

MINUTES – 09/06/2026 – 155/26

54th Health & Safety Committee

DATE:

23 April 2026

LOCATION

Brussels

The **Chair, Geert De Prez** (BE) welcomes the participants ([enclosure 1](#)) and especially the newcomers in the H&S Working Group: Katja Schager, from WKÖ, Katelijne Cielen from Agoria, and Ville Kähkönen from Finnish Technology Industry. The Chair gives an overview of the agenda ([enclosure 2](#)) and gives the floor to **Hilde Thys**. Under AOB, the Secretariat will show the Members Area of the Ceemet website that is currently under construction. Also, from now on the Minutes of Committee meetings will be shorter and contain general reflections of discussions with a central position for action points.

The Members will find attached the slides presented at the meeting ([enclosure 3](#)) as well as the action points of the meeting ([enclosure 4](#)).

1 – Approval of the minutes of the 53rd H&S Committee meeting

The minutes of the 46th General Assembly were sent to the members with circular 265/25. They were approved at the meeting for the record.

The minutes of the 46th General Assembly were sent to the members with circular 265/25. They were approved at the meeting for the record

One Member had a comment later, which will be recorded in the minutes of the current 54th meeting.

- Gesamtmetall wants to clarify in the minutes, with regard to the 53rd H&S Committee meeting under point 6 European Commission revision of EU OSH Directives, after the intervention of Franck Gambelli: “This view/wording reflects the opinion expressed by Franck during the committee meeting, it does not correspond to the view of Gesamtmetall. For Gesamtmetall, the Baseline Scenario would be acceptable, not Options 2a and 2b”.
- Members shared the view that the workplace definition cannot include remote working, such as working from private home and working at the premises of another company.

The Members agreed to the clarifications of Gesamtmetall of the Minutes of the 53rd H&S Committee meeting of 30 October 2025.

2 – Action points of the 53rd H&S Committee meeting

Enclosure 4 contains the list of Actions from the previous meeting. There are three open points from last meeting:

- Possible speaker Dr. Wieske could not attend this meeting.
- Liaise with Isaline Ossieur of BusinessEurope regarding OSH / H&S: the Secretariat will attend the next H&S working group of BusinessEurope on 30 April 2026.
- We will start the meeting with open action point 2 on the lobbying process in Brussels. The Secretariat gives a presentation to explain the legislative process at EU level, the players, the importance to respect deadlines and the various phases where stakeholders can play a role. The presentation is included in the slides. (Cfr. Enclosure 3).

3 – Chemicals at the workplace

a. CMRD 6: state of play

Members receive an update of the steps and activities (see slides), followed by a discussion on the strategy for the next steps in the European Parliament.

The following elements were brought forward in the discussion on the strategy:

- The OEL for cobalt is problematic, as it risks forcing companies and subsectors out of Europe to countries with lower protection for workers. Also, the geopolitical situation has changed dramatically (Middle East). No OEL in the draft report but amendments have included an OEL. In the recitals: to help prevent long-term effects on health of workers, to support attractiveness, competitiveness, and thus long-term sustainability of the cobalt industry in the EU, but also that relocation to third countries with less stringent H&S regulations must be avoided at all times.
The three institutions Commission, EP and Council now all have the same OEL for cobalt.
- In Norway employers and trade unions have jointly signed a statement on cobalt.
- For PAHs: good point is that the transitional period is extended but only for certain sectors.
- The vague definition of welding fumes is problematic: an OEL is set for a single substance, whereas welding fumes are a mixture originating from the different materials that are welded together.

→ **Action:** The Members are invited to send an email to the Secretariat (Viktorya) with a list of products and subsectors that are at risk with the new OEL for Cobalt. The Secretariat will prepare an email, based on the input from Members.

Plan A: The mail will be sent to the EP Plenary, aiming to reach 71 MEPs who together can ask for a debate in Plenary and to vote against the decision to enter inter-institutional negotiations.

Plan B is to contact the Council, as the General Approach on CMRD6 dates from December 2025 and the geopolitical situation has changed.

b. Discussion on the use and utility of sentinel markers versus non-binding limit/binding limits

The Chair introduces the topic, explaining how a sentinel marker is used in new legislation in Belgium on lead. In the discussion, the following issues were brought by Members:

- A sentinel value of 0,5 microgram/dl blood: if the threshold is exceeded, the employer must take action to lower it.
- A limit value (LV) must not be exceeded. If a worker is exposed to a higher value than the binding LV, this worker must be removed from the workplace.
- France has “biological” LV, with biological guidance LV as a benchmark.
- In the Chemical Agents Directive 98/2024, “indicative values” are used. However, there is no study on indicative values in the Impact Assessment, only on limit values. Not sure if this could be used for CMRD as well, combined with biological monitoring.

