

RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE SOCIAL DIALOGUE COMMITTEE FOR THE NATURAL GAS SECTOR

Preamble

In accordance with Article 1 of European Commission Decision 98/500/EC of 20 May 1998¹, the European member organisations of the following social partners: Eurogas, EPSU and EMCEF, have submitted a request, on 21st January 2005 to the European Commission, with the view to establishing a Social Dialogue Committee in the sector of natural Gas. This request was formally accepted by the European Commission by letter of EU Commissioner Vladimír Špidla on 6 November 2006.

In accordance with article 5§1 of the above mentioned Commission Decision, the *Rules of procedure* of the Committee are set out below⁷.

Clause 1

The Committee's objectives are as follows:

- To give opinions whenever appropriate on initiatives in the field of social policy and on the evolution of European policy having a social repercussion in the gas industrial sector.
- To promote and develop the social dialogue, in order to contribute to the development of a sustainable, competitive and secure gas sector.
- To promote and develop the social dialogue in the gas sector, in order to contribute to the development of employment rates and to the improvement of the living and working conditions of employees in this industry sector.

Clause 2

In order to achieve these objectives, the Committee shall:

- Fix, once a year, its work programme.
- Organise the work to be carried out on subjects identified jointly by the Commission and the social partners: Eurogas, EPSU and EMCEF and propose, if necessary, the establishment of working groups to carry out such work.
- Give a follow-up to this work at the appropriate levels.
- Propose to the Commission to invite experts from natural gas industries and trade unions sectors in order to assist it in its work.
- Transmit the results of its work, once approved by the member organisations of the social partners referred to in the preamble, to the Commission and to the authorities concerned.

¹ OJ L 225, 12.8.98

Clause 3

1. The organisations quoted in the preamble designate every year a Chairperson and three vice-Chairpersons chosen by the social partners. The Chairperson and vice-Chairpersons are designated on a rotation bases by mutual agreement.
2. The Chairperson and the vice-Chairpersons whose mandate is expired remain in function until a replacement has been identified. In the event of premature suspension of the Chairman's and/or the vice-Chairmen's mandate, a successor will be appointed for the term of the mandate still to run. This successor will be appointed according to the procedure in paragraph 1. at the suggestion of their respective organisation.

Clause 4

The Committee shall entrust a steering group with the preparation and co-ordination of its work in liaison with the Commission's competent services. This steering group shall be composed of the representatives of the secretariat of the social partners. The Commission services will act as Secretariat for the Committee and of the steering group. The organisations referred to in the preamble shall appoint their delegates to the meetings of the Committee.

Clause 5

1. Committee meetings may include maximum 60 delegates, made up of:
 - 30 delegates for the organisations representing employees
 - 30 delegates for the organisation representing employers.
2. The organisations referred to in the preamble shall appoint their delegates to the different meetings and activities of the Committee.
3. No remuneration shall be paid in respect of the functions exercised and in respect of participation in meetings.
4. Accommodation and travel expenses will be reimbursed in accordance with Article 5 § 3 of the Commission decision mentioned in the preamble *and* with applicable Commission rules.
5. Decisions are taken by consensus between social partners.

Clause 6

The Committee shall meet minimum twice a year. In order to support the work of this Committee, ad hoc working groups can be created whenever necessary.

Clause 7

In respect to the provisions of Article 287 of the EC Treaty, delegates shall not disclose the information they may become aware of through the work of the Committee, of the ad hoc Working Parties or of the select Group every time that the Commission will inform them that the opinion requested relates to a confidential subject.

Clause 8

These Internal Rules shall enter into force on 15 March 2007.

These rules may be amended by consensus between the social partners.

Adopted on March 15, 2007

Signatures:

For Eurogas



For EMCEF



For EPSU

