



AGENCIA
ESTATAL DE
INVESTIGACIÓN

State Research
Agency Annual
Action Plan 2017



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1 PRESENTATION

Royal Decree 1067/2015, of 27 November, created the State Research Agency (hereinafter the Agency) and approved its Statute. Its effective constitution took place on 20 June 2016, with the constitutive meeting of its Governing Council.

The Agency was created with the mission of contributing to the promotion of scientific and technical research in all areas of knowledge through the competitive and efficient allocation of public resources, the monitoring of funded actions and their impact, and advice on the planning of actions or initiatives through which the R&D policies of the General State Administration are implemented.

The effective constitution of the Agency on 20 June 2016 initiated a transitional period of operation in terms of its funding, which was to last until it had its own budget approved by a regulation with the status of law. This period, in which the Agency was still to be financed from the appropriations of the State Secretariat for Research, Development and Innovation, the former General Secretariat for Science, Technology and Innovation, the Directorate General for Scientific and Technical Research and the Directorate General for Innovation and Competitiveness, as well as from the appropriations of the National Institute for Agricultural and Food Research and Technology, was expected to end on 31 December 2016, with the approval of the general State budgets for 2017.

In turn, for a period of six months from its constitution (until 20 December 2016), the general and common services of the Ministry of Economy, Industry and Competitiveness would continue to exercise, in relation to the State Research Agency, the competences they had attributed with respect to the bodies and units that are being abolished.

The Royal Decree creating the Agency provided that until the Management Contract is approved by joint ministerial order of the Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness and the Ministry of Finance and Public Administrations, the Agency's actions will be carried out in accordance with the criteria and guidelines established in the Initial Action Plan that is incorporated into the Report referred to in article 3 of Law 28/2006, of 18 July, as well as the actions to be carried out derived from the approval of the scientific and technical research and innovation plans as established by Law 14/2011, of 1 June, and their corresponding annual action programmes.

In accordance with the plan provided for in the 5th transitory provision of Royal Decree 1067/2015, of 27 November, the Agency had to submit its Management Contract to the Governing Council within three months of its incorporation, so that it could be submitted for subsequent approval by a joint ministerial order of the Ministry of Finance and Public Administrations and the Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness. In turn, in accordance with article 23 of the Statute and in execution of the Management Contract, the Annual Action Plan for 2017 had to be submitted for approval by the Governing Council before 1 February 2017.

However, the prolongation beyond the ordinary period during which the Government remained in office during 2016, together with the extension of the General State Budget Law for 2016, has meant that the Agency has started 2017 without its own budget and that the approval of the Management Contract has been delayed. Likewise, it has been necessary to amend the 3rd transitory provision of Royal Decree 1067/2015, of 27 November, so that the common services of the Ministry of Economy, Industry and Competitiveness may continue to be provided to the Agency until it has its own budget.

The approval of the Management Contract must therefore be faced in 2017, provided that the

Agency has a budget approved by a regulation with the status of law. However, the approval of the Management Contract will also be conditioned to the rules that, where appropriate, may be established by the Ministry of Finance and Public Function as a result of the change in the legal regime of public bodies brought about by the entry into force of Law 40/2015, of 1 October, on the Legal Regime of the Public Sector. This law abolishes the State Agencies, which have a period of three years to modify their statutes and become autonomous bodies.

Consequently, without prejudice to the outcome of the approval of the Agency's Management Contract, it is appropriate to approve the Annual Action Plan for 2017, which covers the new actions to be carried out this year and provides continuity to the activities of the Initial Action Plan.

The Annual Action Plan is the Agency's planning instrument that sets out, on the basis of the resources available, the activities to be carried out in the corresponding year in order to achieve its objectives. Its regulation is developed in article 15 of Law 28/2006, of 18 July, on State Agencies for the improvement of public services and in article 23 of the Statute, according to which:

"The annual action plan shall include, inter alia, the following activities:

- a) Those of a training and methodological nature and those for determining management indicators for the Agency's activities.
- b) Those of management, monitoring and control of the actions that correspond to the Agency in matters of scientific, technical and innovation research, in accordance with its purpose and functions.
- c) The organisation and management of the scientific-technical evaluation of proposals requiring funding under the programmes and instruments assigned to the Agency or resulting from collaboration agreements and conventions".

The Annual Action Plan is structured in this document around 6 main lines of action describing the activities through which the Agency's functions will be carried out and its objectives achieved, as well as the indicators that will enable the degree of compliance to be quantified.

This Annual Action Plan for 2017 has been approved by the Agency's Governing Board, as provided for in Article 23 of the Agency's Statute, at its meeting on 30 January 2017.

2 CONTEXT

2.1 OBJECTIVE AND AIMS

According to Article 2.1 of the Statute, "the Agency's own purpose is the financing, evaluation, management and monitoring of scientific and technical research activity aimed at the generation, exchange and exploitation of knowledge promoted by the General State Administration on its own initiative or in concurrence with other Spanish Administrations or entities or those of other countries or international organisations".

