



ACTIVITY REPORT 2018 - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL QUALITY AND SAFETY

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Publisher: Regis Massant
Chairman a.i. of the Board Committee
Rue du Progrès 50
1210 Brussels

Internet version

“Creating the conditions for a competitive, sustainable and balanced operation of the goods and services market in Belgium.”

Foreword

Dear reader,

If you buy a toy, you expect it to be safe. If you fill up your car at a petrol station, you expect the pump to indicate the correct amount. If you decide to insulate your house, you expect the insulation value of the building materials to be correct.

These are three examples of obvious and justified expectations. However, meeting these expectations is far less evident. For this you need proper regulations that take sufficient account of the current state of the art, a good knowledge of these regulations by all of the interested parties, such as manufacturers, importers, distributors, laboratories, inspection bodies, ... and finally effective controls.

In the areas mentioned in the examples above – and many others – issuing regulations, permits and approvals as well as surveillance are all part of the core tasks of the Directorate General for Quality and Safety. We also carry out research and coordination activities in other areas.

Much of this work is of importance to society, but invisible for the general public. With this activity report we want to show what we achieved for our “customer-stakeholders” in 2018. You will see that our motivated employees, despite dwindling resources, still deliver performances they can be proud of.

We hope you have a pleasant journey of discovery while browsing through this report on our activities in the fields of metrology, product and service safety, trust services, standardization, accreditation, sand extraction, construction contractors and construction products.

Chris Van der Cruyssen
Acting Director-General

“Creating the conditions for a competitive, sustainable and balanced operation of the goods and services market in Belgium.”

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1. Our mission within the FPS Economy

Our directorate-general has defined its mission on the basis of the mission and vision of the FPS Economy. In all of our daily activities, we should ask ourselves continually: are we assisting the companies and in particular the SMEs? Are we protecting consumers and is our action as efficient and effective as possible? Companies should do their utmost to respect the regulations with regard to consumer protection. Nevertheless, we are fully aware that there is no such thing as zero risk and that all regulatory and executive measures should be based on the principle of proportionality.

The mission of the directorate-general can therefore be summarized as follows: “Ensuring a competitive and balanced operation of the technical goods and services market, by regulating, authorizing, enforcing, investigating and coordinating.”

Vision

“The Directorate-General Quality and Safety strives to be a **reliable partner** for all its stakeholders. It communicates in a transparent way with all parties involved. In its actions, it pays **specific attention to consumers and businesses, particularly SMEs**. Its initiatives must be supported by all parties involved and should be as simple and practical as possible. Its employees excel by their technical and scientific knowledge; their impartiality makes them the ideal reference for questions concerning the application of legislation.”



Goals

On the basis of the mission and vision of the directorate-general, its main objectives can be defined by three strategic axes that match perfectly with the strategic matrix of the SPF Economy.

- 1) **Guarantee consumer safety** by supervising the domains that pose the greatest risks.
- 2) **Promote a sustainable and competitive economy** by supporting innovative companies in producing high-quality products and services, through conformity assessment, knowledge transfer and an efficient and effective standardization policy.
- 3) Develop the directorate-general into a **knowledge centre**: install a “**level playing field**”, so that companies can operate competitively and consumers can buy reliable products and services. This is achieved by applied research (e.g. in scientific metrology, the marine environment and nanometrology).

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These three strategic axes can be translated into **six strategic goals**.

- 1) Ensure efficient protection of the users (consumers) with regard to the quality and safety of products and services, by directing the available resources at those products and services that pose the greatest risk to consumers/users.
- 2) Strengthen the role of the FPS Economy as the Belgian key player within the European framework of technical regulations.
- 3) Stand out by its technical and scientific knowledge.
- 4) Increase the confidence that economic operators, users (consumers) and organizations place in the unified goods and services market.
- 5) Develop a policy that benefits competitiveness and innovation.
- 6) Implement the policy within an organisation that respects the values of the FPS Economy, with highly motivated personnel, in line with the concept of the “new working practices”.



2. An overview of our activities and some statistical data

2.1. Promote a sustainable and competitive economy

We support companies in their innovation efforts, so that they can deliver high-quality products and services. For this purpose we use conformity assessments, knowledge transfer and an efficient and effective standardization policy.

