

**PPR**

**EUROPEAN WORKS COUNCIL**

**CHARTER**  
**FRAMEWORK OF COMMITMENTS**  
**ON QUALITY OF LIFE AT WORKS &**  
**PREVENTION OF WORK-RELATED STRESS**  
**FOR EMPLOYEES WITHIN PPR GROUP**  
**IN EUROPE**

**27 July 2010**

**For PPR EWC Select Committee:**

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## **PREAMBLE**

### **The purpose of this Charter is as follows:**

- Define a framework of commitments on the quality of life at work and the prevention of work-related stress for the benefit of workers employed by PPR Group companies in Europe.
- Reassert and enforce one of the principles set forth in the PPR Code of Business Practices in favour of employees of PPR Group companies, for purposes of reference herein (see Annex 1 hereto).
- Officialise, share and complement as needed the current practices and policies in PPR Group companies, in full compliance with national and European laws related to occupational safety & health.

### **The principles set forth in this Charter require that PPR Group companies:**

- Establish any mechanisms and resources appropriate to their business activities and proportionate to their respective issues, in order to apply said principles for the benefit of all employees of PPR Group companies.
- Take into consideration their personnel's diversity throughout the implementation of the measures adopted by PPR companies in application of this Charter: gender, age, ethnic and racial origin, levels of qualification and hierarchy, type of employment contracts.

## **Article 1: Psycho-social risks**

Under the terms of this document, PPR Group's representative labour organisations agree that psycho-social risks cover occupational risks of various origins or natures that jeopardize the physical integrity and mental health of the employees and consequently may have an impact on the proper functioning of the companies.

To date, these risks are governed by European framework agreements, namely:

- The European framework agreement on work-related stress, dated 8 October 2004
- The European framework agreement on violence and harassment at work, dated 27 April 2007

The definition of work-related stress, as agreed jointly by the European Works Council and PPR Group Management, shall refer among other to the definition adopted by the European Agency for Safety & Health at Work<sup>1</sup> :

*“Work-related stress is experienced when an imbalance occurs between the worker’s perception of the demands of the work environment and the worker’s perception of his/her ability to cope with (or control) them. Although this process of evaluation of the demands and resources is psychological in nature, the effects of stress are not solely psychological, and can also affect the physiological health, well-being and productivity of the worker experiencing it”.*

In addition, a state of stress develops when an imbalance occurs between the organisational, psychological and/or physical demands to which a worker may be exposed in the course of his/her duties, and the resources at his/her disposal to cope with them.

## **Article 2: Three fundamental principles**

### **2.1. Identifying and assessing factors of work-related stress**

Proper identification, analysis and assessment of the causative factors of work-related stress should enable each PPR Group company to considerably reduce the sources of such stress.

All companies, assisted by occupational health professionals, must identify and assess all factors of work-related stress specific to their respective businesses and organisations, by sharing the steps of this process with the employee representatives. Said identification shall be consistent with the proposed indicators defined in the European Framework Agreement on Work-Related Stress dated 8 October 2004, namely:

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<sup>1</sup> The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (OSHA) is a European Union agency set up in 1996 further to a decision of the Council of Heads of States and Governments, intended primarily to collect and disseminate technical, scientific and economic data available on issues of occupational health and safety. The data are collected and disseminated at the request of the European Union, the EU Member States or labour organisations.

1) Work organisation and processes

Including among others, but not limited to:

- content of work tasks
- work load and pace
- working time arrangements
- degree of autonomy
- match between workers' skills and job requirements
- corporate culture

2) Working conditions and environment

Including among others, but not limited to:

- working environment and tools
- industrial and social relations at the workplace
- role of employees in work organisation
- career advancement

3) Communication

Including among others, but not limited to:

- uncertainty about what is expected at work
- employment prospects
- forthcoming changes

4) Subjective factors

Including among others, but not limited to:

- emotional and social pressures
- feeling unable to cope with a situation
- perceived lack of support, recognition or justice, at individual and collective levels alike

## **2.2. Establishing preventive measures**

PPR Group companies should mobilise all necessary means and measures conducive to improving the quality of life at work and reducing factors of work-related stress affecting employees.