→ **Action:** Further reflection is required on the possibility to ask the Commission to use more sentinel markers / action values, instead of (binding) limit values. This could be further discussed in the next H&S Committee meeting.

c. CMRD 7: initial reactions

The external study is planned to cover the following 7 substances, 7 groups of substances or process-generated substances (cfr. Slides). The most important substances for our sectors are Respirable Crystalline Silica; and Chromium VI compounds.

- Members discuss the current LV in their country for Chromium VI and Silica, and the measurement of 8 hours.
- CMRD7 will be a topic for the next years.

→ **Action:** Members are invited to prepare and check which substances of CMRD7 will have an impact for their companies.

4 – European Commission Revision of EU OSH Directives

- a. Display Screen Equipment (90/270) & remote work
- b. Workplace (89/654)

Members receive an update of the state of play regarding the upcoming revision of the two Directives mentioned hereunder. This will be one of the topics of the Quality Jobs Act (QJA), which the Commission is expected to launch in December 2026. The Secretariat replied to the first phase social partner consultation on the QJA in January 2026, based on the input from Members. The second phase social partner consultation is expected in the coming weeks.

In the discussion the following points were made:

- Regarding the definition of “workplace”, the problems in include telework from home as well as off-site work at the premises of another company are reiterated.
- The hierarchy of obligations would be changed, if the proprietor of the premises would be on the same level as contractors.
- General legal principles are important: the principle that nobody can do the impossible and the principle of reciprocity. If the employer would become responsible for the private home of an employee, then if follows the employer must be allowed the enter the premises of an employee’s private home to do a risk assessment. However, the European Court of Justice has rules that the right to privacy is more important. Therefore, it logically follows that the employer cannot be held responsible for the workplace in a private home.
- There also remain problems with vague references to “occasionally”, “sometimes”, “regularly” teleworking.

- **Action:** the Secretariat will inform Members when the second stage social partner consultation is launched and will prepare a draft response. Members will be invited to send their comments on the draft response.

5 - Workplace Mental Health

The topic of mental health (MH) and psychosocial risk (PSR) at work is gaining momentum. The tripartite Advisory Committee on Safety and Health (ACSH) has set up a Working Party “Mental health and psychosocial risks at work”, which is due to come with an opinion in June 2026. In the European Parliament, MEP Ceulemans published an own initiative legislative report on 20/03/2026 on PSR, stress and MH at work. The Secretariat prepared amendments to the draft Ceulemans report, sent to the Members on 9/04/2026. The state of play is presented in the slides (see *Enclosure 3*). This topic might also be taken on board in the QJA.

The comments from Members received prior to the meeting are presented, followed by a discussion:

- Additional argument regarding the shift of the burden of proof on the employer: this would require access to personal data on the employee (previous occupations, life events, medical records) to which the employer has no access to. See also previous point that the EcJ has ruled that the right to privacy is a higher priority. In addition, under European law, the reversal of the burden of proof in criminal matters is not prohibited in itself (criminal is the framework for the national transposition of a directive on PSR), provided that it remains reasonable, proportionate and rebuttable, and that it does not render the presumption of innocence meaningless. The core principle is the presumption of innocence.
 - There is already an obligation for employers to consult on external expertise if needed in Art. 7, point (3) of the framework directive: “If such protective and preventive measures cannot be organized for lack of competent personnel in the undertaking and/ or establishment, the employer shall enlist competent external services or persons.”
 - Also, all OSH-directives are built on obligations for the employer, not on rights for the employees to decide how the employer must run the company. Therefore, there cannot be a “right to expertise”, suggesting that workers’ representatives could invite an expert to guide to advise them on PSR.
 - Emphasise that the work of ACSH is very much needed before any legislative measures are considered. Psychosocial risks are different from other OSH risk, as there is no direct link between exposure (demand) and risk of adverse effects. Risk is instead determined by the balance of demand / control, and is different for each individual, which fundamentally set PSR at the workplace apart.
 - Adding the right for compensation for occupational disorders must be avoided, as this is a bottomless pit.
- **Action:** The Secretariat will adapt the amendments accordingly and continue to discuss them with the rapporteur and Shadow rapporteurs in the EMPL Committee.

6 - Climate change & OSH

Members receive an update of developments at EU level. The Secretariat shows the new Member Area of the Ceemet website, where the Opinions of the ACSH can be found, including on climate change (heat).

- **Action:** Members are invited to check their access on the Ceemet website Members Area. A new access can be asked by sending an email to noura.younes@ceemet.org

7-National roundtable

- a. AI in H&S issues
- b. Other H&S news

Members were invited to send a slide prior to the meeting. Members presented the information from their country.