Accreditation of conformity assessment bodies

BELAC, the Belgian national **accreditation** institution for conformity assessment bodies, continued to work on its legal basis, in accordance with the recognized criteria at European and international level (Regulation EC 765/2008, standard ISO/IEC 17011:2017 and the related documents of EA, ILAC and IAF). BELAC was thus able to maintain its status as signatory of the international recognition agreements between accreditation bodies of EA, ILAC, IAF and FALB (EMAS); it also participates actively in the activities of these organizations. The total number of **active accreditation certificates** rose to **567** at the end of 2018. About **3,200 audit days** were performed in 2018, i.e. an increase of over 6 % compared to the end of 2017, with the assistance of some

250 external auditors. BELAC also continued to make considerable investments in the introduction of a training programme adapted to its needs.

A better framework for standardization activities

On 16 January 2018, the Bureau for Standardization (NBN) and the FPS Economy, its supervisory authority, signed a management agreement regarding the annual allocation that the NBN receives from the FPS Economy for the execution of its tasks of general interest. This agreement entered into force immediately, enabling better control and accountability of the use of the allocated funds.

In order to contribute to the development of standards for which scientific knowledge must be developed, the FPS Economy also provided financial support for 24 prestandardization projects. An analysis carried out for the first time in 2018 shows that two thirds of these types of projects have influenced, in whole or in part, the establishment of a standard.

Status quo in the number of applications for recognition as a contractor

In 2018, the number of **applications for recognition** as a contractor fell slightly to **3,823**, which amounts to an average of 319 requests for advice per month. 3,687 applications were introduced by Belgian companies and 136 by foreign companies, principally from our neighbouring countries: 54 from the Netherlands, 16 from Germany, 22 from France and 10 from Luxemburg. The **total number of recognised contractors** remained stable in 2018, at **10,500**.

Building sector: intensive consultation and an increasing number of inspections

The Building Specifications Department is the competent authority for implementing the European regulation (EU) 305/2011, which stipulates harmonised conditions for the placing on the market of construction products.

So far, the scope of 288 harmonised standards has been studied, including 193 in 2018, and as a result [17 lists¹](#) have been published on the website of the FPS Economy. In addition, **five bodies** were notified on the basis of an accreditation.

The Building Specifications department also takes part in the market surveillance for construction products covered by a harmonized technical specification, regardless if this surveillance is reactive (following a complaint) or proactive. In 2018, **14 for-**

1 You will find the lists under the question "Comment puis-je vérifier l'adéquation du produit avec le domaine d'application de la norme harmonisée?"

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mal complaints were registered. 29 % of these were the subject of a warning report, 50 % were closed following an exchange of letters and 21 % are still being processed. Proactive market surveillance campaigns reflect to what extent regulations are followed in a certain sector. A total of **287 companies** were visited.

Table 1. Market surveillance campaigns for construction products

Proactive checks	Number
Smoke detectors	65
Cables	91
Individual heating appliances	46
Floor coverings	55
Natural stone	63
Masonry elements	54
Insulation elements	108
Cladding elements	60
Crash barriers	18
Silicones	69
Reactive checks	12
Market analysis – Product codes (*)	127

(*) Market analysis for the purpose of developing lists of harmonised standards for each product area, to be published subsequently on the website of the FPS Economy.

Source: FPS Economy.

In total that brings the number of

- products checked up to 845,
- companies visited up to 287,
- man-days worked up to 194.

Optimisation of the supervision of sand extraction at sea

Sand extraction at sea and its consequences for the marine environment are the subject of a legal framework and supervision. Due to the strong evolution in maritime technologies, several innovative scientific projects were launched with the aim of improving the accuracy and efficiency of supervision. The results of these projects are expected in 2019 and 2020. The regulations on the environmental impact assessment procedure have also been completely rewritten, with a stronger emphasis on external communication during the permit process, among other things.

Electronic trust services

The eIDAS Regulation of the European Union (Regulation (EU) N° 910/1014) on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions entered into force on 1 July 2016. This regulation aims to support the online economy by allowing the cross-border use of a number of essential electronic trust services – such as electronic signatures, electronic seals and electronic time stamps – within the European Union. The eIDAS cell of the Metrological Regulations Departement was designated to monitor the providers of electronic trust services in Belgium and in order to reinforce the confidence of users of such services.

In order to be included on the list of qualified trust service providers (the so-called “Trusted List”), providers must submit a conformity assessment report and a corresponding certificate of compliance with the eIDAS regulation to the supervisory authority. Since the entry into force of the eIDAS Regulation, 9 Belgian companies have been included on this trusted list of qualified providers of electronic trust services.



