



IABP Board of MEPs for national schemes

At a discussion with the Secretary General's Political Advisor it was agreed that the Secretary General of the IABP should write formally to the Parliament giving the names nominated by the national schemes for the proposed Board of MEPs. It was also agreed that a meeting should be arranged with the Quaestors who oversee services to Members of the Parliament. The proposed Board will promote national schemes to their own MEPs and more importantly to MEPs of the accession countries. The formal arrangements for continuing the Patronage of the IABP under the new President were also agreed.

Lisbon mid term Review (see attached)

The President wants the Parliament to take a very active role in the Lisbon mid term review. This focuses on productivity, software, competitiveness, chemical industries, service directive, etc. Economic issues are at the heart of the review. It was agreed that this could provide an opportunity to bring together IABP member schemes business people with their MEPs and EU officials. It was suggested that the event could take place in the Parliament. The views of national schemes are requested.

Bill Newton Dunn MP and European Parliament Funding

Advised that we should make an immediate application for consideration in the case of any existing funds remaining in the Budget line for 'think tanks'. If none is available Bill Newton Dunn MEP will pursue the issue on the consideration process of the new Budget due when the Commission is finally agreed.

Programmes for officials of the European Parliament

Yves Quitin, has worked at the Parliament for some years but only recently been appointed Human Resources Director. Parliament is employing 900 new people from the accession countries and he wants to use this as an opportunity to look at new approaches to the work. *He said "all the reports back from officials who have*

undertaken IABP national scheme programmes have been very enthusiastic and officials found them extremely useful'

Beginning this year there will be about ten officials who are regarded as having the capacity to be senior managers and the future top level of officials. They will undergo a two-year leadership programme and the IABP 'learning experience modules' will be part of these leadership programmes. There will be a minimum of officials eligible every two years. He would like another meeting in February when the first group will have been chosen. Mr Quitin has a strong sense of the programmes needing to be mutually beneficial. Yves Quintin was interested in Nina Mees's suggestion of quick response programmes provided by Voka and we agreed that she should write to him about these.

EU Commission and the IABP Emerging Democracies Programme

Following Discussions with Head of the Georgia and Armenia Desk of the External Relations Directorate and his colleagues on the development of the Business and Parliament Scheme of Georgia as an Emerging Democracies 'model' it was recommended that meetings are held with the Head of the Ukraine, Balkans and Romanian desks. There was also encouragement to apply for future funding.

MP/MEP Civil Servant Attachment Scheme

In 1998 the Trust was asked by the Cabinet Office Minister, the Rt. Hon. Dr. David Clark MP, to devise and operate an attachment scheme to improve civil servants' understanding of the pressures on Members of Parliament (MPs). With its neutrality and long experience of attaching MPs to companies, the Trust was considered the best organisation for the job.

After 2 successful pilot schemes the Trust in 2002, was asked to continue the scheme and I was seconded from the civil service, the Food Standards Agency to organise and manage the scheme. Over 200 civil servants have now participated since the original pilot programme.

On attachment, each civil servant shadows an MP for at least a day in the House of Commons and in the MP's constituency, and attends a half day and a full day's seminar in the House of Commons on the workings of Parliament. The Scheme has now been extended to include British Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) where the same format is followed, and one day one off seminars. The civil servants also can overlap on some programmes with private

sector companies that are members of the Trust.

The Trust invites nominations from Government Departments and then the nominee is matched with an MP where some commonality of interests is found. Once the MP has agreed to take part in the scheme the candidate contacts their office and arranges mutually convenient dates to do the shadowing. This consists of a day in the House of Commons which can include meeting with a constituency group or particular interest group Sitting in on Parliamentary committees, sitting in the chamber of the House of Commons and hearing a debate, talking to the MP's staff to see how things work and just following the MP around and observing their working day.

The time in the constituency is spent attending any meetings or events that the MP has been invited to, and usually include the weekly meeting where the MP makes themselves available to any constituent who wishes to discuss something with them. The programme is flexible so that arrangements can be made which are mutually convenient.

The half day seminar is a general introductory session which includes an MP and a civil servant talking about their experiences of the scheme. The full day seminar takes place in the Palace of Westminster and the day concentrates on the workings of Parliament with all the speakers being either MPs, Members of the House of Lords or Officers of the House of Commons. The process can take some time as the visits have to fit in to the MPs very busy timetable.

Comments from civil servants show the value of the exercise:

The work in the constituency is very different from the work in parliament – in particular the case work received, and the focus on local, rather than national issues.

I widened my perspective about the concerns at a local level as opposed to things in the national press.

It has given me a useful insight into how MPs other than Ministers think, and their experience of how government works, which will be useful in future activities involving the House of Commons.

I certainly feel that the attachment was worthwhile, and was particularly interested to see the level of commitment that the MP displayed at her constituency surgery, and the amount of work that arises from these.

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