

**UNECE Convention on the Transboundary  
Effects of Industrial Accidents**

**UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary  
Watercourses and International Lakes**

**Joint ad hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents**

**14<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE JOINT AD HOC EXPERT GROUP  
ON WATER AND INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS**

3 May 2016  
Stockholm, Sweden

**Meeting Minutes**



UNECE 2016

## 1. Opening of the meeting

The co-Chairs of the Joint ad hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents (JEG), Mr. Gerhard Winkelmann-Oei (Germany, Industrial Accidents Convention) and Mr. Peter Kovacs (Hungary, Water Convention), opened the meeting and welcomed the participants, especially the new JEG members, Ms. Lubov Hertman and Mr. Medetbek Omurbekov. The co-Chairs also expressed their sincere appreciation to Mr. Claes-Hakan Carlsson for Sweden's hosting and his excellent organization of the meeting. The UNECE secretariat serviced the meeting, represented by Ms. Claudia Kamke (Industrial Accidents Convention).

JEG members present	JEG members absent
1. Mr. Gerhard Winkelmann-Oei (JEG co-Chair, Germany)	1. Mr. Pavel Danihelka (Czech Republic)
2. Mr. Peter Kovacs (JEG co-Chair, Hungary)	2. Ms. Natalia Racovet (Republic of Moldova)
3. Ms. Lubov Hertman (Belarus)	3. Mr. Francisc Senzaconi (Romania) <sup>1</sup>
4. Mr. Pavel Dobes (Czech Republic)	4. Ms. Suzana Milutinovic (Serbia)
5. Mr. Serik Akhmetov (Kazakhstan)	5. Ms. Helena Nasslander (Sweden)
6. Mr. Medetbek Omurbekov (Kyrgyzstan)	
7. Mr. Claes-Hakan Carlsson (Sweden)	

## 2. Mandate, workplan and activities of the JEG in 2015–2016

The secretariat gave an overview of the activities by the JEG since its establishment, recalling its mandate and workplan for 2015–2016, agreed by the Conventions' Bureaux, as well as the JEG strategy according to which the Bureaux decide whether to activate the JEG to work on delivering specific demand-driven product(s). The JEG co-Chairs provided further information about the relevant decisions taken at the seventh Meeting of the Parties of the Water Convention (Budapest, 17–19 November 2015) and the JEG side event on preventing accidental water pollution held in this framework (18 November 2015), emphasizing the importance of the JEG in preventing accidental water pollution.

JEG members took note of the information presented and discussed further activities that could be held in 2016, expressing support for the idea to hold a JEG side event at the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Industrial Accidents Convention (Ljubljana, 28–30 November 2016). Germany offered to act again as the lead country and several JEG members agreed to deliver presentations. The secretariat informed the JEG that Mr. Martin Merkofer (Switzerland), member of the Working Group on Implementation of the Industrial Accidents Convention, could make a presentation on the prevention of accidental water pollution 30 years after the Sandoz accident. JEG members welcomed this proposal, requesting Mr. Winkelmann-Oei to finalize the programme for the side event, in cooperation with the secretariat.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Senzaconi did not inform the secretariat about his absence.

Co-Chair Mr. Kovacs informed participants that he could unfortunately not attend the side event and the ninth Conference of the Parties due to his attendance at the Budapest Water Summit to be held on the same dates. He informed the JEG that 1400 participants were expected at the Budapest Water Summit, particularly many high-level representatives, including the UNECE Executive Secretary. He suggested that this would also be a good opportunity to promote the work of the JEG, for example, through distributing promotion materials, a statement by the Executive Secretary and interventions by national high-level representatives. The secretariat agreed to inquire internally on the proposed opportunities. Mr. Kovacs agreed to inform the JEG once more information about the programme would be available.

**Action items**

- Mr. Winkelmann-Oei to organize the JEG side event at the Conference of the Parties to the Industrial Accidents Convention, in cooperation with the secretariat
- Mr. Kovacs to share the programme for the Budapest Water Summit with JEG members
- JEG members to reach out to their high-level representatives to inquire on the possibility to mention the work done by the JEG in their statements at the Budapest Water Summit
- Secretariat to ship publications to the Budapest Water Summit and coordinate with the UNECE Executive Secretary and the Water Convention secretariat on their statements

**3. Publishing of the checklist for contingency planning for accidents affecting transboundary waters**

Mr. Carlsson informed JEG members about the progress made and next steps planned regarding the publishing of the contingency planning checklist, requesting clarification and advice on the layout, the number of printed copies and language versions needed. The JEG advised that the checklist be published in all three official UNECE languages, i.e. in addition to English and Russian also in French, bearing in mind that the Water Convention has been open for accession by United Nations Member States outside the UNECE region since 1 March 2016 and that the checklist has relevance also for French-speaking countries (e.g. in Africa). The JEG advised that the layout for previous safety guidelines should be used to increase brand recognition and requested the secretariat to provide Mr. Carlsson with an InDesign file for the safety guidelines for tailings management facilities (TMFs). The JEG recommended printing 500 hard copies per language, stressing that it would be important to have them available for the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Industrial Accidents Convention. The JEG agreed on the below time line and action items for publishing the checklist in 2016.