For its part, Article 2.2 establishes that "the Agency's aims are the promotion of scientific and technical research in all areas of knowledge through the efficient allocation of public resources, the promotion of excellence, the fostering of collaboration between the agents of the System and support for the generation of knowledge of high scientific and technical, economic and social impact, including those aimed at resolving society's major challenges, and the monitoring of the activities financed as well as the necessary advice to improve the design and planning of the actions or initiatives through which the R&D policies of the General State Administration are implemented".

2.2 FUNCTIONS

Article 5 of the Agency's Statute states that "for the fulfilment of its objects and purposes, the Agency shall perform the following functions:

- a) The management of the programmes, instruments and actions awarded to it within the framework of the State Scientific and Technical Research and Innovation Plans, any others expressly assigned to it by the General State Administration or those deriving from collaboration agreements entered into with other entities or from other actions, through the objective and impartial allocation of the available resources.
- b) The organisation and management of the ex-ante and ex-post scientific and technical evaluation of proposals, actions or initiatives, when appropriate, using evaluation criteria based on internationally recognised scientific and technical merits, as well as those criteria established in the corresponding calls for proposals.
- c) The verification, monitoring and ex-post evaluation of the activities financed by the Agency and their scientific, technical and socio-economic impact, as well as the control of the justification of the fulfilment of the conditions and objectives of the grants received.
- d) The communication and dissemination of the results of the evaluations carried out.
- e) Monitoring the management, financing, justification and results of all actions directly executed by the Agency, as well as advising on them.
- f) Participation in national and international meetings and forums related to matters within its object and purposes, and representation in R&D&I policy forums when so determined by the Ministry of Economy, Industry and Competitiveness. The actions of the

Agency in international fora will take place in coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation when deemed necessary.

g) Dissemination and communication of the results of its activities and of the results of the research funded by the Agency.

h) The management of actions aimed at fostering collaboration, exchange, circulation, dissemination and exploitation of scientific and technical knowledge among the agents of the System.

i) The performance of activities or the provision of services entrusted to it by the General State Administration or, by virtue of contracts, agreements and, in general, legal business, by other entities.

j) The management of R&D actions financed with European funds and those resulting from Spanish participation in international programmes.

k) Economic and budgetary management and economic-financial control of the instruments and actions for which it is responsible.

l) Any other function entrusted to it.

2.3 BASIC PRINCIPLES OF ACTION

The Agency shall observe the principles of general interest by which the actions of public administrations must be governed. In the exercise of its specific functions, it shall also be governed by the following basic principles in accordance with Article 6 of its Statute:

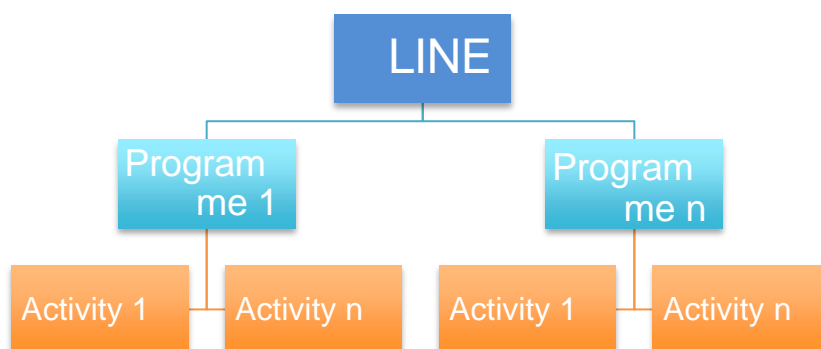
1. Autonomy, understood as the Agency's capacity to manage the means placed at its disposal to achieve the committed objectives.
2. Technical independence, based on the training, specialisation, professionalism and individual responsibility of the Agency's staff, who shall observe the applicable values of competence, professional ethics and public accountability.
3. Objectivity in the evaluation of scientific, technical and innovative merit in all its actions, which will be carried out using previously established criteria, known to all and based on international and commonly accepted standards.
4. Transparency in all administrative activities and compliance with good governance obligations by the Agency's public officials, as well as accountability and commitments to present accurate and complete information on all results and procedures used in management.
5. Effectiveness in its actions, using all means to achieve the object and purpose defined in its Statute.
6. Efficiency in the allocation and use of public resources and continuous evaluation of the quality of management processes and performance procedures, which are

shall be carried out in accordance with the criteria of legality, speed, simplification and e-accessibility and without prejudice to the necessary rigour.

7. Inter-institutional cooperation, understood as the principle that seeks synergies in collaboration with other public or private, national and international administrations, agents and institutions for the promotion of knowledge in all its fields.
8. Gender equality, promoting the gender perspective and a balanced composition of women and men in its bodies, councils and committees and activities in accordance with the provisions of Organic Law 3/2007, of 22 March, for the effective equality of women and men, and the thirteenth additional provision of Law 14/2011, of 1 June.

