



Procedure file

Basic information		
DEC - Discharge procedure	2008/2270(DEC)	Procedure completed
2007 discharge: European Railway Agency ERA		
Subject 8.70.03.07 Previous discharges		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	CONT Budgetary Control		26/03/2008
		PPE-DE FJELLNER Christofer	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	TRAN Transport and Tourism		07/10/2008
		Verts/ALE CRAMER Michael	
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	Economic and Financial Affairs ECOFIN	2922	10/02/2009
European Commission	Commission DG	Commissioner	
	Budget	KALLAS Siim	

Key events			
23/07/2008	Non-legislative basic document published	SEC(2008)2359	Summary
20/11/2008	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
16/03/2009	Vote in committee		Summary
20/03/2009	Committee report tabled for plenary	A6-0165/2009	
21/04/2009	Debate in Parliament		
23/04/2009	Results of vote in Parliament		
23/04/2009	Decision by Parliament	T6-0297/2009	Summary
23/04/2009	End of procedure in Parliament		
26/09/2009	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2008/2270(DEC)
Procedure type	DEC - Discharge procedure
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 100
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CONT/6/67289

Documentation gateway					
Non-legislative basic document		SEC(2008)2359	23/07/2008	EC	Summary
Court of Auditors: opinion, report		N6-0004/2009 OJ C 311 05.12.2008, p. 0001	05/12/2008	CofA	Summary
Document attached to the procedure		05588/2009	23/01/2009	CSL	Summary
Committee draft report		PE416.333	29/01/2009	EP	
Committee opinion	TRAN	PE416.351	18/02/2009	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A6-0165/2009	20/03/2009	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T6-0297/2009	23/04/2009	EP	Summary

Final act	
Budget 2009/667 OJ L 255 26.09.2009, p. 0167	Summary

2007 discharge: European Railway Agency ERA

PURPOSE: presentation of the final accounts of the European Railway Agency for the financial year 2007.

CONTENT: this document sets out a detailed account of the implementation of the Agency's budget for 2007. It indicates that the Agency's final budget amounted to EUR 16.6 million (including a reserve of EUR 1.9 million), as compared with EUR 14.4 million for 2006.

As regards the staffing policy, the Agency (which is located in two cities: its administrative seat is in Valenciennes whereas its meetings have to be held in Lille) officially set out 116 posts in its establishment plan. 95 posts are currently occupied + 4 other posts totalling 99 posts assigned to operational and administrative duties.

The activities carried out in 2007 are as follows:

Safety

- creation and bringing into service of the Safety Database;
- completion and submission of the first set of Common Safety Methods to the Commission;
- a draft recommendation on the methodology for setting common safety targets;
- setting up a task force on peer review to facilitate mutual recognition of safety certificate;
- development of a common approach to safety reporting.

Interoperability ? Technical Specifications for Interoperability (TSI)

- completion of the preliminary draft of the TSI infrastructure and TSI Energy;
- intermediate report on TSI Rolling Stock;
- work on Revisions of the TSI Operations and TSI Freight wagons;
- work on TSI Telematics for Passengers;
- report on the certification of maintenance workshops;
- study on the relationship between the 1 435mm and 1 520mm railway systems;
- development of registration of Rolling Stock.

European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS)

- established as System Authority for ERTMS;
- database for ERTMS change requests;
- recommendation for updating version 2.3.0 of the ERTMS baseline;
- study on Safety Approval of ERTMS systems.

Economic evaluation

- implementation of the methodology to create 'applied methodology' documents for each recommendation;
- launch of the DREAM database initiative (Database for Rail Economic Analysis Monitoring);
- provision of support to European Commission.

The complete version of the final accounts may be found at the following address: <http://www.era.europa.eu/public>

2007 discharge: European Railway Agency ERA

The Committee on Budgetary Control adopted the report by Christofer FJELLNER (EPP-ED, SE) on discharge to be granted to the European Railway Agency calling on the European Parliament to grant the Executive Director of the Agency discharge in respect of the implementation of its budget for the financial year 2007.

Noting that the Agency's annual accounts for the financial year 2007 are reliable, and the underlying transactions are legal and regular, MEPs approve the closure of the Agency's accounts.

However, they make a number of recommendations as part of the decision on discharge. In addition to the general recommendations appearing in the draft resolution on financial management and control of EU agencies (see [2008/2207\(INI\)](#)), MEPs make the following observations:

- the fact that contrary to the Court of Auditors' statement of assurance for 2006, which was partly qualified with regard to the underlying transactions, the statement of assurance for 2007 is positive;
- that the Agency estimated the extra costs resulting from its obligation to work in two different cities - the administrative seat being in Valenciennes whereas meetings are held in Lille - at EUR 450 000.

MEPs regret that the fact of having two seats hampers the Agency's work and results in extra costs for European taxpayers.