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2.2. Guarantee consumer safety by monitoring high-risk domains

Market surveillance campaigns: safety of fireworks, children and lifts as the main concerns in 2018

In order to guarantee user safety and at the same time ensure fair competition between the economic operators, we conduct proactive inspection campaigns every year. In addition to our national campaigns, we also participate in European surveillance campaigns to monitor a larger market segment.

In 2018, the safety of fireworks, children and leisure items figured among the priorities. The safety of lifts also remains a primary concern. The inspection campaign on the modernization of lifts continues to have a positive effect on the safety of the targeted lifts.

Below we present a global overview of the proactive market surveillance campaigns:

The Safety Department organised several campaigns at national level:

- fireworks;
- lifts;
- toys intended for children under 3 years;
- toy drones;
- blinds;
- hoverboards;
- CO detectors.

Joint actions were coordinated at European level:

- electric toys;
- baby carriers and cots;
- climbing equipment.

In 2018, a total of 709 cases were handled regarding product safety. 331 of the above-mentioned cases were opened and handled following a request for an opinion by the customs services. Over 46 % (153) of these cases were related to toys.

Table 2. Number of cases treated in 2018 in relation to product safety

Regulation	Number of individual cases
General product safety	107
Pressure equipment	10
Products appearing to be other than they are	1
New lifts	23
Machines	135
Personal protective equipment	90
Pyrotechnic articles	24
Toys	269
Playground equipment	8
Other	42
Total	709

Source: FPS Economy.

Table 3. Cases connected with product safety, opened in 2018 at the request of the Customs services

Regulation	Number of customs files
Personal protective equipment	49
Toys	153
Machines	42
General product safety	48
Other	39
Total	331

Source: FPS Economy.

Producers and distributors are required to immediately inform the Central Contact Point, by mail or through the European Business Alert Gateway², if they hold information about the dangerous nature of products or services that they placed on the market, or in case of an accident caused by such an unsafe product or service. The Central Contact Point also receives complaints from consumers/users regarding a dangerous product. In addition, the Central Office is the Belgian point of contact for the Rapid Alert System, the European system for the exchange of information on products with a serious risk.

² The online platform where producers can notify the authorities of all member states the voluntary measures they have taken regarding a dangerous product.

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Table 4. Notifications treated by the Central Contact Point in 2018

		Safety	Mobility	Energy	Public Health	Construction	Explosives	Justice	Total	Belgian	Customs
RAPEX	Art. 12 *	708	438	269	584	7	8	0	2,014	0	889
	Art. 11 *	56	1	26	13	0	8	0	104	0	53
	For information	63	2	16	60	0	0	0	141	0	83
Complaints		43	1	8	7	1	0	0	60	0	0
Recalls		154	148	44	9	0	0	1	356	0	0
Total		1,024	590	363	673	8	16	1	2,675	0	1,025
Total number of notifications:									2,675		
Total number of Rapex:									2,259		

(*) article 11 and article 12 of the General Product Safety Directive (2001/95/EG): art. 12: serious risk, art. 11 non-serious risk, 'for information': no risk identified but lack of information.

Source: FPS Economy.

Explosives and gases: safe use and transport

In the field of explosives, the manufacture, storage, sale, transport and use are regulated by a legal framework and subject to supervision. In 2018, the Safety Division issued 635 national and 49 European permits for the transport of explosives and carried out technical inspections of the vehicles transporting these products.

137 technical opinions were given to local authorities issuing permits to explosives manufacturers and economic operators wishing to store explosives and fireworks. In addition, in 2018, 44 opinions were given for folkloric marches.

The FPS Economy took samples of CE marked fireworks (cat. F1 and F2) and P1 articles on the Belgian market for inspection purposes. These were articles that were stored in wholesale depots during the period October - November 2018. A total of 27 types of articles were sampled. These samples were tested by testing laboratories. The follow-up and possible measures are scheduled for early 2019.

A new type of inspection in 2018 concerned the investigation into the illegal dispatch of fireworks with postal packages. During these inspections, a tracking dog was used for the first time in Belgium to detect fireworks. The sniffer dogs sniffed a selection of parcels at four postal and courier companies. No illegal shipments were found, but the problem is real. The experience gained will be useful in future inspections, provided for in the 2019 inspection plan.