Belgium is asking attention for “goldplating”. We advocate for the directives to be transposed in the Member States as intended. Otherwise, we see employees’ representatives cherry-picking. Moreover, this ensures a level playing field for all businesses in Europe.

France: the concept of safety function of the Machinery Regulation is taken over in AI Act.

In Norway, both social partners signed a joint letter regarding CMRD. Ceemet has co-signed the document, that you will find as **enclosure 5**.

In the UK, there is currently a drive to reduce reporting requirements, especially for SMEs.

8 -Miscellaneous

- a. AOB

NEPSI: the Secretariat received news that the European Foundry Association CAEF does not want to report to NEPSI. Members are invited to check within their country that foundry companies are still reporting to NEPSI, taking into account that silica is a substance foreseen in CMRD7 (lowering the limit value from 0,1 mg/m³ probably towards 0,05 mg/m³).

- b. Members Area of Ceemet website: refer to agenda item 6, where the Opinions of ACSH were shown on the Members Area.

- c. New Chair

As this is the last meeting for our current Chair, Geert De Prez, a new Chair should be elected. The Secretariat had already announced in the previous meetings, also at the informal dinner before, that Geert will go into retirement. The previous Chair was from France, a new chair from one of the Nordic countries would be in the interest of balance. We are very glad that Kresimir Iveskic, of the Technology industries of Sweden, has shown interest to become the new chair of the Ceemet H&S Committee.

The H&S Committee voted unanimously the candidature of Kresimir, in accordance with the Terms of Reference.

The floor is then given to Geert, who had prepared a speech.

The Secretariat on its side, thanks Geert for his dedication and expertise as a valuable member for more than 25 years in the Ceemet H&S Committee, and for taking up the role as Chair of this Committee in the last years.

- d. Date and place of next meeting

Together with the newly elected Chair, Kresimir Iveskic, the members agree to the date for the next H&S Committee meeting, on **Tuesday 27 October 2026** from 9h00 to 15h30 in Brussels.

The meeting will be preceded by a dinner on the evening of Monday 26 October 2026.

Enclosures:

1. Participants list
2. Agenda
3. Slides of 54th H&S Committee meeting (attached separately)
4. Action points of 54th H&S Committee (attached separately)
5. Norway: common position on CMRD6 social partners, co-signed by Ceemet (attached separately)

ENCLOSURE 1 – 09/06/2025 – 155/26

54th Health & Safety Committee Meeting

Brussels, 23rd April 2026

Square de Meeûs - De
Meeûssquare 38/40

1000 Brussels, Belgium

T +32 (0)2 786 30 45

 www.ceemet.org

 @ceemet

EU Transparency Register

61370904700-45

Participation list

Name	Organisation	Country	Attendance	Dinner
Katja Schager	WKÖ	Austria	In person	YES
Geert De Prez	Agoria	Belgium	In person	YES
Katelijne Cielen	Agoria	Belgium	In person	YES
Jens Skovgaard Lauritsen	DI	Denmark	online	NO
Ville Kähkönen	Technology Industries of Finland	Finland	In person	YES
Franck Gambelli	UIMM	France	In person	NO
Robert Thurm	Gesamtmetall	Germany	In person	YES
Holger Rademacher	Gesamtmetall	Germany	Online	NO
Lorenzo Dell'Acqua	Assolombarda	Italy	Online	NO
Berit Sørset	Federation of Norwegian Industries	Norway	In person	YES
Kresimir Iveskic	Technology industries of Sweden	Sweden	In person	YES
Rose Sargent	Make UK	UK	In person	YES
Hilde Thys	Ceemet	Belgium	In person	YES
Viktorya Muradyan	Ceemet	Belgium	In Person	YES

54th Health & Safety

Committee

Final Agenda

Square de Meeûs - De
Meeûssquare 38/40

1000 Brussels, Belgium

T +32 (0)2 786 30 45

 www.ceemet.org

 [@ceemet](https://twitter.com/ceemet)

EU Transparency Register

61370904700-45

- 1. Approval of the minutes of the 53rd H&S Committee meeting**
- 2. Action points of the 53rd H&S Committee meeting**
- 3. Chemicals at the workplace**
 - a. CMRD 6: state of play
 - b. Discussion on the use and utility of sentinel markers versus non-binding limit/binding limit
 - c. CMRD 7: initial reactions
- 4. European Commission Revision of EU OSH Directives**
 - a. Display Screen Equipment (90/270) & remote work
 - b. Workplace (89/654)
- 5. Workplace Mental Health**
- 6. Climate change & OSH**
- 7. National roundtable**
 - a. AI in H&S issues
 - b. Other H&S news
- 8. Miscellaneous**
 - a. AOB
 - b. New Chair
 - c. Date and place of next meeting