The preventive measures to be adopted shall follow the following order of priority:

- 1) Prevent hazards
- 2) Fight risks at source
- 3) Adopt appropriate collective protection measures

Such preventive means and measures shall include, among others, the following:

- ❖ Implementation of instruments and procedures of vigilance and alerts, including the following:
  - All existing instruments and/or procedures, whether legally mandatory or company-specific, in compliance with the laws applicable in the country, designed to list and qualify occupational risks, whether physical or mental, linked to occupational health.
  - Also, any and all existing company procedures on prevention, monitoring or alert, whether collective or individual.
- ❖ Measures to enhance the personnel's awareness on the prevention of psychosocial risks, including among other:
  - Information to employees about factors of work-related stress and their prevention.
  - Training of managers to raise awareness on the prevention of work-related stress.
- ❖ Initiatives contributing to reconcile personal life and professional life, including among other:
  - Measures and actions fostering a better life/work balance in full respect for the employees' diversity; in particular, any measures enabling employed parents with dependent children or other dependents, to reconcile family life and work life.
  - Any and all measures and actions conducive to limiting the growing confusion between the times dedicated respectively to personal and professional life.
- ❖ Actions fostering a recognition of employees via career promotion

PPR Group companies shall endeavour to ensure that all existing instruments and procedures on career promotion, mobility and guidance are effectively put in practice for the benefits of employees. This is a prerequisite for any real and permanent recognition and reward of the role played by each employee and each team within the organisation; furthermore it also constitutes a source of collective and individual professional motivation and of personal self-fulfilment.

## **2.3. Informing and listening to employees**

### **a) Information to employees about economic and commercial issues**

Constant changes occurring in the markets and the economic activity have an ongoing impact on the working environment of workers and teams, and therefore require an adaptation of organisations and working conditions. Employees should therefore be provided with the necessary insights to properly understand their respective roles within the organisation, the related challenges, and hence the changes taking place in their working environment.

Accordingly, PPR Group companies shall endeavour to deliver to their employees and teams a modern communication, matching their expectations, suitable to a proper understanding of corporate issues, and conducive to helping them contribute to the collective project.

#### **b) Listening to employees' perception of their working environment and conditions**

PPR Group companies shall remain attentive and listen closely to their employees, teams, and personnel representation bodies about their perception of working environment and conditions.

They shall ensure that the necessary ways and means are made available to collect employee's opinions on such issues, along with the relevant tools providing for high quality communication.

Among other existing tools, the PPR employee opinion poll entitled "*What's the weather like where you are ?*", conducted since 2001, provides employees of PPR companies with the opportunity to express themselves anonymously. Several questions in this survey match the potential stress indicators defined in the 2004 European Framework Agreement and listed under Principle 1 of this Article (see Annex 2).

### **Article 3: Consideration for economic cost and impact of work-related stress**

National and European studies reveal that work-related stress has a direct impact on the mental and physical health of workers, and generates substantial social and financial costs. Accordingly, the European labour organisations wish to refer PPR Group Companies to the quantified data available regarding the cost of work-related stress in Europe.

Thus, according to the International Labor Office (ILO), "*Losses in quality, high absenteeism and staff turnover resulting from stress account for 3% to 4% of GDP in industrialised countries*". A 2007 survey revealed that in Europe 40 million persons suffer from stress.

PPR Group companies must therefore take into account and incorporate into all their analyses and initiatives the economic and social cost of work-related stress, in particular when implementing any new project.

### **Article 4: Scope of application**

The provisions of this Charter on Quality of Life at Work and Prevention of Work-Related Stress within the PPR Group shall be applicable to all PPR companies operating in the Member countries (including those not represented on the European Works Council due to insufficient staff quotas below the minimum threshold, for which the European Works Council shall be the referral) and Observer countries included in the scope of the PPR European Works Council.

## **Article 5: Presentation and dissemination of this Charter**

Each PPR Group company hereby commits to present this Charter to all relevant management boards as well as to all personnel representation bodies, and to disseminate it thereafter to all employees within PPR Group at the latest by end November 2010. This Charter shall be translated into all languages of the relevant countries.

The findings from the EOS 2009 survey, per company, per country and at European scales, shall be presented to the European Works Council. On this occasion, the European Works Council and the PPR Group Management shall in particular focus on the EOS survey results as related to issues of psychosocial risks (Annex 2).

## **Article 6: Annual review of the Charter**

In follow-up to the appropriate analyses carried out at least every two years, an annual progress report on the implementation and success of this Charter shall be presented to the EWC addressing each of the three fundamental principles (and the relevant measures implemented). A first progress report shall be presented to the EWC in June 2011.

This annual review per country and per company may be combined with the progress reports on the PPR Charters on Seniors and on Disabled Workers.