In December 2018, an inspection campaign was organized regarding party fireworks. A total of 67 products were checked with respect to the CE marking. 50 % of these were found not to comply with the provisions of the Royal Decree of 20 October 2015 concerning the making available on the market of pyrotechnic articles (including incomplete information in the designations on products, products without CE marking). 31 checks were made on internet sales. 20 of these checks revealed nonconformities (inter alia delivery by mail, disregard of age categories, delivery from a non-licensed storage location, delivery of excessive quantities). Finally, 162 storage site inspections were carried out in the context of this end-of-year campaign. 30 storage places were not in order (including sales without a license, exceeding the storage capacity, storage place not in accordance with technical requirements). 17 seizures were made for a total amount of approximately 525 kg NEQ. In addition, our services were called upon to take over various seizures carried out by the police.

Finally, the table below provides an overview of other activities and inspections in 2018 in the field of fireworks and explosives.



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Table 5. Activities and inspections of explosives for civil use and pyrotechnic articles in 2018

Description	Number
Complaints	3
Investigations of accidents, incidents	16
Commissioning inspections	255
Routine inspection of storage sites for fireworks	239
Routine inspection of storage sites for explosives	359
Inspections of ADR vehicles	16
Inspections of blasting works in quarries	59
Inspection of blasting works other than in quarries	17
Seveso inspections	18
Shipping-related cases	35
Exams for ADR drivers (mainly of the Ministry of Defence)	151
Tests for approved co-drivers	21
Tests for authorised blasters (quarries)	33
Permits, derogations	1
Product approval	0
Transport	25

Source: FPS Economy.

Table 6. Checks of underground storage, gas transport and gas distribution

Type of check	Number
Underground gas storage	2
Gas transport through pipelines	37
Gas distribution through pipelines	310
Works in proximity to pipelines	180
Total	528

Source: FPS Economy.

Table 7. Investigation of gas incidents involving underground gas storage, gas transport and gas distribution

Type of check	Number
Underground gas storage	0
Gas transport through pipelines	2
Gas distribution through pipelines	81
Total	83

Source: FPS Economy.

Table 8. Investigation of complaints in relation to underground gas storage, gas transport and gas distribution

Type	Number
Underground gas storage	0
Gas transport through pipelines	19
Gas distribution through pipelines	3
Total	22

Source: FPS Economy.

Routine checks and inspection campaigns in metrology

The Metrology Division is in charge of the surveillance of measuring instruments and conditioned products (e.g. prepackages).

In 2016, the Metrology Division's inspection services obtained the ISO/IEC 17020 accreditation as an inspection body for inspections of automatic and non-automatic weighing instruments and, in 2017, for inspections of fuel pumps.

In 2018, the Metrology Division's inspection services approved 5,409 non-automatic weighing instruments (scales), 1,942 automatic weighing instruments and 3,285 fuel pumps (petrol / diesel / gas oil). A limited number of instruments were decommissioned.

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Table 9. Overview of the checks on measuring instruments

	Type of check						Grand total	Result of the check				
	Administrative Check	Technical check on the initiative of the Metrology Service	Technical check requested by the client	Initial verification	Periodical verification	Surveillance		Compliant	Rejected	Decision postponed	Warning	Out-of-court settlement or police report
Weights M1	51	0	0	172	12,447	0	12,670	12,653	17	0	0	0
Weights in verification room	52	0	0	0	0	0	52	52	0	0	0	0
Masses	4	0	0	108	899	0	1,011	1,007	0	4	0	0
Water meters	0	0	303	0	13,411	0	13,714	13,644	70	0	0	0
Gas meters	0	0	9	0	0	0	9	8	1	0	0	0
Automatic gauges	22	0	0	0	0	0	22	22	0	0	0	0
Fixed storage tanks	19	0	0	114	161	0	294	294	0	0	0	0
Pumps for CNG	10	0	0	41	140	0	191	191	0	0	0	0
Pumps for LPG	40	0	0	0	0	0	40	39	0	1	0	0
Two-stroke pumps	40	1	0	0	22	0	63	62	1	0	0	0
Fuel pumps (gasoline/diesel/gas oil)	2,649	636	0	0	0	0	3,285	2,912	28	8	336	1
Measuring equipment on tank trucks	72	9	0	24	65	0	170	168	0	0	2	0
Dipstick volume measurement systems on tank trucks	0	0	0	5	10	0	15	15	0	0	0	0
Additive pumps on tank trucks	0	0	0	3	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	0
Loading stations for liquids	41	0	0	0	0	0	41	41	0	0	0	0
Non-automatic weighing instruments	14,100	1,308	0	0	0	1	15,409	13,101	128	75	2,074	31
Automatic weighing instruments	1,155	43	0	0	744	0	1,942	1,794	57	24	67	0
Grand total	18,255	1,997	312	467	27,899	1	48,931	46,006	302	112	2,479	32

Source: FPS Economy.