3 THE SIX LINES OF ACTION

The Agency's programming has been divided into six main lines of action, each of which has defined a number of main activities, mostly grouped into programmes. Each of the activities is composed of different phases and tasks, according to the following scheme.



An indicator has been associated with each defined activity and, whenever possible, an estimate of the actual workload has been established for each of these indicators, as well as a value, in percentage, for the target of effective fulfilment of the indicator over the actual workload defined.

A table with the following information has been included in each programme:

Activity	Workload estimation	Actual workload indicator	Objective
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The column *Workload estimate* indicates the actual workload for the defined activity. This value may include, depending on the activity in question, both the workload arising from the powers and functions subrogated from the former Directorate General for Scientific and Technical Research and Directorate General for Innovation and Competitiveness of the Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness (first additional provision of Royal Decree 1067/2015, of 27 November), and those corresponding to the Agency's own powers and functions from the time of its entry into operation, or the sum of both.

All indicators are defined on a relative basis, i.e. referenced to the estimated actual workload.

The *Target* column indicates the degree of compliance in percentage that is expected to be achieved in 2017 for the indicator.

In some programmes the Target is not defined as a percentage of compliance with the actual workload of the activity, but in absolute terms. In these cases, the *workload estimation* parameter is omitted and the information given per programme is:

Activity	Indicator	Objective
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3.1 LINE1. CONSOLIDATION and structural development of the Agency.

Programme 1. Approval of the Management Contract.

The most relevant object of the Agency, from the point of view of its consolidation and structural development, is the drawing up and approval of its Management Contract.

The Management Contract shall have the content referred to in Article 21 of the Statute and shall be approved in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 20.

The approval of the Management Contract will be conditional upon the Agency having its own budget approved by a regulation with the status of law. The approval of the Management Contract will also be subject to the rules that, where appropriate, may be established by the Ministry of Finance and Public Function as a result of the change in the legal regime of public bodies brought about by the entry into force of Law 40/2015, of 1 October, on the Legal Regime of the Public Sector. This law abolishes the State Agencies, which have a period of three years to modify their statutes and become autonomous bodies.

Activity	Indicator	Objective
Drawing up and approval of the Contract of Agency Management	Elaboration of the Contract of Management	1

Programme 2. Adequacy of space and material means

Once the organisational and functional structure of the Agency and the staff and material resources corresponding to each division and subdivision have been established, it is necessary to carry out a study of the degree of adequacy of the distribution of available space and material resources.

This study will take the initial situation as a reference, analysing in detail the characteristics required by the new structure and the suitability of the material resources available, trying to achieve the most efficient redistribution possible.

This space and equipment plan shall contain at least: (a) a description of the spaces to be occupied by the Agency; (b) their distribution according to the divisions and subdivisions that make up its structure; and (c) the list of resources - archives, furniture, IT and communications equipment - available for the exercise of its functions.

Once this plan has been defined, adaptations of space and the physical relocation of people and equipment will be carried out where necessary, trying to ensure that the relocation is carried out in such a way as to interfere as little as possible with the Agency's work.

Activity	Indicator	Objective
Development of the plan for the adequacy of space and physical relocation of the Agency's staff and equipment.	Preparation of the plan	1
Adequacy of spaces	Implementation of the action	1
Physical relocation of personnel and equipment	Implementation of the action	1

Programme 3. Human Resources Management

Once the assignment of the personnel of the Secretary of State for Research, Development and Innovation to the Agency has been completed and the structure and distribution of personnel in the different units has been defined, this programme aims to advance in the design of the general framework for action in human resources which, in accordance with the provisions of article 3.7 of the Law on Agencies, focuses on the determination of the working conditions of the Agency's public employees, including aspects relating to the organisation, structure and framework for action in human resources, remuneration, etc., for this purpose, with the participation of the relevant staff representatives and trade union organisations.

The activities included in this programme are the following:

1. **Design and implementation of the general labour relations framework.** This includes the design of the procedures and bodies for labour relations, labour representation, committees and participation systems, as well as the identification and preparation of instructions for risk prevention systems and the identification of the matters that will be the subject of social action.
2. **Installation, adaptation and testing of the HR and payroll management system.** For at least three months, HR staff will develop tests for HR and payroll management, so that once the Agency becomes fully autonomous in these areas, i.e. when the Agency has its own budget, there will be no errors in the payment of payrolls and other HR management procedures.
3. **Elaboration of the Training Plan.** A Training Plan will be drawn up to improve the skills necessary for the correct functioning of the organisation and the efficient provision of services. The Plan shall be drawn up in coordination with the Ministry of Economy, Industry and Competitiveness and with the participation of the workers' representatives.
4. **Welcome Manual.** The Agency shall have a "Welcome Handbook" containing instructions and all relevant information for newly recruited staff or staff staying for a period of more than one year.

