



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND INCLUSION
The Director-General

Brussels
EMPL.B.3/AJ/sc/ (2020)2414435

Subject: Technical update of Annex III to Directive 2000/54/EC on the protection of workers from risks related to exposure to biological agents at work

Dear Ambassador,

With the outbreak of the new coronavirus disease (COVID-19), caused by SARS-CoV-2 virus, the European Commission is preparing a technical update of Annex III to Directive 2000/54/EC on the protection of workers from risks related to exposure to biological agents at work (seventh individual directive within the meaning of Article 16(1) of Directive 89/391/EEC).

In accordance with article 19 of Directive 2000/54/EC, and as established in Article 17 of Directive 89/391/EEC on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work, the Commission shall be assisted by a committee ("Technical Progress Committee") to make purely technical adjustments to the Annexes of Directive 2000/54/EC. These non-essentials measures might be adopted on imperative grounds of urgency under the urgency procedure pursuant to Article 5a of Decision 1999/468 laying down the procedures for the exercise of implementing powers conferred on the Commission (as amended).

Firstly, the Commission services would like to organize a **virtual expert group meeting** with Member State scientific experts to discuss a further technical update of Directive 2000/54/EC – i.e. a new entry in Annex III of SARS-CoV-2 with its respective classification and characteristics. The meeting would take place on **27 April 2020 via videoconference / webinar**. Therefore, I would kindly request the national authorities to confirm the nominations of scientific experts (as enclosed to this letter) previously appointed to support work on the last technical update which lead to the adoption of Commission Directive (EU) 2019/1833 of 24 October 2019 amending Annexes I, III, V and VI to Directive 2000/54/EC, or, if needed, to appoint a different expert.

Secondly, with a view of convening the **Technical Progress Committee**, I would kindly request the national authorities to confirm their respective nominations to the Technical Progress Committee where the draft Commission Directive amending Annex III to Directive 2000/54/EC will be discussed and submitted to vote, or, if needed, to appoint a different delegate. The delegate shall have a specific mandate to present the position of

the Member State and to participate in the process of voting. **The meeting would take place on 11 May 2020 via videoconference/webinar.** Please note that for your convenience a list of nominations for the previous meeting of Technical Progress Committee held on 11 June 2019 is enclosed to this letter.

Please note that representatives of third parties (for example EFTA States) shall not be present at and shall not participate in voting of the Technical Progress Committee.

Please note that **both virtual meetings will be held in English** (without interpretation).

The final date and final background documents/draft measures will be sent directly to the nominated expert/delegate.

We kindly request you to send the confirmation at your earliest convenience and not later than **22 April 2020 at noon** to our Secretariat (5.1.2e@ec.europa.eu), with a copy to 5.1.2e@ec.europa.eu.

Yours sincerely,

5.1.2e

Enclosures: List of nominations – scientific experts
 List of nominations – TPC
 Draft agenda
 Background document for the expert group meeting