Table 10. Overview of the checks performed on conditioned goods

	Number of batches checked	Warning report	Amicable settlements
Conditioned or prepackaged goods	956	160 (16,7 %)	43 (4,5 %)

Source: FPS Economy.

In addition to calibration operations and routine checks, the Metrology Department has carried out ten specific inspection campaigns on measuring instruments and on the content of pre-packaged goods:

- scales in slaughterhouses and meat cutting plants,
- carcasses in slaughterhouses,
- commissioning of non-automatic weighing instruments and automatic weighing instruments that are newly put on the market,
- non-automatic weighing instruments with a maximum range of 60 to 10,000 kg,
- weighbridges for trucks,
- weighing instruments used under the SOLAS legislation,
- fuel pumps in automatic gas stations,
- quantity and labeling of cosmetic products,
- weight and labeling of frozen vegetables,
- volume and labeling of nicotine-containing e-liquids.

2.3. Set up a knowledge centre and a “level playing field”

Setting up a knowledge centre and a level playing field will enable

- companies to work competitively,
- consumers to buy reliable products and services.

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World Metrology Day

The World Metrology Day (20 May) in 2018 was dedicated to the renewal of the definitions of the units of measurement on 20 May 2019. The National Standards Unit organized a study day about it that attracted a lot of interest. On this study day, presentations were given about the current and future definitions, the benefit of the change and its impact on our society.

The international definitions of our units of measurement will change on 20 May 2019. The 7 basic units for time (second), distance (meter), mass (kilogram), temperature (Kelvin), current (ampere), light intensity (candela) and amount of matter (mol) will from then on all be based on natural constants. These constants are set out in the new definitions. More information about this can be found on the website of the Bureau International des Poids et Mesures (BIPM), www.bipm.org.

Calibration activities

The National Standards Service offered calibrations in the following domains:

- nanometrology,
- dimensional metrology,
- electric measurements,
- masses,
- volumes,
- thermometry,
- time and frequencies.

In 2018, 865 instruments and references were calibrated by the National Standards Unit and 276 calibration certificates were issued containing 1,532 calibration results.

Developing a knowledge centre for metrology

In 2018, the National Standards Service continued to develop its nanometrology department. The nanometrology activities focus mainly on the dimensional characterisation of nanoparticles and the concentration of these according to their dimensions. The measurements concentrate on the range of nanoparticles from 10 nanometres tot 100 nanometres, the dimensions which are supposed to involve the most risks.

In the framework of the ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation of the nanometrology laboratory for determining the dimensions of spherical particles, a new method of uncertainty calculation was introduced, which is being further developed. Thus, the nanometrology laboratory joined a new European research project “Examples of Measurement Uncertainty Evaluation”.

In the fields of nanometrologie and measurement uncertainty, they participated in a number of EMPIR (European Metrology Programme for Innovation and Research) research and development projects, organized within the framework of Horizon 2020 via EURAMET (The European Association of National Metrology Institutes) in order to respond to the demand by the European industry for ever more precise metrological processes.