## ANNEX 1 – Principles of business conduct and practices

### (Extracts from the PPR Code of Business Practices)

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The PPR Code of Business Practices, published and disseminated in all PPR companies, constitutes the cornerstone of the Group's Corporate Social & Environmental Responsibility. Its preamble states the following principle:

*"We are aware of our duties and responsibilities towards ourselves, our colleagues and our employees.*

*We have the duty to act with integrity and loyalty. We believe in dealing respectfully and fairly with colleagues and employees and in doing our utmost to create a motivating work environment fostering the development of employee potential. Our human resources policy aims to contribute to the professionalism, motivation and fulfilment of each of our employees, by providing opportunities for training, mobility and internal career promotion and by developing their employability.*

*We ensure that working conditions comply with Human Rights standards and labour legislation as well as with laws and regulations governing occupational environment, health and safety matters.*

*We do not tolerate discrimination, intimidation or harassment at the workplace.*

*We promote diversity and foster equal opportunity and equal treatment.*

*We fight against child labour and forced labour.*

*We encourage the freedom of speech of the Group's employees.*

*We encourage dialogue and respect freedom of association within the legislative framework applicable in the different countries where we operate."*

Concurrently with the dissemination of the Code within PPR Group back in 2005, a corporate Committee of Ethics and Social & Environmental Responsibility (CESER) was created. The CESER fulfils three mandates:

- Monitor the appropriate dissemination and enforcement of the Code of Business Practices.
- Respond to any enquiry from Group employees about the Code: from simple questions up to complaints reported about a presumed non-compliance with one of the Code's principles.
- Formulate recommendations in order to enhance the Group's CSR policy and actions.

Any PPR Group employee witnessing a case of non-compliance with any one of the ethical principles advocated in this Code of Business Conduct may therefore contact the CESER if deemed justified.



**ANNEX 2 – Questions included in the PPR employee opinion poll matching the four potential stress indicators identified in the European Framework Agreement on Work-Related Stress dated 8 October 2004**

<b>Potential factors of stress identified under the European Framework Agreement on Work-Related Stress</b>	<b>Questions from the PPR employee opinion poll “What’s the weather like where you are?”</b>
<b>1) Organisation and work processes</b> (working time arrangements, degree of autonomy, match between workers’ skills and job requirements, workload, etc.)	<b>Question 1:</b> I have a very clear idea of my job responsibilities
	<b>Question 2.</b> In general, the information I need to carry out my job is easily accessible
	<b>Question 3.</b> In my department, the work is well organised
	<b>Question 4:</b> My department operates efficiently
	<b>Question 16:</b> I have enough opportunities for training to enhance my career development
	<b>Question 18:</b> I have enough opportunities for training to improve my skills in my current job
	<b>Question 24:</b> I have enough autonomy in my job to deliver a good service to customers
	<b>Question 26:</b> I have the right IT tools necessary to work efficiently
	<b>Question 41:</b> My company sacrifices too often the quality of service in order to reduce costs
	<b>Question 43f:</b> My direct line manager develops the skills of his/her staff members
	<b>Question 66a:</b> How satisfied are you about the following aspects of your current job: possibility to take over responsibilities
<b>Question 66c:</b> How satisfied are you about the following aspects of your current job: your work load	
<b>2) Working conditions and environment</b> (exposure to abusive behaviour, noise, heat, hazardous substances, etc.)	<b>Question 13:</b> In general, my working conditions are satisfactory (ventilation, temperature, work space, etc.).
	<b>Question 20:</b> In my work space, you can work in full safety
	<b>Question 40:</b> In my job, I often feel uncomfortable/disturbed by excessive pressure
	<b>Question 49:</b> Our IT systems provide the information that I need to work
	<b>Question 66b:</b> How satisfied are you about the following aspects of your current job: work atmosphere
<b>3) Communication</b> (uncertainty about what is expected at work, employment prospects, forthcoming change, etc.)	<b>Question 35:</b> My direct line manager regularly shares his/her opinion with me about my performance
	<b>Question 43c:</b> My direct line manager is available whenever he/she is needed
	<b>Question 45:</b> In my company, it is possible most of the time to say what we think without any fear
<b>4) Subjective factors</b> (emotional and social pressures, feeling unable to cope, perceived lack of support, etc.)	<b>Question 6:</b> Where I work, people are treated with respect, whatever their job
	<b>Question 7:</b> My job gives me a feeling a self-fulfilment
	<b>Question 8:</b> My company has established a working climate where you can challenge the usual way of doing things
	<b>Question 43d:</b> My direct line manager encourages individual and collective implication