

Economic Commission for Europe
Convention on the Transboundary Effects
of Industrial Accidents

Capacity-building activity within the
Assistance Programme

Report of the National training on identification of hazardous
activities for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

I Introduction

1 The National training session on identification of hazardous activities was held in Skopje on 23-24 March 2010. It was organized within the framework of the implementation phase of the Assistance Programme for the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe pursuant to a decision by the Conference of the Parties at its fifth meeting (Geneva, 25-27 November 2008; ECE/CP.TEIA/19, paras. 50 (c)(iii) and 78 (i)).

2 The Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia organized the training session.

II Objective

3 The objective of the National training session was to improve knowledge of the governmental experts in the area of identification of hazardous activities under the Convention and under the Seveso II Directive (96/82/EC) as well as to enhance awareness of industry with respect to the potential risk of hazardous activities.

4 The detailed objectives of the National training session provided the participants with the possibility to:

(a) Learn about the application of the Annex I, including the differences between Annex I and the location criteria of the Convention and Annex I of the Seveso II Directive;

(b) Discuss other techniques used for identification of hazardous activities (worst-case scenarios analysis); and

(c) Discuss good practices for collecting, processing and inventorying information on hazardous activities.

III Participation

5 The National training session was organized for experts from authorities in the FYR of Macedonia, which are responsible for industrial safety in the country. In particular representatives from the following authorities participated to the training session: the Administration for Environment Division for Chemicals and Industrial Accidents, Division for Chemicals and Industrial Accidents, Division for Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control, SAIM Project Unit, State Environmental Inspectorate of the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning. Representatives of different industrial installations

present in different areas of the country were also represented. The industries represented at the training session had all been inserted in a preliminary list of hazardous activities in the Country. The training session was supported by two experts hired by the secretariat and by a member of the secretariat.

IV Opening, welcome address

6 Mr. Filip Ivanov, Director of the Administration for Environment of the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, welcomed the participants and opened the national training session. He expressed his gratitude to the UNECE Convention and to the experts for organizing the National training session for the fyR of Macedonia and to the representatives of the installations for joining the training session.

7 Ms. Virginia Fusé, UNECE secretariat also addressed the participants, expressing satisfaction that the training session could be organized, and wished all the participants a fruitful work for the following two days. She also invited the participants to actively participate to the training session and she highlighted the important role that has the cooperation between authorities and public sector to reach an effective industrial safety.

V Programme

8 The programme of the training session consisted in three sessions:

9 Session I aimed at providing a general framework on the Convention and its implementation in the country. The session was also providing the participants with a general overview of the legislation adopted for the implementation of the Convention in general and on the identification of hazardous activities in particular. This session was particularly needed given the participation of a relatively high number of representatives of the private sector/industry, who were not yet familiar with the Convention and its requirements.

10 Session II focused on good practices for the identification of hazardous activities under the Convention. Experts from Bulgaria and Serbia presented the experience of their countries concerning the identification of hazardous activities. The two experts provided interesting view of their different experiences and paths towards the same aim. The facilitators also provided an overview of differences and similarities between the Annex I under the Convention and the Annex I of the Seveso II Directive¹. The representatives of the competent authorities of tfYR of Macedonia could also present the activities undertook for the Convention implementation in the country and national legislation linked with industrial accidents management. The representative from the State Environmental Inspectorate gave a comprehensive presentation on performed activities in this area from the inspection point of view

11 Session III focused on the tools provided by the Convention for the identification of hazardous activities. In particular, through case studies, participants could see how to apply the guidance of Annex I to the Convention and the location criteria, including a part on the presentation of the worst-case scenario methodology. The conclusion of this session aimed at drawing a possible follow-up for the country.

¹ Directive on Major accidents involving dangerous substances. Council Directive 96/82/EC, as amended by Directive 2003/105/EC.

Findings of the training session

12 In particular the experience from Serbia could have been of main interest also considering the fact that the country had just started to implement the process on identification of hazardous activities.

13 An interim working group involving the authorities dealing with the implementation of the Convention was institutionalised by law. The members of the working group met regularly and were planning to implement an integrated approach to major accidents. The working group was the initiator of the National training session.