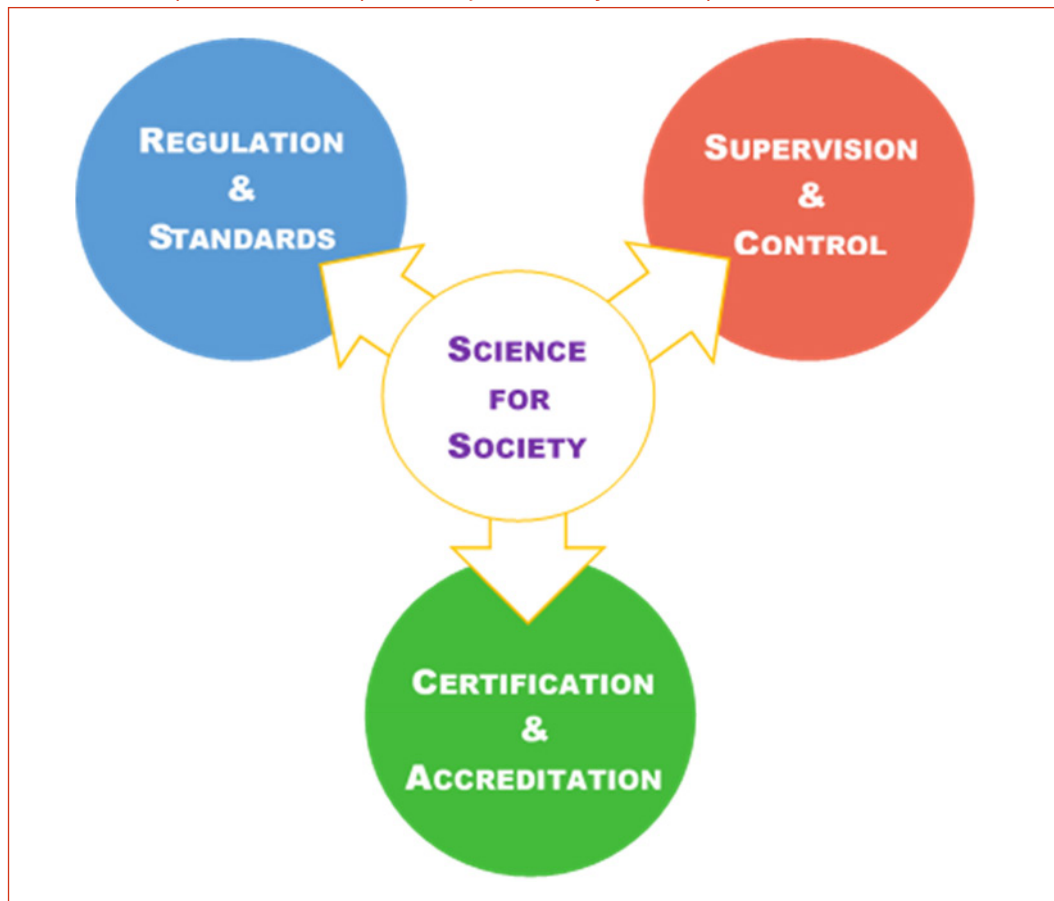
In the field of time and frequency, the atomic clocks of the National Standards unit contribute to the international time and necessary preparations have begun for updating the definition of time and disseminating time in Belgium.

In 2018, the Directorate-General Quality & Safety decided to coordinate its research and development activities within a virtual multidisciplinary scientific pool “HUB R&D”.

This organization must make it possible to promote and use the technical and scientific expertise, as well as the infrastructure that is being developed at the FPS Economy. The beneficiaries and the national and international partners will thus gain access to a unique showcase of scientific research in support of the activities for which the Directorate-General Quality and Safety is responsible. The R&D HUB could, in the long term, develop research activities for the needs of inspections, regulations and certification in other directorates-general, based on the vision of a scientific structure that must provide an answer to important social issues (figure 1).

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Figure 1. Guaranteeing the quality of products and services and monitoring their safety, based on scientific expertise, so as to proactively tackle major social problems



Towards a “level playing field” for deep-sea mining

The International Seabed Authority is currently working on the development of a mining construction code for the exploitation of the mineral resources of the ocean floor in areas that do not belong to any state. In order to offer a “level playing field to all companies wishing to conclude a contract with the Authority”, Belgium defends the introduction, at international level, of uniform, strict rules regarding environmental protection, transparency, public participation and supervision. In Belgium, the focus in 2018 was on communication and stakeholder consultation and the organization of a public consultation.



3. New regulations

3.1. Safety of products and services

In 2018, the Royal Decree of 2 September 2018 amending the Royal Decree of 19 January 2011 on the safety of toys was published in the Belgian State Gazette. Since 28 October 2018 and 26 November 2018, new limits apply for lead and bisphenol A in toys, respectively. And since 4 November 2018, the use of phenol in toys has also been limited.

In 2018, the European Directive 2016/2309 of 16 December 2016/2309 adapting for the fourth time the Annexes to Directive 2008/68/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the inland transport of dangerous goods to scientific and technical progress, was transposed by the Royal Decree of 23 February 2018 adapting the regulations regarding the road and railway transport of explosive substances to the scientific and technical progress. This means that the ADR and RID versions of 2017 now apply in Belgium for explosive substances.

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In 2018, the European Directive 2018/217 of 31 January 2018 amending Directive 2008/68/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the inland transport of dangerous goods by adapting Section I.1 of its Annex I to scientific and technical progress was transposed by the Royal Decree of 11 October 2018 amending the regulations regarding the road transport of explosive substances to the scientific and technical progress. This means an ADR corrigendum becomes applicable in Belgium for explosive substances.

