

Election of staff representatives to the AFP board:

# All AFP Staff Worldwide Are Eligible to Vote



**Whatever your nationality, your workplace or your contract status**

The election of the two staff representatives on AFP's governing board, the only company vote that is truly worldwide, is to take place between June 10 and 20. Against the backdrop of a complex and confusing patchwork of labour and professional rights for AFP staff around the world, this election is special in that it allows **everyone** to have a say.

Article 7 of AFP's founding statutes specifies that the governing board comprises 16 members, including the CEO and *"Two representatives of agency staff, namely:*

- *A professional journalist elected by the body of professional journalists belonging to the agency's editorial staff;*
- *A member of personnel from among other staff categories, elected by staff from the said categories.*"<sup>1</sup>

In a statement published on April 29, CEO Emmanuel Hoog gave a full explanation of plans for the 2014 election<sup>2</sup> and in a second note published on the company intranet on May 5, he summed up the key points.<sup>3</sup>

**These texts state clearly that ALL AFP staff worldwide are eligible to take part in the election.** And yet:

## Some People Are Still Being Left Out

As soon as the electoral rolls<sup>4</sup> were published, on May 6, *SUD* contacted management to point out that the names of some 100 **staff employed by AFP's German subsidiaries** were missing.

In our message, we cited the CEO's April 29 statement and wrote:

*"No provision in the ruling quoted excludes people working for the German subsidiaries, who contribute just as much to the agency's activities as any other staff, whether they be employed under French labour law, under local contracts or as freelancers. Indeed any such exclusion probably violates Article 7 of the 1957 law laying down AFP's statutes."*

***SUD* has therefore asked that the staff in question be added to the electoral rolls, inasmuch as they fulfill the general conditions applicable to other voters.**

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.sos-afp.org/en/statutes - article7>

<sup>2</sup> <http://asap.afp.com/asap/document/dbdc2e5c-7a8e-4e05-8143-1d8c892e84ae> (Intranet link, French only)

<sup>3</sup> <http://asap.afp.com/asap/document/69aaa0fe-a2d1-499d-944c-ef18f92cc1d2> (Intranet link, Fr only)

<sup>4</sup> <http://asap.afp.com/asap/document/36f6e229-afbd-4767-aef9-751d3ec7a1d6> (Intranet link, Fr only)

## A Basic Principle

*SUD* has long defended the opening-up of the election of our representatives to the AFP board to all staff worldwide. For us, this is a basic principle.

The original version of the company's statutes, adopted by the French parliament in 1957, specified that the two staff reps. had to be "**of French nationality**". This also meant that only French nationals were eligible to vote in the election.

In 1998, the inclusion of **nationals from the states of the European Economic Area** brought the statutes into line with EU law. However this change still left over a thousand **staff members from other countries** out in the cold, independently of whether they had HQ or local employment status. Since 2011, that obstacle has also been lifted: after a long and difficult battle waged by *SUD* to the highest level of the French legal system, the **Constitutional Council** ruled that the restriction on the nationality of voters was unconstitutional.<sup>5</sup>

In the case of AFP staff in Germany, we are fully aware that they benefit from social and labour rights similar to those we enjoy in France. But there is no excuse for excluding them from the staff representative election.

The fight to ensure full rights for "HQ-status" staff while winning new professional, social and democratic rights for people working as freelancers or under non-French contracts requires equal voting rights for all.

## Union is Strength!

## All Together, Let's Defend Our Rights!

### Practical points

- The electoral rolls can be consulted on the Asap intranet site. Staff have until **Tuesday May 13** to point out omissions or errors.
- The deadline for candidacies for the two representative posts, which are made on an individual basis, is **May 23**. In both the journalist and the non-journalist college, *SUD* will back the candidate whose views are most in line with our vision of social and democratic rights, and of an AFP that is true to its general interest mission.
- The election, in a single round, will take place between June 10 and 20. Voting will be via an online system.

This document online : <http://www.sud-afp.org/spip.php?article254>

Version française : <http://www.sud-afp.org/spip.php?article254>

Deutsche Fassung: [http://www.sud-afp.org/IMG/pdf/voteca\\_d.pdf](http://www.sud-afp.org/IMG/pdf/voteca_d.pdf)

Paris, Friday May 9, 2014

**SUD-AFP (Solidaires - Unitaires - Démocratiques)**



**Sud** Solidaires  
AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE

<sup>5</sup> Statement in English on SUD's court battle: <http://www.sud-afp.org/spip.php?article102>