Activity	Indicator	Objective
Design and implementation of the framework general labour relations	Preparation of the document	1
Installation, adaptation and testing of the HR and payroll management system	Preparation of the document	1
Elaboration of the Training Plan	Preparation of the document	1
Elaboration of the Welcome Handbook	Preparation of the document	1

Programme 4. Adaptation of administrative, management and monitoring processes.

The Agency's top priority is to substantially improve the efficiency and transparency of the integrated management procedures used in the allocation of public funds for R&D activities, which requires addressing the simplification of procedures related to the implementation and monitoring of all its actions.

To this end, this programme includes the following main activity:

1. **Basic Procedures Manual.** This manual shall include the Agency's catalogue of basic procedures, and within each of them it shall describe, among other aspects, the activities included, the units involved, the IT tools to be used, the applicable regulations and the associated deadlines.

The manual should contribute to the efficiency, agility and simplification of procedures, as well as to ensuring audit control. Likewise, efforts will be made to standardise IT systems and to identify indicators that allow for an evaluation of the achievement of objectives.

The manual shall include the development of procedures in the following management areas:

- a. Procedures associated with the management of R&D&I grants.
- b. Financial and budgetary management procedures.
- c. Procedures for HR management.

Activity	Indicator	Objective
Basic Procedures Manual	Preparation of the document	1

Programme 5. Communication and visibility of the Agency's activities.

Looking ahead to 2017, this programme includes two priority activities:

1. **Drawing up the dissemination and communication plan for the Agency's activities.**

The plan will include the set of initiatives to be adopted to enhance the Agency's image, publicize its activities, its financing (giving due publicity to the Community funds allocated), its results and the forms of collaboration with other agents of the Spanish Science, Technology and Innovation System.

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In this sense, it is important that the manual defines the actions that guarantee adequate media coverage of the Agency, its creation, constitution and functions, and its necessary presence in social networks.

As a particular measure of special relevance, the development of a dedicated Agency web portal will be undertaken in 2017.

2. The elaboration of a Transparency Plan for the Agency. This plan aims to:

- a. Maintain a permanent information system on all the Agency's actions that may be of interest to citizens.
- b. To present the Agency's annual management balance sheet and results in its different functions and competencies.
- c. Fostering relations with citizens through a system of direct and personalised attention.

This plan should also consider specific training for the civil servants who will carry out these tasks.

Activity	Indicator	Objective
Dissemination, communication and institutional relations of the Agency	Preparation of the document	1
Website design and implementation Agency website	Implementation of the action	1
Agency Transparency Plan	Preparation of the document	1

Programme 6. Determination of the framework of shared services with MINECO.

The Agency and the Undersecretariat of the Ministry of Economy, Industry and Competitiveness are committed to implementing a common service delivery framework in 2017 that will affect several areas:

- Information and Communications Technologies.
- Services associated with the building, facilities and services provided by the Office of the Principal Officer. Services such as childcare and canteens are also included.

The establishment of the common services framework and its formalisation includes the following actions:

1. Designing the content, specifications and financing of shared services.
2. Signing of the appropriate collaboration agreement (*).

Activity	Indicator	Objective
Content design, specifications and financing of shared services	Preparation of the document	1
Signing of the agreement	Publication of the agreement	1

(*) Subject to the approval by Royal Decree of the general conditions of the Department's common services framework (article 68.3 of Law 40/2015 of 2 October).

3.2 LINE 2. MANAGEMENT of funding instruments.

The Agency's functions include the management of the programmes, instruments and actions awarded to it within the framework of the State Scientific and Technical Research and Innovation Plans, any others expressly assigned to it by the General State Administration or those deriving from collaboration agreements entered into with other entities or from other actions, through the objective and impartial allocation of available resources (article 5a of the Statute).

Within the framework of these State Plans, the Annual Action Programmes (hereinafter AAP) are the documents containing the actions programmed to promote and boost R&D&I, and the budget appropriations allocated for their financing through different funding bodies, including the State Research Agency, generally by means of competitive calls for proposals.

In turn, the Agency is responsible for the economic and budgetary management and the economic and financial control of the instruments and actions for which it is responsible [Article 5 k) of the Statute].

Therefore, the Agency's activity in this area has been subdivided into Programme 1: Instruction of the procedure for awarding calls for proposals and Programme 2: Economic and budgetary management. The indicators provided in these two programmes depend entirely on the actions programmed in the PAA and the available budget, so they have been estimated based on 2016 data.

Programme 1. Instruction of the procedure for the award of calls

This programme has been divided into 4 key activities consisting of the different phases and tasks described below:

1. **Drafting and publication of calls.** This includes, in addition to drafting the texts of all calls for proposals, requesting the mandatory reports and authorisations, signing and publication in the BOE (Official State Gazette) and in the National Grants Database (hereinafter BDNS).

Qualitatively, the aim is to achieve homogenisation in the wording of the calls for proposals and in the data to be entered in the BDNS in order to make it easier for potential

beneficiaries the process of submitting applications for assistance and access to information.