3.2. Building products

1 February 2018 - Royal Decree on the statutes and the procedure for adopting Technical Specifications (BSG 09/02/2018)

21 March 2018. - Royal Decree on sampling and analysis of construction products in the framework of the law of 21 December 2013 implementing Regulation (EU) No 305/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2011 laying down harmonised conditions for the marketing of construction products and repealing Council Directive 89/106/EEC, and various provisions (BSG 29/03/2018)

22 June 2018. - Royal Decree on the amicable settlement of infringements of the law of 21 December 2013 implementing Regulation (EU) No 305/2011 of the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union of 9 March 2011 laying down harmonised conditions for the marketing of construction products and repealing Council Directive 89/106/EEC and various provisions (BSG 05/07/2018)

22 June 2018. - Ministerial Decree appointing the officials responsible for proposing to offenders of the law of 21 December 2013 implementing Regulation (EU) No. 305/2011 of the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union of 9 March 2011 laying down harmonised conditions for the marketing of construction products and repealing Council Directive 89/106/EEC and various provisions, the amicable settlement referred to in Article 7 of the aforementioned law (BSG 05/07/2018)

3.3. Standardization

30 October 2018 - Royal Decree ratifying and canceling the ratification of Belgian standards elaborated by the Bureau for Standardization (NBN) (BSG 12.11.2018)

22 June 2018 - Royal Decree ratifying and canceling the ratification of Belgian standards elaborated by the Bureau for Standardization (NBN) (BSG 04.07.2018)

18 March 2018 - Royal Decree ratifying and canceling the ratification of Belgian standards elaborated by the Bureau for Standardization (NBN) (BSG 27.03.2018)

3.4. Sand extraction at sea

21 October 2018 - Royal Decree concerning the rules on environmental impact assessment in application of the law of 13 June 1969 on the exploration and exploitation of non-living resources of the territorial sea and the continental shelf (BSG 29.10.2018)



4. Our quality policy to serve you better

The quality policy within an organization can only be effective if the management defends it and supports it fully and commits the necessary resources to it.

The DG Quality and Safety focuses on **four quality standards**: ISO 9001:2015, ISO/IEC 17025:2005, ISO/IEC 17020:2012 and ISO/IEC 17011:2017. Their application is not a goal in itself but rather a means of demonstrating that the output of our directorate-general fully supports its mission.

All of our processes are based on the **KISS principle (Keep it Simple and Straight)**. The objectives are defined in the management plan and operational plan of the director-general and are translated into objectives by division and by department.

Every year, before the middle of February, a management review takes place at the highest level and subsequently at service level. During this review, a critical evaluation of past activities, possible improvements and future activities takes place. The long-term aim is to achieve an integrated management system that will not only serve as an example for other directorates-general of the FPS but also for other public organizations. It is the only way to demonstrate our added value for the companies and consumers. All of this should be combined with professionalism and with the values of our FPS, namely "At your service", "Respect", "Stand together", "Excellence" and "Durability".

Internal audits

Internal audits are undertaken to check the proper functioning of the quality system and to improve its effectiveness. These internal audits are imposed by four standards and play a major part in internal control (deontology, internal audit and budget control).

Every year, the activities of all of our services are subjected to an internal audit. At each audit, a certain number of activities are thoroughly evaluated, so that fundamental improvements may be implemented on a sound basis. Since 2015, the directorate-general, in order to step up the frequency of these internal audits and their impartiality, has turned to external auditors and organised training sessions for interested staff members.

Overall, the directorate-general currently has two internal auditors with ISO 9001 qualification and three internal auditors with ISO 17025 qualification.

In 2018, 34 days of internal audits were carried out against the different standards. In addition, external audits took place against the different standards, which confirmed and even extended our certification and accreditation.

Since 2016, the Directorate-General Quality and Safety is accredited as a type A inspection body for its inspection activities in the field of automatic and non-automatic weighing instruments, as well as for passenger lifts. This competence was first extended in 2017 to the activities in the field of playgrounds and fuel pumps. A further extension was under preparation in 2018 for the activities related to prepackaging and gas.

“Creating the conditions for a competitive, sustainable and balanced operation of the goods and services market in Belgium.”

5. Contacts and useful information

5.1. Single point of contact

In order to create a simpler and faster access for different users, the six contact points of the Directorate-General Quality and Safety were merged into a single one: **belspoc**. From now on, if you have a question or have to provide information, you can use:

- the unique address: belspoc@economie.fgov.be, and
- the unique telephone number: 02 277 53 36.

