WHO/Europe priorities and current activities in chemical emergencies (industrial accidents)

First Interagency Consultation on Industrial Accidents

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Presentation outline

• International legal basis
• WHO/Europe priorities
  - IHR implementation
  - Emergency preparedness and response
• Current activities
  - meetings/trainings
  - participation in the project
  - other
International legal basis

• International Health Regulations (2005) – legally binding instrument (194 States Parties)

• Art. 5 “... Develop, strengthen and maintain... the capacities to detect, assess, notify and report events in accordance with these Regulations. ..”

• Art 13 “... Develop, strengthen and maintain ... the capacities to respond promptly and effectively to public health risks and public health emergencies of international concerns...”
International legal basis

- 15 June 2009: Core capacity assessment completed
- 15 June 2012: Core capacities implemented
- 15 June 2014: Possible extension of 2 + 2 years
- Monitoring IHR Implementation

Dates:
- 29-04-2013
- 15 June 2009
- 15 June 2012
- 15 June 2014
- 15 June 2016
IHR Core Capacities and extension requests
(IHR team assessment, WHO/Europe)

- As of 11 February 2013, **21 of 55 States Parties** to the IHR in the WHO European Region (38%) have requested extensions lasting until 2014

- 15 countries have submitted the implementation plan necessary for them to be eligible to receive an extension

- Better developed and coordinated capacities are needed in more countries
Priorities: WHO/Europe (IHR implementation)

The IHR Core Capacity Group Meeting - WHO Regional Office for Europe (Luxembourg, 2013)

- 132 participants from 48 Member States (and UN administered province of Kosovo);

Priorities *(selected)*:

- improving inter-sectoral and multi-sectoral cooperation;
- developing and implementing legislation for support of national IHR implementation;
- developing human resources and capacity;
Priorities: WHO/Europe (chemical safety)

Health aspects of chemical safety: Strategic directions for action of the WHO Regional Office for Europe (Bonn, Germany, 2012)

Gaps: exposure scenario/modeling, poisons centers development, long-term epidemiological follow-up and exposure monitoring, and laboratories capacities development;

Priorities:

**capacity-building activities** for emergency preparedness and response and implementation of the IHR in the chemical safety area by:

• promoting the creation of poison centres and strengthening the capacities of existing centres according to WHO recommendations;
• supporting the development and implementation of training activities on the IHR and emergency preparedness and response;
• facilitating the implementation of methodologies to assess the long-term effects of chemical emergencies; and
• providing support for risk profile map development;
Current activities: meetings and trainings

Regional activities

Awareness raising and training workshop for SEE countries “Capacity building in the public health management of chemical incidents and the IHR implementation” *(Belgrade, Serbia, March 2013)*

*Co-organized by WHO Regional Office for Europe and WHO-Collaborating Centre for Chemical Incidents (Cardiff University, UK)*;

17 participants from 7 countries (IHR and UNECE Convention focal points or focal points nominees)

Objectives (selected):

Present an overview of the multi-disciplinary skills required for the successful management of chemical incidents

Planned: Kiev, Ukraine (July, 2013) – Belarus, Russian Federation, Ukraine Radiation and Chemical Safety/IHR implementation;

National activities

Workshop on Implementation of the International Health Regulations (2005) and Chemical Safety in Bosnia and Herzegovina *(Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, November 2012)*;

28 participants from all relevant governmental stakeholders
Current activities: participation in the project

In partnership with Secretariat of UNECE/Republic of Moldova/Netherlands

RIECO project “Risk assessment of Industrial accidents and Enforcement of Cross-border Obligation” (January-December 2013)

WHO/Europe role – involvement of health sector in:
- capacities/gaps/needs assessment;
- discussion of chemicals preparedness and response framework;
- participation in development of guidance documents;
Current activities: development of networks of experts and information communication

- **National focal points for health related aspects of chemical safety**
  33 WHO European Region Member States (since 2012)

- **Roster of experts in chemical emergencies preparedness and response (is developing)**

- **WHO/Europe web-site - web-page “Chemical safety” (is developing)**
  “Policy” – UNECE Convention on Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents
  “Activities” – Preparedness for chemical incidents and emergencies