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PRESS RELEASE

Twenty-fourth meeting of the Management Board

The EMEA Management Board met on 1 December 1999 under the chairmanship of Mr Strachan Heppell.

The Management Board adopted a budget of € 49.559 million for 2000. Subject to the final vote by the European Parliament at its plenary session 13 – 17 December, the budget is made up of € 34.775 million in fee revenue, with a contribution of € 13.2 million from the EU general budget and miscellaneous revenue of € 1.584 million.

On the basis of the opinion of the European Court of Auditors, the Board gave discharge to the Executive Director for the execution of the 1998 budget. Discharge was also granted to the EMEA accounting officer. The Board also agreed various transfers between chapters of the 1999 budget and confirmed the adoption of a series of implementing rules of the EU staff regulation.

Following a three months public consultation, the Board finalised the EMEA Code of Conduct, including a Code of Good Administrative Practice as proposed by the European Ombudsman. The Code of Conduct provides specific guidance concerning conflicts of interest, confidentiality and discretion, gifts and invitations. The Code applies to members of the Management Board and scientific committees, European experts and EMEA members of staff. The Code is available on the Agency's Internet web site.

The Board reviewed the basis for distribution of fees between the EMEA and national competent authorities for the provision of rapporteur and other services. It was agreed to continue in 2000 with the current system where half of most fees are paid to national authorities for rapporteur and inspection services. The distribution of the new annual fee was confirmed as follows: 30 % to cover EMEA staff costs, 30 % paid to rapporteur and co-rapporteur, 30 % attributed to special activities, and up to 10 % for sampling and testing of centrally authorised products. The Board will review the scope of the special activities and projects at its next meeting.

The Management Board noted significant progress towards the adoption of the European Parliament and Council Regulation on orphan medicinal products. The Board highlighted the need for appropriate funding from the EU budget to compensate for fee exemptions for orphan medicines. The Board also endorsed the Standard Operating Procedure for the provision of Scientific Advice by EMEA scientific committees.

A series of proposals to improve communication between competent authorities was endorsed by the Board, including the creation of electronic links for crisis communication and the promotion of greater use of video-conferencing.

The Management Board approved the activity report for 1999. The report will be made public at the beginning of 2000 once all final figures have been included. In preparation for the General Conference of the Pan-European Regulatory Forum (PERF) in Budapest on 2-4 February 2000, the Board noted important efforts made by national authorities and the EMEA to co-operate with Central and Eastern European regulators (http://perf.eudra.org).

The Board will begin a new three-year term next year. Meeting dates for 2000 and 2001 were confirmed as follows

- 2000: 22 February, 7 June, 27 September and 20 December
- 2001: 21 February, 6 June, 3 October and 19 December.

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NOTES FOR EDITORS:

1. This press release, together with other information about the work of the EMEA, may be found on the Internet at the following location: *http://www.eudra.org/emea.html*

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