5.2. Other useful contact details for companies

National Standards

Tel.: 02 277 63 23 - Fax: 02 277 54 03
metrology.scientific@economie.fgov.be

Safety Regulations Unit

Tel.: 02 277 76 99 - Fax: 02 277 54 39
ensure@economie.fgov.be

Accreditation – BELAC

Tel.: 02 277 54 34 - Fax: 02 277 54 41
belac@economie.fgov.be

Standardisation and Competitiveness

Tel.: 02 277 74 40 or 02 277 54 42
norcom@economie.fgov.be

Continental Shelf Unit

Tel.: 02 277 72 77 - Fax: 02 277 54 42
copco@economie.fgov.be

5.3. Our offices

The Directorate-General Quality and Safety has **eight offices**:

❶ [Brussels \(central administration\)](#)

North Gate III
Koning Albert II-laan 16
1000 Brussels

❷ [Antwerp](#)

Theaterbuilding
Italiëlei 124 – PO box 85
2000 Antwerp

❸ [Ghent](#)

Zuiderpoort Office Park
Gaston Crommenlaan 6
9050 Ghent

❹ [Hasselt](#)

AC Verwilghen
Voorstraat 43
3500 Hasselt

❺ [Haren](#)

Haachtsesteenweg 1795
1130 Brussels

❻ [Liège](#)

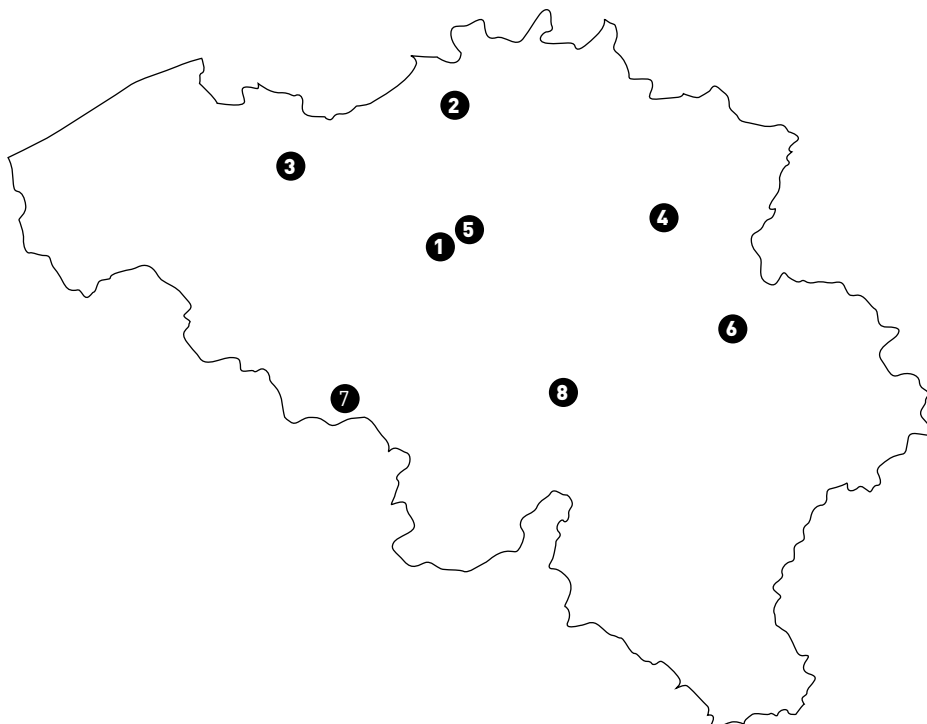
Saint Jean
Boulevard de la Sauvenière 73-75
4000 Liège

❼ [Mons](#)

Avenue Mélina Mercouri, bloc 10
7000 Mons

❽ [Namur \(Belgrade\)](#)

Business Center
Route de Louvain-la-Neuve 4 (PO box
8, 9, 10)
5001 Belgrade



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5.4. Follow the FPS Economy and our actions on social media

Like our Facebook page and get advice on consumer rights, the safety of products and services and the activities of our FPS. Follow us on Twitter! You will get information about consumer rights, advice for companies and the self-employed.



<https://www.facebook.com/SPFEco>



<https://twitter.com/spfeconomie>

5.5. Follow the actions of the Continental Shelf Unit on Facebook

Through its Facebook page, the unit keeps you informed about new research, its results and the scientific work of the FPS Economy.



<https://www.facebook.com/Service-Plateau-Continental-319506274818192/>



Rue du Progrès 50
1210 Brussels
Entreprise no: 0314.595.348
<https://economie.fgov.be>