
Ispra, 27th April 2016

NOTE TO THE ATTENTION OF
MR V. ŠUCHA – DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE JRC

Subject: Comments on the implementation of the JRC Strategy

Dear Mr Šucha,

Overall, the new organisational chart contains many innovative ideas and has the potential to enable the JRC to be more productive and successful in the future.

We appreciate the efforts to anticipate to staff many aspects of the planned reorganisation, over and above typical Commission practise. Nevertheless, this openness in itself opens the door to more questions. For instance, while the concept of Knowledge Management (KM) is a major innovation for the JRC, a document describing what these KM units will be doing and how they should work is still missing. Additionally, the lack of definition of the scope of each individual unit is introducing too much space for interpretation and speculation. Staff moves into the new structure should be done in the most transparent way, ideally through an open call for interest to be launched as soon as possible.

We believe that the relationship and split of responsibilities between Knowledge Production and Knowledge Management should be made as clear as possible in order to avoid overlaps of activities and future possible conflicts.

Beyond the functions, we are also very interested in the target staffing levels for the various Directorates. A staff ratio target of *70:30 Work Programme to Support services* has been included in the Strategy, but how this is to be attained in practise is still unclear. We expect that redeployment of some staff from Directorate A, which we understand is considered part of Support services, will take place. Redeployment of other support staff will be more difficult depending on competencies and willingness to move and retrain.

Fundamentally, in order to be able reduce the numbers of support staff it will be essential that burdensome administrative procedures be simplified hand in hand with the corresponding reassignments of posts. This is to ensure both that the remaining support staff are not overworked, and that the administrative work is not simply shifted elsewhere.

Furthermore, in our opinion it would be more fitting to rename Directorate R (Resources) into S (Support). You have been very careful in the renaming of other Directorates and Units such that their function is clear from their name, and we think this non-trivial change is consistent with this approach: this Directorate is expected to execute support tasks, and not to manage resources.

As well as these comments, we would like to address some initial questions to you:

- The Strategy expressed an aim of following the forthcoming EC Decision on Middle Management: the mobility of Head of Units nominated for more than 5/7 years was therefore an important objective. A generous absolute limit of 10 years is already allowed for the JRC. However, it appears that there is a number of derogations to this policy in the new organisational chart. For the sake of transparency, a list of exceptions, together with the reasons for such exceptions, should be made available.
- The Knowledge Management units have a double hierarchical organisation (administratively under the vertical Directorates but thematically under the Knowledge Management Directorate). How will the reporting work in practise?
- How will the administrative support be given to units split on two different JRC sites?
- There is currently an on-going JRC Laboratories assessment exercise with a deadline in July 2016. How will the new organisational structure be taken into account for this assessment?
- Are there similar reviews to the JRC Laboratories assessment exercise foreseen for other operational areas, such as ICT support, administrative procedures etc.?

We believe that the "mobility space" – since many months under discussion between the administration and the Staff Representation - could provide an ideal tool to accompany the whole process of the reorganisation. A pilot had been promised in the Strategy for 2016 and we hope that its so far delayed introduction will not become a missed opportunity.

We fully support transparent communication and we look forward to receiving further information in order to better understand the full picture of the future organisational chart.

Robert Kenny
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Cc: Ms Rute
Mr Gammel