UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

Convention on the Transboundary
Effects of Industrial Accidents

Industrial Accident Notification (IAN) System
Task force
14 January 2010

SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE TASK FORCE MEETING
By the secretariat

I.   Introduction

1.   At the request of the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties, 15th meeting, The Hague, 26-27 January 2009, secretariat invited points of contact within the UNECE Industrial Accidents Notification (IAN) System to nominate their representatives to join a task force with the following tasks: (a) ensure a number of analytical exercises to be carried out before the Fourth consultation of points of contact, (b) ensure the results of these exercises to be presented for analysis at the fourth consultation to allow the points of contact making further recommendations on strengthening the effectiveness of the IAN System, and (c) facilitate to the points of contact to make the evaluation of the compatibility of IAN and EU CECIS Systems and verify if there is no redundancy between the two systems and submit results and possible recommendations in this regard.

2.   Points of contact from Austria, Croatia, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Romania and Switzerland nominated their representatives to the task force.

3.   The second task force meeting was held in The Hague on 14 January 2010 at the invitation of the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment of the Netherlands. The following task force members took part in the meeting: Mr. Christian Krol (Austria), Mr. Barjan Bajt (Croatia), Mr. Eric Philip (France), Mr. Stefano Smaniotto (Italy), Mr. Ruud de Krom (the Netherlands), and Mr. Dominiqure Rauber (Switzerland). Mr. Lukasz Wyrowski representing the secretariat, Mr. Gerhard de Vries from Joint Research Centre of the European Commission, Mr. Erik van den Berg from Capgemini Business Consulting, and Mr. Marnix de Ridder from the Technical Environmental Institute (RIVM) of the Netherlands also participated to the meeting. Mr. Francisc Senzaconi (Romania) due to other obligations could not attend the meeting.

II.   Provisional Agenda for the Fourth consultation

4.   Mr. Wyrowski presented the first draft version of the agenda as prepared by the secretariat on the basis of conclusions of the first task force meeting (Geneva, 17 September 2009). The draft contained three sessions:
        I – Effectiveness of UNECE Industrial Accidents Notification System
        II – Effective use of different notification systems
        III – No name. The topic of this session was for discussion by the task force.

5.   Mr. Wyrowski also presented the responses received to his message of 3 November 2009 in which, at the request of the task force, he invited points of contact to inform the secretariat and the task force about their interests in topics for discussion in the sessions III of the Fourth consultation.

6.   Two points of contact responded to the secretariat's message. One of them - Republic of Moldova - informed that they would be interested in additional training for their staff operating the IAN system. The second one - Ukraine – informed that they would like to make a presentation at the upcoming consultation about their procedures in detection of emergency situations.

7.   The task force expressed its disappointment that only two countries were able to respond to the message of the secretariat. At the same time, the group appreciated the suggestions received from Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

8.   The task force discussed the suggestions and decided that the session III should give points of contact the opportunity to share experiences and good practices related to their work. The members agreed that the issue of procedures for ensuring good quality of information delivered to points of contact for notification would be an interesting topic for presentations and discussion.

9.   Mr. Bajt volunteered Croatian point of contact to share at the Fourth consultation the procedures as existing in Croatia. Mr. Philip informed that French point of contact could also deliver such a presentation, nevertheless, to confirm this offer he would need to verify the availability of his colleagues.

10.   The task force appreciated the offers from Mr. Bajt and Mr. Philip. The group requested then the secretariat to contact Ukraine and to invite the country to deliver the presentation with the focus on the procedure on ensuring reliable data for international notification.

11.   With regard to session I, the task force agreed on it as presented in the draft provisional programme, i.e. starting with one presentation showing the statistics of the communication tests, following with three presentations showing the results of the analytical exercises and ending with one hour discussion devoted to further enhancement of the IAN system's effectiveness while taking into account the results of the exercises. The task force requested the secretariat to contact Mr. Senzaconi to moderate this session.

12.   Mr. Bajt presented the logistical preparations to the Fourth consultation.

`

13.   The task force expressed its appreciation to Mr. Bajt and Croatia for the efforts put into the consultation's logistical and technical arrangements.

14.   The task force requested the secretariat to draw up the information notice for the Fourth consultation based on the information provided by Mr. Bajt and to update the provisional agenda following the decisions of the second meeting as well as to circulate both documents within the task force for final review.

III.   Presentation of the data connecter and information exchange system

15.   Mr. Erik van den Berg presented to the task force a system being developed in the Netherlands to enable connection between different national notification systems used by various Dutch authorities. The key part of the system is an information pool to/from which relevant data is added/extracted. To enable effective operation of the system, the data needs to be provided in a standardized format and an agreement between system's users have to be concluded regarding the rights to add and/or extract data from the information pool.

16.   Mr. Gerhard de Vries presented the activities carried out under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) that led to elaboration of a common standard for notification of radiological emergencies. The standard was named International Radiation Information eXchange (IRIX). It is characterized by a well defined set of data elements that can be exchanged (machine to machine) using a XML schema through a web-service.

17.   The task force discussed both presentations and concluded that:

- Standardization as carried out for notification concerning radiological emergencies should be a basis also with regard to notification of chemical emergencies for ensuring compatibility between different notification systems in a longer term;
- It could be beneficial if a standard similar to IRIX was developed for chemical emergencies and was accepted by different organizations hosting notification systems on chemical emergencies;
- IRIX could be a basis for developing chemical emergencies standard;
- Standardization should be discussed by the Fourth consultation of points of contact. This discussion should preferably be joined by representatives of different organizations hosting notification systems for chemical emergencies
- The connecter/information pool solution requires standardization to be implemented first, therefore it would be premature to start any discussion in this regard already at the fourth consultation;

18.   Based on the conclusions above the task force agreed to arrange the session II of the fourth consultation of points of contact, as follows:

- First presentation should introduce the challenge for points of contact with operating, besides the national systems, different international notification systems, available

currently as electronic, often web-based, applications. Mr. Krol agreed to make such a presentation on the basis of experience of the Austrian point of contact;

- Second presentation should show the standardization carried out under IAEA. Mr. de Vries was requested to make this presentation at the Fourth consultation.
- Third presentation should show the benefits of the standardization both for countries that operate various national notification systems together with the international ones and for countries that use only international systems. Mr. de Krom agreed to make such a presentation.
- The presentations should be followed by discussion moderated by Mr. de Krom with the aim to work out recommendations on a possible way forward for notification of chemical emergencies.