**Action items**

- May – secretariat to send the InDesign file to Mr. Carlsson
- June – Mr. Carlsson to circulate the draft layout to the JEG for comments
- July to August – Mr. Carlsson to include the comments on the layout received from the JEG in all three language version, consulting with the secretariat for further questions

- September – Mr. Carlsson to initiate the printing of the checklist in all three languages and subsequent shipping

#### 4. Checklist and follow-up project for tailings management facilities

Co-Chair Mr. Winkelmann-Oei informed participants about two follow-up projects, resulting from the project on addressing risk management at TMFs in Ukraine (2013–2015), which will be implemented under Germany’s leadership: (i) Raising knowledge on industrial safety at universities in Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine (June 2016–June 2017); and (ii) Improving risk management at tailings management facilities in Georgia (start date of the one-year project in 2016 to be determined). Mr. Winkelmann-Oei informed JEG experts that the approach in the Georgian project builds on “train-the-trainers”, i.e. that the participants should act as trainers on the TMF methodology in their countries thereafter. He informed the JEG that, in addition to 10 Georgian participants, 15 participants from other countries would attend the meeting. He invited JEG members, especially those with an interest in training national participants in their country thereafter, to attend the project activities. Ms. Hertman, Mr. Akhmetov and Mr. Omurbekov expressed interest on behalf of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, respectively, agreeing to enquire on the participation of English-speaking experts from their countries. Mr. Winkelmann-Oei also informed that Germany might be able to finance a follow-up project in one of those countries as of 2018, building on the application of the Tailings Hazard Index for which a national database on TMF activities would be needed. He encouraged JEG members thus also to inquire for the next meeting whether such databases existed in their countries.

#### **Action items:**

- Mr. Winkelmann-Oei to share the English description of the TMF project in Georgia with the JEG, once available, and to keep JEG members informed about the project start, including the dates for implementing project activities
- JEG members to confirm their interest in attending the workshops for the follow-up projects in Georgia and/or Ukraine
- Ms. Hertman, Mr. Akhmetov and Mr. Omurbekov to enquire about the possible participation of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, respectively, in the Georgian project, as well as about the existence of national databases on TMF

#### 5. Possible future activities by JEG in 2017–2018

The secretariat recalled the discussions held at the last JEG meeting (Kyiv, 20 May 2015) with regard to possible future activities by the JEG. The secretariat also recalled that, in accordance with the JEG strategy,<sup>2</sup> future activities of the JEG would need to be agreed by the Conventions’ Bureaux. The next Bureau meetings were scheduled for 29–30 June 2016 (Industrial Accidents Convention) and 20 October 2016 (Water Convention). JEG members discussed and agreed on the following activities to be included in the next workplan:

<sup>2</sup> Available from: [www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/teia/water/JEG/Strategy\\_JEG.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/teia/water/JEG/Strategy_JEG.pdf).

**(a) Development of guidance for fire-water retention strategies**

Co-Chair Mr. Winkelmann-Oei presented the conclusions from the seminar on the occasion of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Sandoz accident (Bonn, Germany, 8–9 November 2011)<sup>3</sup> which, among others, stipulated the recommendation by Parties to both Conventions that the JEG be tasked with the elaboration of a catalogue of preventive measures for processing plants, giving special attention to the handling of fire waters at these plants. He recalled that, despite this year’s 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Sandoz accident, fire-water retention strategies were still an issue in most countries of the European Union and European Free Trade Association, including Germany and the Netherlands which had experienced related accidents more recently. The development of guidance on fire-water retention strategies would thus be of utmost importance and should be included in the JEG’s upcoming workplan for 2017–2018.

JEG members agreed that there was still a need to develop guidance on this topic and supported the proposal that this be done by a smaller steering group of experts on the topic. The Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary and Sweden indicated their readiness to provide experts in-kind on this topic. Co-Chair Mr. Winkelmann-Oei also suggested that Germany could act as a lead country for the implementation of this activity. It was further proposed to invite experts from other countries to join the steering group, following agreement on the JEG workplan by the Conventions’ Bureaux. To facilitate discussion in the Bureaux, the secretariat suggested that a short concept paper on the activity be prepared for presentation to the Bureaux, containing information on the kind of product to be delivered, timeframe and organization of work, including tentative meetings and funding requirements. The JEG agreed with the proposal and co-Chair Mr. Winkelmann-Oei volunteered to prepare such a concept paper.

