

## European Administrative School (EAS) about to take off

**SCICNEWS** talks to David Walker, Principal of the new school and, until last week, Director of SCIC B. David was appointed by the Commission at the end of December and the EAS was created at the end of January.

**SN: What is the EAS?**

**David Walker:** The EAS is an attempt to add value, above what each institution can do individually, to training in three areas or three key career stages for staff where, irrespective of the institution for which they work, they have broadly the same needs, namely:

- Induction of new staff;
- Managers and potential managers;
- To prepare colleagues to move from the AST to the AD function group.

The school has been under discussion a long time. We were talking about it already in 2000 when I left DG ADMIN's Training Unit to join SCIC. I felt two preconditions needed to be fulfilled before the school could be a success: it should have responsibility for training where there are common, or similar, needs across the institutions, and the school should not be yet another batch of administrators, it should also employ professional trainers. The first of those conditions have been met and now it's up to me to fill the second.

Initial focus will be on the three areas mentioned, with the third point as the highest priority since this is an area where we will be starting from scratch. The first two areas are already provided for in the Institutions and the School will take over their organisation from the second half of the year. Induction training has however already been run inter-institutionally since mid-2004.



**SN: How will the EAS fit in with existing training units?**

Well, for me the most important thing is that the EAS should not be seen as a competitor or a threat to them. Cooperation with them has been good during the preparatory phase and this augurs well for the future. We are all striving for the same target, and we will take the time necessary to work out the details of our relations with the training efforts in each institution. Of course, some resources have been transferred to the EAS from the institutions' training budgets since we will take over some of the work previously done by them.

**SN: How big is the School?**

The EAS will have a very limited staff – only about half of what the Commission's Training Unit had when I headed that in the late 1990s! We will have 15 staff in Brussels and 3 in Luxembourg and I've already filled about half the posts. Unfortunately there has been only one application from someone in another institution than the Commission so we will need to look at how publication of EAS-posts is done in the other institutions when the second wave of posts is published. For me it's vital that we have people from elsewhere and also that we have as many nationalities as possible represented – the seven people I've picked so far all have a different nationality.

*The EAS is administratively linked to EPSO for the first three years, after which the arrangement will be reviewed by the Secretaries General of the Institutions. It's a "marriage of convenience", where the EAS will be working with the same management board as EPSO and EPSO will take care of a lot of the logistics and administration work in order to keep the EAS administration to a minimum and avoid duplicating structures. EPSO will also be involved directly in the AST-AD certification process.*

*The EAS was set up by the Commission, the EP, the Council, the EESC, the CoR, the Court of Justice, the Court of Auditors and the office of the Ombudsman. It may, later on, offer training also to European Agencies and Offices.*

*The school is funded via earmarked appropriations in EP-SO's budget. It is still uncertain where it is going to be located but the best bet at the moment appears to be the ground floor of rue du Luxembourg 46.*

The EAS is small, and not divided into Units. It has two informal teams:

Physical training management  
(participants, contracts, evaluation, tendering, publication, budgets, finance, IT)

Training Team  
4 of 6 A-posts will go to the training team in order to establish in-house training capacity.

About half the posts have already been filled, there is a good spread of nationalities, and a lot of the skills necessary are already available in the Commission.

**SN: Will the School have enough resources?**

Historically, induction and management training has been  
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outsourced and the corresponding funds have been transferred to the School. So, assuming overall participant numbers stay the same, there should not be a problem. On the other hand, the training for "certification" is an unknown quantity and is going to be a weighty dossier for the EAS. It is foreseen to provide about 300 hours of training and preparation.

It is not foreseen to provide training in view of the Attestation procedure since that does not imply a change of function group only a further rise up the same pay scale – and there is no test for candidates.

**SN: How do you see the School developing?**

I want to be sure that we can provide a high-quality service from the outset, which is more important than having flashy premises or trying to expand too quickly. In any case the volume of what we can do is limited by our budgets and staff and, of course, by the mandate the school has received. It will only survive if it delivers added value but if it does deliver, I believe it is destined to grow. One obvious possibility for expansion in the future would be to take on responsibility for language training which is already largely inter-institutional.

The school can help promote common values and address the common needs of the Institutions – and also achieve some economies of scale. But clearly, there are some areas

of training that are unlikely to be suitable for an inter-institutional approach, for example programme and project management which is very much specific to the Commission or training that is specific to individual DGs, including much of the training organised by SCIC itself.



Source: David Walker, EAS; Ian Andersen (SCIC 02)

**DG SCIC goes public**

On 14 January, SCIC and DGT gave a joint press briefing in the Berlaymont Press Room on the state of interpretation and translation 8 months after enlargement with 10 new Member States. A press release published on the previous day sets out the situation. **For interpretation, see:**

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/05/9&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

**For translation, see:**

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/05/10&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

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Source: Sue Roberts (A9 EN – VideoSCIC)