They also note the ECA's criticism that weaknesses were found in some selection procedures and that the Agency had not yet finalised its recruitment procedures. They therefore call on the Agency to finalise a full description of procedures to be followed as regards recruitment in the first quarter of 2009.

As regards budget planning and implementation, MEPs observe that the Agency final budget for 2007 amounted to EUR 16.6 million, including a reserve of EUR 1.9 million and that, at the end of 2007, EUR 3.4 million had to be cancelled, including the reserve, and that, in addition, EUR 2.7 million was carried over to 2008. Members are therefore concerned that more than 35 % of the Agency's final appropriations had not been used.

Furthermore, MEPs recall that despite the weaknesses in budgetary implementation, the Agency had requested and obtained funding from the Commission (the amount of which exceeded actual cash needs by about EUR 6.8 million). MEPs agree with the Court's conclusion that the Agency's cash forecasts had not been prepared rigorously. They call on the Agency to better plan its cash-flow requirements and to comply with Regulation No 2343/2002, which obliges the agencies to implement rigorous cash management.

As far as the follow-up to the 2006 discharge exercise is concerned, the MEPs recall that, at the time, the ECA's statement of assurance was qualified due to weaknesses in tendering procedures (which recurred in 2007). They note that the Agency had acknowledged that some improvements are still needed and that it is working on a procurement manual in order to standardize procedures.

Lastly, they note that, as in 2006, the Court of Auditors criticised weaknesses in budget implementation. They therefore call on the Agency to strive to increase the level of budget implementation and to report on the measures taken and results achieved in its report on budgetary and financial management 2008.

2007 discharge: European Railway Agency ERA

The European Parliament adopted a decision on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Railway Agency for the financial year 2007. The decision to grant discharge is also an approval of the closure of the accounts of this EU agency.

Furthermore, the Parliament adopted by 417 votes to 15, with 14 abstentions, a resolution with observations which form an integral part of the decision to grant discharge.

The Parliament points out that:

- contrary to the European Court of Auditors' (ECA) statement of assurance for 2006, which was partly qualified with regard to the underlying transactions, the statement of assurance for 2007 is positive;
- the Agency estimated the extra costs resulting from its obligation to work in two different cities - the administrative seat being in Valenciennes whereas meetings are held in Lille - at EUR 450 000.

The Parliament regrets that the fact of having two seats hampers the Agency's work and results in extra costs for European taxpayers. It also notes the ECA's criticism that weaknesses were found in some selection procedures and that the Agency had not yet finalised its recruitment procedures. It therefore calls on the Agency to finalise a full description of procedures to be followed as regards recruitment in the first quarter of 2009.

As regards budget planning and implementation, the Parliament observes that the Agency's final budget for 2007 amounted to EUR 16.6 million, including a reserve of EUR 1.9 million and that, at the end of 2007, EUR 3.4 million had to be cancelled, including the reserve, and that, in addition, EUR 2.7 million was carried over to 2008. Members are therefore concerned that more than 35% of the Agency's final appropriations had not been used. Furthermore, the Parliament recalls that despite the weaknesses in budgetary implementation, the Agency had requested and obtained funding from the Commission (the amount of which exceeded actual cash needs by about EUR 6.8 million). It agrees with the Court's conclusion that the Agency's cash forecasts had not been prepared rigorously. It calls on the Agency to better plan its cash-flow requirements and to comply with Regulation No 2343/2002, which obliges the agencies to implement rigorous cash management.

As far as the follow-up to the 2006 discharge exercise is concerned, the Parliament recalls that, at the time, the ECA's statement of assurance was qualified due to weaknesses in tendering procedures (which recurred in 2007). It notes that the Agency had acknowledged that some improvements are still needed and that it is working on a procurement manual in order to standardise procedures.

The Parliament also recalls that, as in 2006, the Court of Auditors criticised weaknesses in budget implementation. It therefore calls on the Agency to strive to increase the level of budget implementation and to report on the measures taken and results achieved in its report on budgetary and financial management 2008.

Lastly, noting that the Agency's annual accounts for the financial year 2007 are reliable, and the underlying transactions are legal and regular, the Parliament approves the closure of the Agency's accounts and refers, for other observations accompanying its decision on discharge, to its resolution on financial management and control of EU agencies - see [2008/2207\(INI\)](#) - adopted in parallel.

2007 discharge: European Railway Agency ERA

PURPOSE: to grant discharge to the European Railway Agency for the financial year 2007.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Decision 2009/667/EC of the European Parliament on the discharge for the implementation of the budget of the European Railway Agency for the financial year 2007.

CONTENT: with the present decision, the European Parliament grants discharge to the Executive Director of the European Railway Agency for the implementation of the Authority's budget for the financial year 2007.

This decision is in line with the European Parliament's resolution adopted on 26 April 2009 and comprises a series of observations that form an integral part of the discharge decision (please refer to the summary of the opinion of 23/04/2009). The decision to grant discharge is also an approval of the closure of the accounts of this EU agency.