2. **Instruction.** This activity includes the technological configuration processes of the communication interfaces with the beneficiaries and internal processing applications, the administrative review of the applications, the rectification and processing of possible withdrawals and the notification of the provisional and final decision proposal.

Qualitatively, the aim is to standardise notifications to beneficiaries and to improve procedures in order to shorten processing times.

3. **Maintenance of the system of entities.** The System of Entities is the repository where the entities applying for grants from the Agency must register, providing the necessary documentation to accredit both their legal nature and the valid representation of the natural persons designated as their legal representatives.

This repository is connected to all the systems for processing aid, so it is essential that all the information is kept up to date and that a system for registering new entities is allowed.

4. **Advice to applicants.** Throughout the application submission process and instruction of the calls for applications, it is essential to provide correct advice to the entities on the configuration of the application reports, the correct allocation of eligible costs, responsible declarations, hearing procedures, etc. This advice will be provided through the manuals and FAQ files published on the institutional website, as well as through e-mail accounts.

Activity	Load estimation of work	Overload indicator actual work	Objective
Drafting and publication of the calls for proposals	22	No. of calls published	100%
Instruction	16.000	No. of dossiers processed	100%
Maintenance of the system of entities	3.600	No. of requests for additions/deletions/modifications processed	100%
Advice to the applicants for aid	30.000	No. of emails answered	100%

Programme 2. Economic and budgetary management

This programme has been divided into 5 key activities consisting of the different phases and tasks described below:

1. **Prior audit of the calls for aid that require it.** The number of calls for proposals subject to prior audit by the Delegated Comptroller of the Ministry of Economy, Industry and Competitiveness will depend on when the Agency has its own budget. Until such time, all the following will have to be audited

calls, and from budget approval only calls with chapter 8 available for funding.

This process comprises, for each of the different accounting phases necessary to execute the expenditure (listed in point 4), the preparation of the documentation which, as regards the basic requirements for ex ante control, is set out in the Council of Ministers' Agreement of 30 May 2008.

- 2. Review of the requirements for obtaining the status of beneficiary and for the payment of multi-annual aid.** This activity includes both the review of the responsible declarations and certificates provided by applicants and, in the event that prior authorisation has been given, verification through the web servers set up for this purpose of compliance with obligations to the Tax Agency and Social Security.

This review is carried out only once for each entity regardless of the number of grants awarded.

- 3. Issuance of accounting documents.** The documents required to process the calls managed by the Agency are, depending on the stage of the procedure, the following:

Type of accounting document	Phase of the call
RC	Withholding of appropriations document accompanying the expenditure proposal for authorisation
A	Expenditure approval document, once the call for proposals has been authorised and published.
D	Commitment of expenditure, this document is used once the call for proposals has been resolved and the beneficiaries.
OP/OK	Recognition of the obligation and payment of the obligation or recognition of the obligation and proposal for payment (depending on whether the appropriations are from the Chapter 7 or Chapter 8)

- 4. Payment of grants.** In the payment of aid, as in the entire procedure for the financial management of aid, a distinction must be made between the Agency's own budget and the budget of the Secretariat of State, i.e. Chapter 7 or 8.

In the first case, once the aid reflected in the respective OP document has been accounted for, it will be transferred to the unit in charge of managing the Agency's Treasury, in order to order the necessary transfers, always taking into account the situation of the Treasury.

In the case of Chapter 8 transactions, once the accounting document has been recorded by the Financial Controller's Office, payment is authorised by the Treasury, a process in which the Agency does not intervene at any time.

All grants awarded, regardless of their form, must be registered in the National Grants Database.

- 5. Advice to applicants for assistance.** Advice will be provided to beneficiaries, especially with regard to the presentation of guarantees and the characteristics of bank accounts. This advice will be provided through e-mail accounts available on the institutional website.

Activity	Estimation of workload	Indicator on actual workload	Objective
Prior audit of the calls that require it	5	No. of calls audited	100%
Review of eligibility requirements and payment of multiannualities	7.000	No. of revisions	100%
Issuance of accounting documents derived from the concession	17.500	No. of accounting documents issued	100%
Payment of aid	18.000	No. of transfers implemented	100%
Loading data into the BDNS	18.000	No. of concessions uploaded	100%
Advice to the beneficiaries	300	No. of mails answered	100%

3.3 LINE 3. Scientific and technical EVALUATION of proposals.

The Agency is responsible for the organisation and management of the ex-ante and ex post scientific and technical evaluation of proposals, actions or initiatives, where appropriate using evaluation criteria based on internationally recognised scientific and technical merit, as well as those criteria established in the corresponding calls for proposals, as set out in its Statute (Article 5b).

The scientific-technical evaluation of the proposals and their internationally contrasted development protocols are the fundamental pillars that guarantee the correct functioning of competitive concurrence based on criteria of excellence and the correct allocation of budgetary funds.

