at the latest 30 days before the starting date of the exchange.
 - In case of request of pre-financing, a minimum of 45 days before the starting date of the exchange is strongly recommended (this option is applicable only for exchanges with an estimated costs above EUR 3,000);
 - In case applications are submitted between 31 July and 31 August 2017, the starting date of the exchange cannot be prior to 18 September 2017.
- **The deadline to submit applications is the 1st of December 2017.**

In case you have further inquiries concerning the exchange, please do not hesitate to address them to the following e-mail: CHAFEA-EXO@ec.europa.eu.

Yours faithfully,

Véronique WASBAUER

[signed]

Enclosures:

- Rules for the reimbursement of travel expenses for exchange of officials
- Complementary rules for application to the exchange of officials programme