

Road Safety

New regulations come into force in mid-2013 to increase the safety of drivers and passengers

UNECE has issued three new regulations to increase passenger safety in cars, trucks and coaches. They concern (a) the lane departure warning system, (b) the child restraint system and (c) the advanced emergency braking system. The regulations enter into force in mid-2013.

According to an impact assessment made by the European Commission, the mandatory implementation of the advanced emergency braking system alone could save some 5,000 lives and avoid 35,000 serious injuries every year across the EU27.



The Lane Departure Warning System warns drivers, through an optical, acoustic or haptic warning, when their vehicle begins to unintentionally drift out of the travel lane. It aims at minimizing accidents by addressing the three main causes of collisions: driver error, distraction and drowsiness. The regulation will apply to all new coaches and trucks.



The new Child Restraint System will create a well-anchored seat like that of an adult, safeguarding children to the maximum degree possible in the event of a collision or of abrupt deceleration of the vehicle, by limiting the mobility of the child's body. The provisions include the introduction of a side-impact test procedure which will lead to a better protection of the child's head. Until today, there was no dynamic test requirement for lateral impacts. The regulation also extends the mandatory rear-facing position for children to 15 months from the current 9.



The Advanced Emergency Braking (AEB) system, fitted to trucks and coaches, employs sensors that monitor the proximity of the vehicle in front and detect situations where the relative speed and distance between the two vehicles suggests a collision will take place. The system not only provides the driver with a warning but also activates the vehicle braking system to slow down the vehicle to avoid or mitigate the severity of a collision if the driver doesn't respond to the warning.

In the European Union, AEB systems will become mandatory for new coaches and heavy transport vehicles from 2013 and the UNECE regulation will form the basis for the approval of such systems. □

For more information please visit:
<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=31393>

Watch video in English and Spanish at:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vIX1Dle1mVY&feature=plcp>.

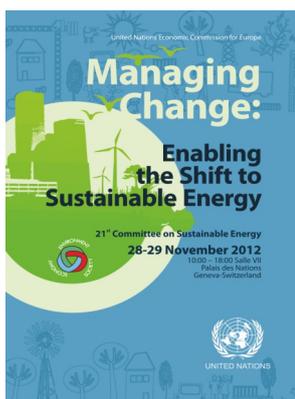
Sustainable Energy

Enabling the Shift to Sustainable Energy

The 21st Session of the Committee on Sustainable Energy will focus on "Managing Change: Enabling the Shift to Sustainable Energy". The meeting will take place in Geneva at the Palais des Nations from 28-29 November 2012.

The substantive discussion of the Committee on Sustainable Energy will open with introductory presentations on the Sustainable Energy for All Initiative, Rio+20 and Managing Change, as applicable to the UNECE region.

In line with the objectives of the Secretary General's initiative on Sustainable Energy for All, the dialogue will consider the situation in the UNECE region in relation to access to energy for all, doubling the rate in energy efficiency and increasing the share of renewables in the energy mix.



The outcome document from the Rio conference recognized the role and contributions of the regional commissions to sustainable development in a number of areas, notably in energy where it emphasized energy access, energy efficiency, mobilization of public and private sector investment in cleaner energy technology, and linkages to other sectors such as housing and transport.

Moving to a sustainable future involves significant changes the world's primary energy mix, conversion and transmission technology, and energy use patterns. Proper management of those changes is necessary to enable the shift to occur.

In view of these anticipated changes in the energy sector, the UNECE Committee on Sustainable Energy will review its work with special attention to synergies with other areas covered by the UNECE and in light of existing cooperation with other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. □

For further information, please visit:

<http://www.unece.org/energy>

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Energy

EU Member States assess use of UNFC for raw materials supply

At its plenary meeting in Brussels on 12 November, the EU Raw Materials Supply Group assessed the value of using the UN Framework Classification for Fossil Energy and Mineral Reserves and Resources (UNFC) in the context of the European Innovation Partnership on Raw Materials. The Group comprises representatives of the European Commission, EU and European Economic Area (EEA) Member States, candidate countries, industry, environmental NGOs, and trade unions. It falls under the remit of the EC Directorate-General for Enterprise and Industry.

The Commission Staff Working Paper of 29 February 2012 references the UNFC. This Working Paper accompanies the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: "Making Raw Materials available for Europe's future well-being – proposal for a European Innovation Partnership on Raw Materials". UNFC is referred to in the context of the need for a "common terminology related to mineral and metals classification and production statistics, harmonized geological resources classification e.g. according to the UNFC guidelines".

The representatives of industry highlighted their use of the Committee for Mineral Reserves International Reporting Standards (CRIRSCO) family of codes for corporate reporting. These codes were noted to be aligned with the UNFC. The CRIRSCO template provides the mineral-specific specifications (rules of application) for the UNFC.

Governments, however, need to be able to understand and report their full resource bases, particularly for long-term planning purposes, which the UNFC allows them to do. As a result of the alignment and mapping work that has been done, quantities reported under the CRIRSCO template can also be reported under the UNFC using its numerical codes, thus allowing integration with Government estimates and providing coverage of the full resource base.

The EC will give EU Member States one month to provide their positions on the UNFC. □

For more information, please visit:

<http://unece.org/energy/se/reserves.html>

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SPECA

UNECE offers capacity-building in green technologies to help Central Asian countries adapt to changing climate

Innovative green technologies can ease environmental constraints and increase resource efficiency. However, if countries wish to introduce new technologies, they need the right



framework conditions, suitable infrastructure, good access to external knowledge and well-trained personnel. Active collaboration among policymakers in different fields and with the private sector is critical to designing effective policies and developing the infrastructure to implement them.