14 The presentations and the exchange of information with the experts during the training session, showed that, although legislation on different aspects of the Convention had been elaborated or was under elaboration, the country had a limited knowledge of the identification of hazardous activities and it did not have a sustainable procedure for it. The country had also a general legal framework on the classification of chemicals and on the collection of data from the operators to the competent authorities.

15 In the country, at the time of the training, a preliminary list of hazardous installations had been drawn up on the basis of the IPPC Directive². In order to identify which installations should be invited to the training session, it was agreed that the Environmental Inspectorate would have submitted a questionnaire to the operators. The questionnaire was to better establish which installations were more likely to fall under the scope of the Convention. The questionnaire was still under assessment at the time of the meeting, but still it allowed identifying the installations to which send an invitation for the training session.

16 The country was using a system for the classification of chemicals, which was managed by the Ministry of Health and which was being harmonised with European Union legislation. A Rulebook on the hazardous substances, the limit values (thresholds) for the presence of hazardous substances and the criteria or properties by which a substance shall be classified as hazardous was approved. The training session was also an opportunity to present it to the operators in order to better work together for its full implementation.

17 The representatives of the authorities and of the operators could hear of the more and more important link between the safety reports³ and the collection of data, which could be useful in the mechanism for the identification of hazardous activities.

18 Operators were submitting to the relevant authorities, data already elaborated on chemicals. Nonetheless, it was highlighted that there was still not a mechanism for a systematic collection of data for the purposes of identification of hazardous activities.

19 Participants also discussed whether the same procedures adopted for installations under the IPPC Directive should be followed for the installations falling under the Convention. The general opinion was that the installations concerned were too different for the same procedures to be applied.

20 The country was planning to organise a national workshop for the preparation of safety reports and to have a list on hazardous activities under the Convention by the end of 2010.

2 Integrated pollution prevention and control (IPPC) Directive (2008/1/EC)

3 The safety reports are documents from where relevant information on hazardous activities present in the country could be gathered.

Conclusions

21 Participants could see that there were not major differences in the Annex I to the Convention and the Annex I to the Seveso II Directive. Therefore the participants could conclude that the implementation of the provisions of the Convention could also advantage the country in the implementation of the provisions of the European Union.

22 Participants to the training session estimated that a harmonised mechanism for collecting information, a harmonised mechanism for inspections and one for issuing permits would allow to reduce the burden to the operators and to enhance the exchange of information between the different authorities involved.

23 The country experts agreed that, after having finalised a list of hazardous activities under the Convention, the relevant authorities should decide what measures to apply to the installations falling under the Convention, and what measures to apply to other hazardous installations not falling under the Convention according to the location criteria, but with similar hazardous potential.

24 The authorities acknowledged that they needed to work more together in cooperation between the different authorities involved.

25 The national training session allowed the national authorities and the operators to better exchange information on the needs and the rationale for the implementation of the legislation. This could be a good starting point for future cooperation.

26 The first outcome of the national training session would be the preparation of national guidelines for the identification of hazardous activities under the Convention. The guidelines should be approved by the Bureau and should serve as a basis for creating a sustainable mechanism for the identification of hazardous activities in the country. The guidelines were to be submitted to the secretariat by 7 June 2010.

VI Closing of the training session

27 The representative of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia expressed their satisfaction for the national training session, which gave the opportunity of discussing, together with representatives of national authorities, but also with representatives of many hazardous installations in the neighbouring countries, important topics for industrial safety.

28 Participant appreciated the material made available by the experts and even more the possibility of discussing with them the way the identification of hazardous activities was structured in the respective countries. In particular, the experience from Serbia was of main interest, considering the fact that the country had started relative recently to implement the provisions of the Convention and of the Seveso II directive, also in relation of the identification of hazardous activities.

29 The representative of the secretariat thanked Ms. Kupeva-Nedelkova and her team for organising the national training session and welcomed the conclusions reached through the discussions. Ms. Fusé also expressed the appreciation of the secretariat for the availability of the country to prepare guidelines on the identification of hazardous activities and expressed her wish that, once ready, the guidelines would be used effectively to implement a sustainable mechanism for the identification of hazardous activities.

30 In addition, she highlighted how important was the participation of such a high number of participants from hazardous installations, since the cooperation between authorities and operators is of extreme importance to achieve an effective industrial safety.

31 Ms. Kupeva-Nedelkova, on behalf of the authorities of the country, closed the national training session.
