

Der Generalsekretär

02 MARS 2016

CSG D(2016) 619

NOTE TO THE MEMBERS OF THE BUREAU

Subject: Reform of the Members' transport service in the current security situation

SUMMARY

At its meeting of 23 November 2015 the Bureau held an exchange of views on the current security situation in Europe and its consequences for Parliament. Among a number of other important measures to be undertaken, the Bureau expressed a strong wish to internalise the transport services offered to Members as soon as possible. At its meeting of 18 January 2016 the Bureau invited the Secretary-General to present a proposal for a possible internalisation of the Members' transport service.

Parliament is currently providing transport services for Members in Brussels and in Strasbourg through a combination of mainly externalised drivers together with a limited number of statutory staff. Outside companies are representing a reputational risk for Parliament as they are regularly sued by their drivers for not respecting national labour law.

The main objective of the internalisation is the improvement of the security of Members as Parliament will be able to conduct security screenings of drivers before employment, provide continuous training and monitoring of its staff. This allows Parliament furthermore to improve its image as a modern employer fully respecting working conditions of staff employed in its premises. Furthermore, Parliament will be able to improve the security equipment of the cars. The preparatory stages for the internalisation would require approximately 12-14 months, allowing the new service to start in February 2017.

The Bureau is invited to:

- consider and approve in principle the proposal for reorganisation of the Members' Transport services in Brussels and Strasbourg by way of internalisation as a follow-up measure relating to the new security context of the Institution;
- authorise the Secretary-General, if all the conditions are met, to launch the corresponding procedures to start the preparation phase in line with the proposal;
- invite the Quaestors to examine and update the Rules governing Members' Transport services;
- invite the Secretary-General to adapt the specific working conditions for the internalised Members' transport services in order to guarantee a resource and cost efficient, high quality service for Members.

1. Background

1. At its meeting of 23 November 2015 the Bureau held an exchange of views on the current security situation in Europe and its consequences for Parliament. Among a number of other important measures to be undertaken, the Bureau expressed a strong wish to internalise the transport services offered to Members as soon as possible. The externalised service has been identified as representing a major risk for the security of Members as long as Parliament has no means to either screen the background of the drivers or decide the security equipment of the cars.
2. At its meeting of 18 January 2016 the Bureau invited the Secretary-General to present a proposal for a possible internalisation of the Members' transport service.
3. Parliament is providing transport services for Members in Brussels and Strasbourg through a combination of mainly externalised drivers together with a limited number of statutory staff and purchased service cars. Members are entitled to use the European Parliament car service in accordance with the Rules governing transport arrangements for Members in the European Parliament's places of work (Bureau Decision of 30 November 2011; Annex 1).
4. The use of an external company for transporting Members carrying frequently highly confidential documents raised increasing concern about security gaps in particular as Parliament is not the direct employer of the drivers and as such has no possibility to undertake a security screening.
5. Furthermore, repeated negative experiences with external service providers have shown, in particular during the last two years, the weaknesses of maintaining an externalised approach (e.g. internal conflicts between contractors and subcontractors, pending court cases for non-respect of national labour law and a rising amount of complaints from Members for the quality of client service). These problems represent not only a security related but also a reputational risk for Parliament.
6. Parliament will guarantee that once the driver service is internalised all social responsibilities of the employer are fully met. This is, as explained above, not the case in the current situation where the outside companies have been repeatedly accused of infringing labour law.
7. In addition, Parliament is the only EU institution still purchasing service cars instead of concluding operational leasing contracts.

2. Current situation

8. Members' transport requests in Brussels and in Strasbourg are partly organised with Parliament service cars (13 limousines and 5 minivans), with the additional assistance of two different external service providers (one in Brussels and another one in Strasbourg, chosen through a public call for tender). The current total annual budget allocated for these outside contracts is 5.22 million euro.
9. In addition to the two framework contracts, Parliament owns a pool of purchased vehicles (13 service cars and 5 minivans). Next to individual transport for Members,

this fleet of cars is often used by the Parliament's Protocol for transport of official delegations and VIPs. The current total number of statutory Parliament drivers is 13 (6 AST and 7 CA FG I). The average net total annual budgetary cost across years for contractual pool drivers, purchase, maintenance, reparation and insurance is 1.58 million euro.

10. The current average total annual budget of the Members transport service is 6,8 million euro. This figure includes the annual budget allocated for the two framework contracts, the annual operational cost of limousines, the average purchase budget for renewal of limousines, the insurance cost for limousines and HR cost.
11. One of the main disadvantages of externalised services is the limited control and monitoring possibilities on HR quality and the image of Parliament. Furthermore, only few companies in Brussels and Strasbourg are in a position to favourably respond to the specifications in the Parliaments' call for tenders with a quasi-monopolistic position in the market. The high, nearly uncontrollable, turnover of temporarily recruited staff is a risk for personal security of Members and the Institution. Furthermore, the external service providers recruit nearly exclusively male drivers on the local labour market, not taking into account the Parliament's policy on geographical and gender balance.

3. Option of Internalisation

Improved security for Members

12. Members are often alone in the car with the driver. Moreover, Members often carry highly confidential documents. As explained above, as long as the Members' transport service is provided by an outside company, Parliament has no means to screen the drivers' background.
13. In the framework of recruitment for an internalised service Parliament will formulate specific requirements which have to provide assurance linked to the personal background of the drivers. Furthermore, continuous training and monitoring will focus on enhanced security.
14. Parliament will also be able to equip its own cars according to the security needs of Members, as for instance the installation of an alarm button linked to relevant authorities and the drivers' centre.