This line of action is divided into 3 programmes of activities: the first programme includes the activities corresponding to the evaluations of the instruments included in the AAP; the second programme includes the evaluations corresponding to the collaboration agreements in this area with other entities external to the Agency. Finally, the third programme refers to the development of protocols to be used in internal processes related to evaluation, which will be duly disseminated.

Programme 1. Evaluations derived from the AAP

This programme includes four activities:

1. **Management of individual peer reviews.** This activity starts with the search for the best available experts in each of the thematic areas to which the proposals correspond, with the aim of obtaining a peer review evaluation of each application. This process in turn involves close monitoring of the execution of the evaluations themselves and the reassignment of proposals to new evaluators in cases where the evaluators assigned in the first instance reject the proposal, or where there is a discrepancy between the evaluations issued.
2. **Management of the technical evaluation commissions.** This activity includes tasks such as the appointment of the members of the commissions themselves, as well as the organisation of the technical and human resources necessary to hold the commissions.
3. **Preparation of final evaluation reports.** This activity consists of the generation of the final reports that gather the information obtained from all the applications submitted and from the technical reports produced by the peer review and the technical commissions, all with the main objective of achieving the final prioritisation of all the proposals.
4. **Elaboration of allegation reports.** Possible allegations submitted by applicants related to the scientific/technical evaluation of their proposals must be studied in detail by external experts or collaborators, and the corresponding technical reports must be issued.

Activity	Load estimation of work	Overload indicator actual work	Objective
Management of individual peer reviews	30.000	No. of individual evaluations carried out	100%
Management of the Technical Commissions of evaluation	150	No. of Technical Evaluation Commissions held	100%
Final evaluation reports	16.000	No. of final evaluation reports completed	100%
claim reports	3.200	No. of allegation reports carried out	100%

Programme 2. External evaluations

This programme refers to evaluations of calls for proposals external to the Agency, both with public and private entities, with which a collaboration agreement has been previously signed for this purpose (See LINE 5). Once these institutions transfer the projects or actions to be evaluated to the Agency, the process followed is equivalent to that used in the evaluations derived from the PAA indicated in Programme 1, except for the development of the technical evaluation committees, which usually correspond to the entities or bodies responsible for funding these calls, depending on the particular characteristics of each one of them.

Activity	Estimation of workload	Overload indicator actual work	Objective
Management of evaluations individual in pairs	5.000	No. of evaluations Individuals made	100%
Final reports of evaluation	2.500	No. of final reports of evaluation carried out	100%
Allegation reports	150	No. of reports of allegation made	100%

Programme 3. Development of protocols

This programme comprises two main activities:

- 1. Updating the protocol for the evaluation of R&D actions.** The Agency will review and update the evaluation protocols to be applied in order to fully adapt them to the best international practices in the field. The aim is to increase quality standards, promote rigour and consistency of results, and simplify procedures, all in the interests of greater efficiency in the processes.
- 2. Drawing up the protocol for the selection of collaborating experts.** A protocol will be developed for the selection of collaborating scientific and technological experts to be temporarily assigned to the Agency in accordance with Article 19 of Law 14/2011, on Science, Technology and Innovation, for the development of tasks of elaboration, management, monitoring and evaluation of scientific and technical research programmes.

This is intended to ensure objectivity, transparency and a guarantee of excellence in the selection of experts.

Activity	Indicator	Objective
Update of the evaluation protocol of R&D actions	No. of protocols developed	1
Development of a protocol for the selection of collaborating experts	No. of protocols developed	1

3.4 LINE 4. Monitoring of aid.

The Agency's functions include monitoring and advising on the management, financing, justification and results of all actions directly implemented by the Agency [Article 5 e) of the Statute].

In turn, the same statute establishes that the Agency's functions shall include the verification, monitoring and subsequent evaluation of the activities financed by it and their scientific, technical and socio-economic impact, as well as the control of the justification of compliance with the conditions and objectives of the aid granted (Article 5 c) of the Statute) [Article 5 c) of the Statute].

The Agency's activity in this area has therefore been subdivided into Programme 1 for the scientific and technical monitoring of the implementation of grants and Programme 2 for the economic monitoring of the implementation of grants.

Programme 1. Scientific-technical monitoring of the implementation of grants

Grants awarded following the proposal evaluation processes must be monitored to ensure that they are actually being implemented at the levels of excellence that justified their award. Furthermore, the assessment of the development of the aid programmes must serve to progressively improve the definition of these programmes. For all these reasons, the scientific and technical monitoring of the implementation of grants is one of the fundamental components of the Agency's activity.