To support policymakers in these endeavours, UNECE held a Joint National Seminar and a Stakeholder Meeting on Promotion and Financing of Innovative Green Technologies in Bishkek from 7 to 9 November. The two events were organized jointly with Kyrgyzstan's Ministry of Economy and Antimonopoly Policy, within the framework of the UN Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA). Participants included more than 80 senior policymakers, experts, representatives from non-governmental and private-sector organizations from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

The Seminar addressed issues such as environmental policy, innovation policy, and financing of green technology projects; thus supporting integrated policymaking for adapting to a changing climate. The participants looked at environmental challenges and opportunities in both Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, and emphasized the importance of building absorptive capacity for introducing green technologies in the two countries.

They also discussed the use of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) to finance green technology projects, including waste to energy, hydro-power generation, water irrigation in rural areas and street lighting.

The Stakeholder Meeting provided networking opportunities and helped develop a shared vision of current problems and possible action. Policymakers exchanged views with experts, academics and representatives of NGOs and the private sector. They examined in particular the possibility of developing pilot green technology projects through PPPs and reviewed the mechanisms to facilitate technology transfer in the two countries.

UNECE will hold a series of capacity-building events on green technologies for the policymakers of other Central Asian countries in 2013, as part of a UN Development Account project for climate change adaptation. □

For more information, visit: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=31073>
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Industrial Accidents

UNECE aligns its Industrial Accidents Convention with United Nations Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

The seventh Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (Industrial Accidents Convention) was held from 14 to 16 November 2012 in Stockholm. At this historic meeting, which also marked the twentieth anniversary of the Convention's adoption in 1992, countries took a number of important decisions that will steer the Convention's activities in the coming years.

Parties agreed to begin the process of aligning the Convention with the United Nations Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS), which was revised in 2010 to include new hazard categories for chemically unstable gases and non-flammable aerosols. The meeting tasked the Working Group on Development with the revision of annex I to the Convention over the next two years to align it with GHS. The amended annex I should be agreed on at the eighth Conference of the Parties in autumn 2014 and could enter into force by the end of 2015.

Moreover, through the amendment of annex I to the Convention a high degree of consistency with European Union (EU) legislation addressing chemical accidents would be maintained. The new EU Seveso III Directive, finalized in March 2012, will apply from 1 June 2015.

In addition, the Conference of the Parties adopted the Convention's workplan for 2013–2014, which specifies the work priorities for the next biennium. Besides the implementation of various projects and activities to improve the level of industrial safety in the UNECE region, the workplan foresees support to States in ratifying the Convention's Protocol on Civil Liability and Compensation for Damage Caused by the Transboundary



Effects of Industrial Accidents on Transboundary Waters. The Protocol was adopted on 21 May 2003 and signed by initially 22 (now 24) States, but is not yet in force because only one Party (Hungary) has ratified it. Once in force, the Protocol will give individuals affected by the transboundary impact of industrial accidents on international watercourses (e.g., fishermen or operators of downstream waterworks) a legal claim for adequate and prompt compensation.

At the meeting Parties also reviewed implementation of the Convention, the work of the Convention's Bureau and activities carried out within the Convention's Assistance Programme in order to draw conclusions for the future. Parties further adopted a sustainable financial mechanism that should help assure adequate voluntary contributions for the work under the Convention.

The decisions taken at the seventh Conference of the Parties will further strengthen the implementation of the Convention and help countries to prevent, prepare for and respond to industrial accidents, particularly those that can have transboundary effects. □

More information about the United Nations Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals can be found at: http://www.unece.org/trans/danger/publi/ghs/ghs_welcome_e.html.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.unece.org/env/teia/cop7.html> or contact Nicholas Bonvoisin at: nicholas.bonvoisin@unece.org.

Gender

Third UNECE Forum of Women Entrepreneurs examines ways to narrow the gender gap in entrepreneurship

Women in the UNECE region have the highest labour market participation in the world, but they lag behind men in setting up and running their own businesses. The gender gap is even more pronounced in high-growth sectors and innovative-based enterprises even though women outnumber men in third-level education in many countries of the region. Closing this gender gap is essential to sustainable job creation and development, especially in a time of growing uncertainties in the international environment and teetering national economies.

These were some of the main findings of the Third Regional Forum of Women Entrepreneurs in the UNECE region held on 14 and 15 November 2012 in Baku. The Forum brought together policymakers, female and male entrepreneurs and academics, as well as representatives of international organizations, regional development organizations and other innovation practitioners.

Welcoming the participants, the Executive Secretary of UNECE, Mr. Sven Alkalaj, said: "We, in the UNECE, attach highest priority to developing women's entrepreneurship as an avenue for the economic empowerment of women and for achieving gender equality in all realms of life. Promoting women's economic independence and facilitating their success as entrepreneurs is a smart investment with positive and economic returns".

The global financial and economic crisis has affected practically all UNECE member States and exacerbated gender disparities, including those in entrepreneurship activities across and within countries. In particular, gender gaps between women and men entrepreneurs have widened in Central Asia and the Southern Caucasus.

Many speakers said that building partnerships between women's business associations and public organizations, or between private and public companies owned by male and female entrepreneurs, could be a pathway to closing the gender gap. This type of collaboration could also have an international dimension or link partners from different countries and UNECE subregions.

The Forum was organized by UNECE in cooperation with the State Committee for Family, Women and Children's Affairs of Azerbaijan. □

For further information, please visit: <http://www.unece.org/gender> or contact Malinka Koparanova at: malinka.koparanova@unece.org.

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