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Report of the fourth consultation for points of contact

Objectives (3 sessions)

- Review effectiveness of IAN system
- Discuss effective use of the IAN system alongside other notification systems
- Sharing experience and good practices in the organisation of national rescue and civil protection directorates

1- Effectiveness of the IAN system

Experiences learned from recent tests

- 20 communication test and 3 exercises performed since last consultation
- There were still points of contact that did not acknowledge receipt of notification (did not open report received with IAN application)

Some lessons learned from exercises 1/2

- Technical tools are very important but telephone lines still needed
- Cross-border notification is very difficult due to :
 - Lack of clear criteria for decision-making
 - Lack of quality data from the field
 - Difficulties related to translation in English
- Regular notification exercises need to be held

Some lessons learned from exercises 2/2

- Local authorities have to think internationally
- Exercises need more realistic scenarios
- While the IAN has been found to be user-friendly, it was suggested to be improved on some technical points (see report)

Some actions formulated to be undertaken (country and international)

- Country level :
 - Raise awareness on the obligation to provide reliable international notification
 - Introduce regular testing / exercises between neighbouring countries
 - Maintain good knowledge of structure, means and procedure for response to emergencies

Some actions formulated to be undertaken (country and international)

- International level :
 - Provide a commonly agreed tests and exercises plan
 - Address the issue of avoiding duplication and inconsistencies in notification if a number of notification systems are in use
 - Make changes to the IAN system to increase its user-friendly operation

Some suggestions made

- Test and exercises should be performed between neighbouring countries
- Exercises including mutual assistance should be performed UNECE-wide
- Notification systems in transboundary contexts, and equally for testing, should be used as follows:
 - (i) For waterway scenarios notification should be made by more dedicated systems (e.g., early warning systems of international river commissions), if existing, whereas IAN should be used in cases where there was a lack of more dedicated systems and for mutual assistance requests; and
 - (ii) For airway scenarios IAN should be used;
- Ideally, there should be one system for all notifications
- The IAN system should allow for a reply function
- Modifications to the IAN system should be only recommended once exercises and tests were conducted by more points of contact

PoC agreed that 1/2

- PoC who did not comply with notification procedures under the IAN system should be urged to do so
- PoC who faced problems with using the IAN web-based application should contact the secretariat for immediate assistance to rectify the situation
- Test and exercises using IAN system should be performed on three level (see report)

PoC agreed that 2/2

- Recommendations for any modifications to the IAN system and its web-based application should be made only after a considerably higher number of tests and especially analytical exercises were carried out
- The secretariat should collect the suggestions for modifications to the IAN system for consideration at the next consultation of points of contact and for possible submission to the subsequent meeting of the COP

2- Effective use of the IAN system alongside other notification systems

Issues 1/2

- UNECE member countries are operating various notification systems
- Each existing notification system is best adapted for its particular purpose
- While a lower number of systems could be more efficient and more user-friendly, the various systems are providing back-up for each other

Issues 2/2

- During emergencies there is always only a short time in which to decide what information to send via which system
- Under the real stress of emergency situations, manuals are of little help in guiding the choice of which notification system to use
- The establishment of standards to be applied across different systems for notification could present a solution

Conclusions 1/2

- PoC agreed that there are too many notification systems
- At the same time all of them provide an essential function
- The proposal to apply standardisation across various notification systems was commonly appreciated and supported

Conclusions 2/2

- Elaboration of the standard, if to do, should be done in cooperation with international bodies hosting other notification systems
- PoC requested secretariat to contact those international bodies to see if they are interested
- PoC also recommended that, if a work on the standards is to be carried out, CoP should establish a working group to jointly elaborate the standards with other international bodies

3- Sharing of experience and good practice

Presentation done

- Croatia and France presented good practices and national systems used in everyday work by the respective rescue and civil defense authorities



Thank you

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