This programme has been divided into 6 key activities consisting of the different phases and tasks described below:

- 1. Management of the scientific-technical monitoring programmed in each call.** This scientific-technical monitoring process includes tasks such as the preparation of the computer applications for the presentation of the execution reports by the beneficiaries of the grants, the claiming of the reports not received or the correction of those that are not complete, among others. Subsequently, these reports must be made available to the external scientific and technological collaborators and finally, when the result of the assessment of the execution reports is favourable, the corresponding certificates of conformity necessary for the release of the subsequent payments will be issued. On the other hand, in cases where the assessment is unfavourable, the corresponding forfeiture or reimbursement proceedings will be initiated, as the case may be.
- 2. Assessment of grants in follow-up meetings.** This activity consists of the development of face-to-face meetings for the presentation and intermediate monitoring of the state of implementation of the funded activities under assessment. The face-to-face monitoring meetings will be led by the scientific and technological partners and may be attended by the external experts who carried out the evaluation, as well as officials from the monitoring subdivisions (thematic or transversal) for administrative support.
- 3. On-site monitoring visits.** When foreseen in a call for proposals, inspection visits will be carried out as scheduled.
- 4. Resolutions of authorisation/refusal of modifications to the conditions of the aid.** Those requests for modification of the conditions of the aid that are justified and appropriate in each case will be processed for authorisation. To this end, the scientific and technological collaborators will issue the technical reports that support the decisions to authorise or reject the modifications.
- 5. Citizen information and user relations.** Throughout the entire process of monitoring the scientific and technical implementation of the grants, it is essential to provide beneficiaries with correct advice on the completion of implementation reports, the submission of incidents, procedural queries, etc. This advice

will be done primarily through e-mail accounts set up for this purpose.

6. Improving the definition of target indicators.

A working group will be set up with the Directorate-General for Research, Development and Innovation Policy in order to improve the models of the scientific-technical monitoring reports and the models of the evaluation reports of these reports, so that the indicators of compliance with the objectives are clearly and quantifiably identified.

It will also include the proposal of improvements in the IT applications necessary for the exploitation of information on indicators and results, so as to improve the information systems necessary for the ex-post evaluation of aid programmes.

Activity	Estimation of workload	Overload indicator actual work	Objective
Follow-up management scientific-technical aid	14.142	No. of aid covered by tracking	50%
Assessment of aid in follow-up meetings	3.596	No. of aid assessed at meetings of tracking	33%
On-site monitoring visits	247	No. of on-site visits	25%
Decisions authorising/refusing modifications of the conditions of the aid	5.000	No. of resolutions modifying the conditions of the aid	100%
Citizen information and user relations	26.000	No. of mails answered over the number of mails received	100%

Activity	Indicator	Objective
Improving the definition of indicators for objectives	Preparation of the document	1

Programme 2. Economic monitoring of the implementation of the grants.

A total of 7 main actions are considered within this programme:

- 1. Administrative review of the supporting account and economic audit of the expenditure** of all files whose justification ends on 31 December 2016. The stages of checking the validity of the expenditure charged by the beneficiaries will depend on the type of supporting account, ranging from checking the ROAC (Official Register of Auditors) auditor's report to the exhaustive checking of all the supporting documents of expenditure provided by the beneficiary.

beneficiary and, where appropriate, the processing of the requirement, rectification or request for additional documentation.

2. **Monitoring visits.** When so stipulated in the calls for proposals or the regulations governing the European Structural Investment Funds (ESIF), on-site verification will be carried out at the headquarters of the beneficiary entities, of the accounts and supporting documents for the expenditure provided, as well as, where applicable, for the tangible fixed assets financed. These monitoring visits cannot take place until the project has been completed and the supporting account has been submitted. This activity is envisaged for calls launched in 2013.
3. **Reimbursements.** This procedure includes the issuing of the agreement to initiate reimbursement, the opening of the hearing, assessment of the allegations presented by the beneficiary and notification of the final decision on reimbursement and, where appropriate, the loss of the right to payment of outstanding annual payments. It also includes the issuing of the payment document model 069 of the Tax Agency or, in the future, the Agency's own reimbursement system.
4. **Maintenance of the National Grants Database (BDNS).** It will be necessary to register in the BDNS the reimbursement files that they initiate.
5. **Cancellation of guarantees and seizure of guarantees.** The procedure for the cancellation of guarantees submitted to the Caja General de Depósitos includes the issuance of the cancellation order in accordance with the models of the Caja General de Depósitos and the referral to the same, as well as the notification to the beneficiary that said referral has been made so that the beneficiary may proceed to cancel the guarantee. The procedure for the seizure of guarantees includes notifying the beneficiary of the start of the procedure as well as the opening of the hearing, the assessment of the allegations and, in the event that these are rejected, issuing the request for seizure and sending it to the Delegated Comptroller for audit and to the General Depositary Fund (Caja General de Depósitos).
6. **Certification of European Structural Funds.** The certification of structural funds implies the justification before the Managing Authorities of the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund of the eligible expenditure of the co-financed projects in order for the European Commission to proceed with the payment of the aids with these structural funds.
7. **Advice to beneficiaries.** Advice will be provided to beneficiaries at all stages of the procedure, especially with regard to the submission of the supporting account. This advice will be provided through e-mail accounts available on the institutional website.