<b><u>Action items</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• By the end of May 2016 – Mr. Winkelmann-Oei to prepare a concept paper on the development of guidance on fire-water retention strategies, in cooperation with co-Chair Mr. Kovacs and the secretariat</li><li>• By mid-June 2016 – secretariat to circulate the concept paper to the Bureau of the Industrial Accidents Convention (and subsequently to the Water Convention Bureau)</li></ul>



**(b) Promotion of transboundary response exercises**

Co-Chair Mr. Winkelmann-Oei informed participants that a transboundary response exercise between Poland and Germany on the Odra River was scheduled for 4–5 September 2017. The exercise would simulate an oil spill and be held back-to-back with a seminar focusing on firefighting strategies. He suggested that this seminar be used to discuss a draft of the guidance on fire-water retention strategies, as proposed under item 5 (a). JEG members welcomed and supported this proposal.

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<sup>3</sup> Available from: [www.unece.org/index.php?id=25376](http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=25376).

In addition, co-Chair Mr. Kovacs informed participants that a transboundary response exercise in Hungary was also planned for autumn 2017, simulating a chemical accident other than oil. To avoid conflicting dates with the German-Polish exercise, he suggested inquiring whether the Hungarian exercise could be moved to another date, presumably in spring 2017 or in 2018. Mr. Kovacs also suggested that a seminar could be held back-to-back with the exercise, focusing on transboundary contingency planning to avoid accidental water pollution. JEG members welcomed and supported this proposal, suggesting that this be organized also in close cooperation with the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River.

<u>Action item</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. Kovacs to confirm the dates for the transboundary response exercise in Hungary</li> </ul>



**(c) Supporting the application of UNECE safety guidelines and checklists in countries with economies in transition and other United Nations Member States**

The JEG agreed that supporting countries with economies in transition in their application of UNECE safety guidelines and checklists should be continued in 2016–2017, welcoming in this regard particularly the two follow-up projects on TMF safety in Georgia and Ukraine, led by Germany. JEG members also discussed whether, in the medium-term, JEG could develop checklists based on the UNECE safety guidelines and good practices for pipelines and those for oil terminals. The Group agreed that this would rather be a task for after 2018.

**6. Prioritization and elements for a draft workplan by JEG in 2017–2018**

JEG members agreed that the focus of the next workplan should be on: (i) the development of guidance on fire-water retention strategies; (ii) the organization of transboundary response exercises between Germany and Poland as well as in Hungary, with which two seminars be held back-to-back; and (iii) the provision of support to Georgia and Ukraine in applying the TMF methodology.

The Group also concluded that, in order to monitor and support effectively the implementation of current and future JEG tasks, more regular meetings would need to be held, that is, twice per year. It requested the secretariat to the Water and Industrial Accidents Conventions to ensure that the meetings would be serviced by at least one representative. The secretariat highlighted capacity constraints, explaining that the usual meeting frequency has been once a year in the past, but also procedural constraints, namely that according to the JEG strategy the Bureaux of the two Conventions decide about the activation of the JEG for specific tasks. Co-Chair Mr. Winkelmann-Oei informed the JEG that funding for the participation of JEG members and the secretariat was available within the follow-up projects in Georgia and Ukraine in 2016–2017 and suggested that future JEG meetings be held-back-to-back with such project activities. JEG members welcomed this proposal.

**7. Input for presentation of JEG activities to the Bureaux and the Conference of the Parties**

The secretariat was requested to prepare a draft workplan of the JEG for 2017–2018, based on the discussions held at the meeting and in cooperation with the two co-Chairs, for consultation and agreement by the Bureaux of the Industrial Accidents and Water Conventions at their meetings in June and October 2016, respectively. They requested the co-Chairs to present past and future activities by the JEG at the respective Bureaux meetings and, upon agreement, subsequently at the next meetings of the Conventions' governing bodies for inclusion of JEG activities in the Conventions' programmes of work.

<u>Action items</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• May/June 2016 – Secretariat to prepare a draft workplan for the JEG for 2017–2018, in cooperation with the two co-Chairs, and to circulate it to the Bureaux thereafter</li><li>• Co-Chairs to present the JEG workplan for 2017–2018 at the Bureaux meetings in June (Industrial Accidents Convention) and October (Water Convention) 2016</li></ul>



**8. Any other business**

Co-Chair Mr. Winkelmann-Oei reiterated the need for regular meetings of the JEG twice a year and suggested that the next JEG meeting be held in September or October 2016, back-to-back with one of the project activities in Georgia or Ukraine. The secretariat proposed that, because of limited capacity in the secretariat, the next JEG meeting be shifted to after the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Industrial Accidents Convention. It was agreed that the date of the next JEG meeting would be confirmed once the dates for the respective project activities would have been determined.

**9. Closing of the meeting**

The Co-Chairs thanked the secretariat for the preparation of the meeting and the JEG members for their active participation, before closing the meeting.