Improved service to Members

15. It is considered that a fully internalised, directly managed transport service is the best possible solution to guarantee high service quality for Members in accordance with the Bureau rules. Specific training sessions for drivers and management of the service will focus on acquiring the necessary knowledge not only about secure and efficient driving, but, also about needs of Members, specifics of Parliament and service attitude.
16. Additionally, a framework contract with a taxi company in Brussels and Strasbourg is needed to guarantee business continuity and as a safeguard measure to cover

unpredictable saturation peaks. This contract should enable Parliament to adapt in the most flexible way to the needs.

17. Internalisation would contribute to Parliament's image as a professional and modern employer respecting working conditions of staff employed in its premises and considerably lowers the reputational risk incurred by a contractor not respecting labour law provisions.
18. As a side effect an additional service will be available to Members: as service cars would be transported from Brussels to Strasbourg for plenary sessions Members who are nowadays travelling more often directly from Brussels to plenary sessions in Strasbourg, can request to take a service car for this travel (with certain conditions to be specified by the Quaestors who would need to examine and update the current Rules in order to verify that the service is used relating to the parliamentary function of Members).

Parliament's car fleet

19. Internalisation will also mean a shifting from a Parliament's car fleet with a limited number of purchased cars together with cars from external service providers, towards a total fleet of service cars under a full operational leasing contract. Parliament would need to launch its own open call for tender, a procedure which normally takes nine months until contract signature and another estimated three months to enable the leasing company to order and provide the cars.

Consequences for Human Resources - drivers

20. Currently the external service provider in Brussels puts at Parliaments' disposal a maximum capacity of 65 drivers and cars, the one in Strasbourg 85.
21. Taking into account the standing provisions on working conditions in the Staff Regulations in combination with the opening hours of the Drivers service in Article 2 of the Annex to the Bureau rules, global internalisation would include additional 110 drivers to be effectively recruited by 1 January 2017 in order to guarantee business continuity. These recruitments will enable Parliament to seek the geographic and gender balance - laureates list permitting – and to do a security screening, a tailor made induction as well as continuous training for each driver. Furthermore, Parliament will seek a wider language profile (currently most drivers put at Parliaments' disposal speak exclusively French) and invest in language training. The drivers would be employed as contract agents and not as officials.
22. Parliament would need to launch its selection process (CAST), similar to the process for the internalisation of the security guards in DG SAFE. The process would need to result into a reserve list of minimum 200 laureates. The average duration of the process for the organisation of a CAST would be 9-12 months (from publication date until effective arrival of staff). Ideally, the list would need to become available by the end of 2016, enabling recruitments during the fourth trimester of 2016, and effective arrival of staff by 1 January 2017.
23. A short period of progressive phasing in of internal resources with a progressive phasing out of services to be rendered by the external contractors as from 1 January

23. A short period of progressive phasing in of internal resources with a progressive phasing out of services to be rendered by the external contractors as from 1 January 2017 until February 2017 would enable to maintain normal business continuity for Members until the full implementation of internalised organisation structure has been finalised by the expiration of the current framework contract in Brussels and an anticipated termination of the contract in Strasbourg in February 2017.

Consequences for Organisation and Management

24. Internalisation of the Members' transport services will also have an important impact on the Members Transport unit organigram and structure, with a need to reinforce HR in some parts of the unit (coordination, Car Reservation Centre, management support team) via budget neutral internal redeployment.

Environmental aspects

25. Operational leasing of service cars will enable Parliament to provide a fleet of cars responding to the highest and latest environmental standards in the most flexible way. Direct fleet management will enable the Parliament to better monitor the respect of environmental standards which is not always possible with external service providers.

Other considerations

26. Similar to the good practice in the other EU-institutions, it would be necessary to conclude a framework contract with local taxi companies in Brussels and in Strasbourg in order to respond to ad hoc situations and to guarantee business continuity in unpredictable circumstances (however, taxis would not enter into Parliament's premises for security reasons).

Budget and timetable

27. Annex 2 to this note summarises a comparative calculation between internalisation plus operational leasing and externalisation. Internalisation would increase the total annual budget by 3,7 Mio. €
28. This difference of cost is mainly to be explained because of the commitment of Parliament to fully respect the rights of its employees including overtime and night shift remuneration, mission cost. Drivers will be trained not only for secure driving in all circumstances, but, will receive ongoing training in order to understand the environment they are working in, to ensure their service mindedness as well as professional behaviour. Furthermore, the cars Parliament will lease will be equipped to guarantee the highest security standard including panic button and tracing systems. Also, with leasing the cars by Parliament will always meet the very latest environmental standards.
29. It is considered, that this extra investment guarantees security checked personal, a drivers team which is loyal to the institution, aware of the needs of its Members, service oriented and reliable.

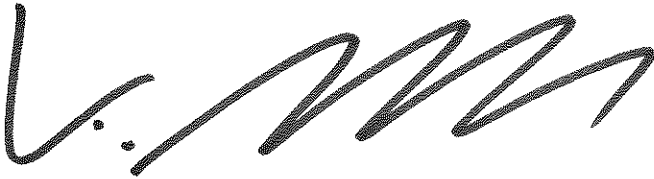
accordance with the contract conditions and without the potential financial penalisation laid down in the contracts.

31. The current planning would allow Parliament to have a fully internalised Members' transport service as of February 2017.

4. Conclusion

The Bureau is invited to:

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- authorise the Secretary-General, if all the conditions are met, to launch the corresponding procedures to start the preparation phase in line with the proposal;
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Klaus WELLE

Annexes:

1. Bureau Rules governing Members transport (Bureau decision of 30/11/2011)
2. Fiche Financière