

Alicante, 15/04/2016

SC 14-17 Note 33 Cds.Doc

Mr José Cuenda
Mr Mark Ronayne
Co-Presidents
Staff Regulations Committee

By mail: Sylvie.durand@curia.europa.eu

Subject: EUIPO membership of AASC

Dear Mr Cuenda,
Dear Mr Ronayne,

The EUIPO Staff Committee (formerly the OHIM Staff Committee) would like to inform you that it decided in its session of 23 February 2016 to suspend its membership of the Assembly of Agency Staff Committees (AASC).

AASC is an informal association of staff committees from EU agencies which primarily serves to share information and opinions. Although it has no official recognition as an EU legal body, it is potentially a useful way for maintaining a network through which staff committees can pool and coordinate their efforts. However, we believe that the current internal decision-taking mechanism of AASC is not open and responsive enough for us to effectively give proper voice to our colleagues' concerns. In our view, the lack of internal debate, combined with an extremely independent Secretariat, hinder the organisation from effectively representing our staff's interests.

This is in particular true in relation to the Staff Regulations Committee (SRC). Since an increasing number of Implementing Rules drafted by the Commission apply by analogy to our agency, we ought to have been informed in time and consulted about the draft proposals submitted to the SRC.

Pursuant to Article 10 of the Staff Regulations, the agencies should be jointly represented, in accordance with rules to be fixed by agreement between them and the Commission. To our knowledge, those rules have never been drafted. The delay in drafting the rules must not be allowed to have a negative impact on the participatory rights of our staff. It seems disproportionate that an agency with a staff of around 800 employees and its own unique organisational structure (e.g. Boards of Appeal), is not consulted within the SRC, while other bodies with a far smaller number of staff are directly involved in the decision-making process.

The situation needs to be addressed urgently and we would be grateful to have an opportunity to discuss possible alternatives regarding our active participation in the SRC. In the meantime, we suggest that the representatives of the EUIPO Staff Committee are invited to the sessions of the SRC as observers.

We look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

Gregor Schneider

Chairperson of the Staff Committee