



International & Knowledge Unit (EU)
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
LONDON

5 August 2013

Dear Sirs

**CRCE RESPONSE TO CURRENT CONSULTATION: CALL FOR EVIDENCE ON THE
GOVERNMENT'S REVIEW OF THE BALANCE OF COMPETENCIES BETWEEN THE UNITED
KINGDOM AND THE EUROPEAN UNION FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT**

This response complements an earlier response sent to the Department of Health on the balance of competencies between the UK and the EU for Health.

Public Health England's Centre for Radiation, Chemicals and Environmental Hazards (PHE, CRCE) has substantial involvement in EU projects, with £6 million of its current active contracts coming from European Research Programmes. CRCE has access to on-going European project outputs with a total value of over £167 million. The Centre also benefits in other ways from its relationship with the EU and the frameworks that it provides.

CRCE has developed an excellent international reputation as a leading authority in the fields of radiation, chemical and environmental health protection and security from both leading and participating in multidisciplinary collaborative research projects. The research framework and funding provided through the EU has facilitated this process and has enabled CRCE to develop forward thinking strategies to work collaboratively in large consortia of leading international organisations. It has also enabled CRCE to engage and work with other actors outside of the EU in areas which would have been inaccessible on a national level. This would have been more difficult had these agreements been developed through bilateral agreements with separate countries.

As an example, collaborations with other Member States that have been established through EU funding have led to a number of positive outputs related to health security, which have been well documented by others. Although not exhaustive, these include:

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- Formal and informal exchange of information and best practice.
- Opportunity to benefit from EU funded research outputs and support national research with pooled expertise.
- Improved alertness and situational awareness.
- Strengthening of national plans by co-ordination with other MSs (eg, port health).
- During a crisis countries can boost national resources and resilience by requesting support.
- Possibility of pooling certain resources.

The agreement by EU Parliament on the Decision for Serious Cross Border Health Threats will further support the important work of CRCE and also improve the health security of UK citizens from such hazards.

The paragraphs above highlight positive aspects of CRCE's relationship with the EU on health security. This statement could equally be expanded to cover other public health aspects that fall within CRCE and PHE's remit to include ionising and non-ionising radiation, chemicals and other environmental hazards. For example, in the ionising radiation area PHE are fully engaged with initiatives and projects that aim to better co-ordinate low dose risk research across the EU (DoReMi, MELODI, OPERRA).

The new funding framework (Horizon 2020) will present excellent opportunities for CRCE and PHE to compete for monies to improve national health protection and compete in global markets for the commercial realisation of developed products. We would wish that future EU funding can be obtained with a reduced burden of administration and reporting requirements; these remain burdensome despite EC attempting to simplify.

Yours faithfully

Deputy Director