



**Third Consultation and Training Session
for Points of Contact for the Purpose of
Accident Notification and Mutual
Assistance Designated within the UNECE
Industrial Accident Notification System**

Francisc Senzaconi
General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations, Romania

INTRODUCTION

- The consultation and training session was part of the workplan under the Convention for period 2006 – 2008;
- It was organized and hosted by the General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations / Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reform in Sibiu, Romania From 1 to 3 April 2008.
- Participation: representative of points of contact from the 30 UNECE member countries (Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Turkey, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, United Kingdom and Uzbekistan).

OBJECTIVES

- To review the effectiveness of the UNECE IAN System on the basis of the results of the System's tests carried out after the second consultation by Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic and Estonia in 2006, and by Denmark, Finland, Latvia and Lithuania in 2007;
- To share experience about the functioning and organization of work of points of contact.

THE AGENDA

- Session I: The effectiveness of the IAN System, and results of the tests performed in 2006 and 2007;
- Session II: Exchange of good practice on the functioning and organization of work of the points of contact;
- Session III: Hands-on training in the use of the Web-based application for notification and requesting assistance within the IAN System.

SESSION I - EFFECTIVENESS OF IAN SYSTEM

- Eight tests were carried out in the period 2006–2007, four in English, four in Russian;
- There were problems and time consuming in case of using the fax (especially when the fax and telephones share the same line);
- There are out-of-date contact details for some points of contact.

ENGLISH TESTS (2006-2007*)

| | Austria | Czech Republic | Denmark | Finland |
|---|------------|----------------|------------|------------|
| Date of the test | 27.06.2006 | 28.11.2006 | 25.06.2007 | 08.02.2008 |
| Number of participating points of contact | 26 | 30 | 30 | 29 |
| Number of acknowledgements received | 21 | 22 | 23+3* | 27* |
| Number of points of contact who did not reply | 5* | 8 | 4 | 2 |

RUSSIAN TESTS (2006-2007)

| | Bulgaria | Estonia | Latvia | Lithuania |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Date of the test | 15.06.2006 | 22.12.2006 | 01.06.2007 | 03.12.2007 |
| Number of participating points of contact | 10 | 11 | 11 | 11 |
| Number of acknowledgements received | 4 | 3 | 9* | 7* |
| Number of points of contact who did not reply | 6 | 8 | 2 | 4 |

SESSION II - FUNCTIONING AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK OF THE POINTS OF CONTACT

- Representatives of points of contact from Belarus, Hungary, the Netherlands, Romania and Switzerland presented information on the organization and work in case of emergencies.
- The main aspects revealed:
 - A clear set of procedures for communication and cooperation is essential in emergency situations;
 - Points of contact should be fully integrated into overall emergency management;
 - Exercises and drills need to be conducted regularly to test the effectiveness of adopted procedures and systems, including back-up systems;
 - Staff needs to be involved in the regular training.

SESSION III TRAINING

- A presentation on the use of Web-based application made by Mr. J. Buangan, IT consultant to the Convention secretariat, orientated on how to:
 - access the application,
 - use the navigation section for sending early-warnings, information or requests for assistance reports;
 - use different functions of the application;
 - update the accounts, check on reports received and use the exercise mode.
- A hand-on session, during which participants using training accounts, tested and learned how to use the application by sending each other early warning, information or assistance request reports.

CONCLUSIONS

- The results of the tests, in particular in the EECCA and SEE sub-regions were not satisfactory and the sub-regional testing on communication should be continued with two rounds of testing per year;
- The points of contact should be encouraged to perform supplementary communication tests on a voluntarily basis using the Web-based application with their counterparts in neighboring countries;
- It was recognized that cooperation between points of contact should also be tested through more comprehensive exercises carried out between neighboring countries and focused on analysis of emergencies corresponding to the real situations;
- At least three such comprehensive exercises should be carried out in 2009 and each should involve one country initiating the exercise according to its scenario on industrial accidents and those (neighboring) countries which according to the scenario could really be affected. A report to the next consultation of points of contact is expected from participating countries.

CONCLUSIONS

- For such complex exercises should be drawn-up a guidance document, based on a draft scenario developed by Nederland and Georgia;
- A steering group formed by few points of contact should analyze and finalize the guidance until the fourth Conference of the Parties
- On the basis of the results of the exercises and the outcome of the communication tests organized during the 2009 points of contact and their consultation should discuss on possible improvements to IAN System, and make recommendations for consideration to the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties;
- Croatia – Slovenia and Armenia – Georgia already announced their willingness to organize this kind of comprehensive exercise in the first half of the 2009;
- In view of further harmonization between different systems, the data format used in the IAN System should be evaluated and an analysis undertaken on the added value of using a data format developed within the framework of the notification system of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Follow-up to the Consultation - Steering Group Meeting under the Industrial Accidents Notification (IAN) System

- Was held in Geneva, at Palais des Nations, on 30 July.
- Was organized at the request of the Third Consultation of Points of Contact on the basis of the conclusions which emphasized the need to test the cooperation between points of contact of neighboring countries through organization of more detailed exercises focused on analysis of incidents/emergencies close to real situations.
- The aims of the steering group meeting was to:
 - finalize a general scenario to serve as a basis for performing comprehensive analytical exercises on response to and notification on possible industrial accidents with transboundary effects;
 - prepare a schedule for comprehensive exercises and communication tests to be performed until the fourth consultation for points of contact;
 - make an evaluation of the data format used under the IAN System.
- 7 countries + UNECE Convention Secretariat, 11 participants

Follow-up to the Consultation - Steering Group Meeting under the Industrial Accidents Notification (IAN) System

Guidance for comprehensive analytical exercises

- The steering group agreed that the guidance is developed to support the testing of notification between countries and the effectiveness in using the Industrial Accidents Notification System and for this purpose:
 - it should contain steps for performing exercises, hints to be followed by “countries initiating the exercise” and by “other countries participating in it”;
 - the scenario should contain a long-term vision of the scale and aims of the exercises in order to reflect a possible real situation and into which as many as possible response stakeholders/actors should be involved.

The guidance for comprehensive exercises

- The guidance provides information to the points of contact for the organization of analytical exercises implying the use of IAN System and in particular on:
 - steps to be taken prior to performing an exercise,
 - actions to be taken during the exercise,
 - possible accident scenarios, which can be used as a starting point for an analysis, where it is differentiated between scenarios involving:
 - substance that may have impact when released into the air, and
 - substance that may have impact when released into the water (surface or/and groundwater)

Follow-up to the Consultation - Steering Group Meeting under the Industrial Accidents Notification (IAN) System

Evaluation of the data format used under the IAN System

The steering group:

- looked into the data format for notification as elaborated for exchange of information on nuclear and radiological incidents under the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).
- agreed that the detailed comparison between formats of both systems should be done after the IAN System's comprehensive exercises are performed so that it is known whether any proposals for changes to IAN reports and their formats are suggested based on the experience from the exercises. Should it be the case, the detailed analysis of the formats could be carried out at the preparatory meeting for the Fourth consultation for points of contact.

Way forward

Conference of the Parties is invited to request points of contact to:

- continue with communication test and to perform analytical exercises as recommended by the Third consultation and on that basis look for the ways to further enhance the notification effectiveness.
- Organize their fourth consultation to discuss the results of the tests and exercises and evaluate possible changes to the IAN System, if any, allowing further enhancing the effectiveness of notification (e.g. the use of data format).
- Report to the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the outcome of the fourth Consultation and make recommendations for decisions.

Thank you for attention