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Activity	Estimated burden of work	Indicator on actual workload	Objective
Administrative review of the supporting account and expenditure audit	39.147 *	No. of files reviewed	22%
Follow-up visits	100	No. of visits implemented	100%
Refunds	22.200 *	No. of resolutions of refund	25%
Maintenance of the BDNS	5.480	No. of updates per refund	100%
Cancellation of guarantees and seizure of collateral	1.700	No. of guarantees cancelled in whole or in part or seized	100%
Certification of EIE funds	2.700	No. of operations certified	100%
Advice to the beneficiaries	16.600	No. of mails answered	100%

*. The value indicated is the sum of the actions completed on 31 December 2016 plus those pending from the former Directorates-General for Scientific and Technical Research and for Innovation and Competitiveness.

3.5 LINE 5. MANAGEMENT OF AGREEMENTS, ENTRUSTMENT OF MANAGEMENT AND PROVISION OF SERVICES.

The Agency is responsible for carrying out the activities or providing the services entrusted to it by the General State Administration or, by virtue of contracts, agreements and in general legal transactions, by other entities [Article 5 i) of the Statute]. Also, for the exercise of its functions, the Agency may enter into the necessary management agreements and entrustments (Article 24 of the Statute).

The activities envisaged under this LINE are as follows:

- 1. Collaboration agreements, management commissions and other legal instruments** with other public and private non-profit institutions.
- 2. Provision of services**, mainly in the field of scientific and technical evaluation of R&D&I activities of other institutions.
- 3. Establishment of public prices and tariffs** for the provision of services related to the activities described in points 1 and 2.

Activity	Indicator	Objective
Signing of agreements, entrustment management and other legal instruments	No. of instruments signed	7
Service activities	No. of activities carried out	40
Setting of public prices and rates	Implementation of the action	1

3.6 LINE 6. COMMUNICATION, DISSEMINATION and REPRESENTATION in R&D forums.

One of the Agency's basic principles of action is transparency in all its administrative activities, accountability and commitment to present accurate and complete information on all results and procedures used.

In turn, its Statute establishes as one of the Agency's functions the management of actions aimed at promoting collaboration, exchange, circulation, dissemination and exploitation of scientific and technical knowledge among the agents of the System [article 5 h) of the Statute].

In order to respond to these requirements, this main line of action is divided into two distinct sets of activities: firstly, communication and dissemination, and secondly, representation at R&D meetings and forums.

Programme 1. Communication and dissemination

Communication and dissemination activities aim to give visibility and transparency to all of the Agency's actions through participation in events by its management and technical staff, and through media presence, including social media.

Activity	Indicator	Objective
Active participation in events	No. of papers and conferences	48
References in the media communication	No. of references	8
Press releases	No. of press releases	60
Social media	No. of contents communicated to through social media	100

Programme 2. Representation at national and international fora

Given the importance of maintaining and strengthening the national and international dimension of the Agency's activities, representation activities will be developed in national and international meetings and forums related to matters within its scope.

The Ministry of Economy, Industry and Competitiveness will also be represented in R&D policy forums when so determined by the Ministry of Economy, Industry and Competitiveness.

International activities include participation in the governing bodies of ERANETs and specialised working groups within the European Commission.

National activities include boards, commissions, working groups and other specialised fora.

Activity	Indicator	Objective
Participation in international forums	No. of forums participated in actively	30
Participation in national forums	No. of forums participated in actively	35

4 HUMAN RESOURCES.

The staff of the State Investigation Agency as at 1 January 2017 is as follows.

Unit	No. of jobs		
	Filled	Vacancies	Total
Support Unit	4	1	5
General Secretariat	17	2	19
Division for Scientific Coordination, Evaluation and Monitoring and Technical	4	2	6
Coordination and Evaluation Subdivision	21	5	26
Scientific and Technical Thematic Programmes Subdivision	30	4	34
Cross-cutting Scientific and Technical Programmes Subdivision, Strengthening and Excellence	25	4	29
Division of Programming and Economic Management and Administrative	3		3
Planning and Administrative Management Subdivision	41	15	56
Economic Management Subdivision	17	1	18
Grant Monitoring and Justification Subdivision	46	15	61
European Funds Grants Management Subdivision	15	2	17
TOTALS	223	51	274

5 BASIC REGULATION.

The basic regulations applicable to the management processes of the State Research Agency are as follows:

- Law 38/2003 of 17 November 2003 on General Subsidies.
- Law 28/2006, of 18 July 2006, on State Agencies for the improvement of public services.
- Law 14/2011, of 1 June, on Science, Technology and Innovation.
- Royal Legislative Decree 3/2011, of 14 November, approving the revised text of the Public Sector Contracts Act.
- Law 39/2015, of 1 October, on the Common Administrative Procedure of Public Administrations.
- Law 40/2015, of 1 October, on the Legal Regime of the Public Sector.
- Royal Decree 1067/2015, of 27 November, creating the State Research Agency and approving its Statute.