

Annual interagency coordination meeting on industrial accidents

29 May 2018, Cardiff, United Kingdom

1. Opening of the meeting

The meeting was opened by Prof Ian Mathieson, Dean of the Cardiff Metropolitan University. Welcoming the meeting participants in the Cardiff School of Management Dr Mathieson stressed the importance of the meeting due to expanding a problems related to emergency situations worldwide. He stressed that environmental and occupational health and safety is one of the priorities of the School of Health Science due to growing needs of preparedness for and response as a part of the main activities of the School aiming at improving the population health and well-being. Dr Mathieson noted that the School is pleased with hosting of the WHO Collaborating Centre for the public Health Management of Chemical Exposure and with close cooperation in the area of chemical safety with World Health Organization.

The meeting was chaired by Prof David Russell, WHO Collaborating Centre for the Public Health Management of Chemical Exposure.

The provisional agenda was adopted (Annex 1).

2. Participants

The meeting was attended by representatives of eleven international and regional organizations and institutions (Annex 2). In introducing themselves, the participants outlined their expectations from the meeting and in particular sharing of information and discussing ways for cooperation and coordination in the area of industrial and natural disasters.

3. Presentation of the WHO Collaborating Centre

The WHO Collaborating Centre (CC) for Public Health Management of Chemical Incidents was established at the University of Wales Institute Cardiff (UWIC) in 1993 with the purpose to enhance access to scientifically evaluated data and enhance public health capacity collectively mitigating community risk to chemical exposures trough supporting WHO activities on capacity building, development of guidance documents and investigating methodology for public health management of emergency situations. Examples include the guidance document on public health management of chemical incidents, investigation of toxic sludge spill in Hungary (2010), trainings in China, Thailand, Kenya, and Ghana. In the framework of the Global Health Security Initiative, the WHO CC organized Symposiums on early response and chemicals warfare agents. The latest methodological instrument developed by the Centre is a screening tool to prioritise public health risks associated with accidental or deliberate release of chemicals into the atmosphere titled Screening Categorization Risk Prioritization Tool (SCRIPT). The tool provides a comparison of the relative risk between the

chemicals under assessment and is available on-line. The Centre has been re-designated as WHO CC on Public Health Management of Chemical Exposure in 2017.

The meeting participants expressed an interest in sharing more information about the instrument (web-link) and in demonstration of its work that was done later during the day.

4. Update on activities of intergovernmental agencies and international organization on man-made and natural disasters

The representatives of agencies and organizations shared information on their activities since 2016. It included guidance documents, trainings, workshops and other activities.

The recent guidance document Chemical Releases Caused by Natural Hazard Events and Disasters: Information for Public Health Authorities (WHO), Guidance on Ownership Change in Hazardous Facilities (OECD), Safety guidelines and good practices for the management and retention of fire-fighting water (UNECE) are finalized and are available/will be available shortly. Implementation of some documents such as the Flash Environmental Assessment Tool (FEAT) and Disaster waste management guidance developed by UN Environment/OCHA already demonstrated their effectiveness in many countries while OECD guidance Benefits of Regulations for Chemical Accidents Prevention, Preparedness and Response is now in a progress to contribute to methodological support to countries. The Revision of the 2nd Edition of the OECD Guiding Principles is also planned to be initiated soon.

The capacity building and exchange of information component is strong in all agencies. A number of events reported by the agencies representatives confirmed that: UNECE, for example, organized a Seminar on industrial safety and land-use planning (Mechelen, Belgium, May 2018); two transboundary response exercises between Poland and Germany on the Oder River (Sept 2017) and between Hungary and neighbours (Oct 2018); sub-regional workshops on industrial accident prevention in South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe & Caucasus (Zagreb, 21-23 Feb 2017 and Minsk, 11-13 Apr 2017); Training of trainers and training on environmental emergencies and hazardous industrial activities (Almaty, 23-24 and 25-26 Oct 2017). Furthermore, under the UNECE Industrial Accidents Convention's Assistance Programme, the Project on strengthening the implementation of and accession to the UNECE Industrial Accidents Convention in Central Asia and a Project to strengthen the safety of mining operations, in particular TMFs, in Kazakhstan and beyond in Central Asia, have been implemented. More events are planned in the nearest future (see agenda item 8). In addition to its safety and security management programme, OPCW has launched two new initiatives with a broader view on chemicals and accidents/incidents, in particular, Executive Programme on Integrated Chemicals Management, and Green/Sustainable Chemistry Initiative.

JEU (Joint Environment and OCHA Unit) continue increasing their response as a primary point of contact advising on and taking immediate actions in case of environmental emergencies including in coordination with other international partners.

ILO, WHO and UNECE take efforts to promote the implementation of legally binding instruments through high-level dialogs with countries representative, for example UNECE high-level mission to Ukraine, developing supporting documents such as ILO Code of Practice and Strategy for promotion of conventions (ILO Convention 174), supporting the implementation of different projects.

A lot of attention is paid by all organizations for sharing of available information. A one-stop-shop of information, tools, trainings and guidance to inform a more prepared and effective response to environmental emergencies (<http://www.eecentre.org>) and UNECE publications are examples demonstrating a diversity of approaches.

IMPEL is running a project to ascertain baseline arrangements across EU environmental regulators to help ensure regulated industries effectively prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from incidents and accidents; and to support environmental regulators in sharing and adopting good practice in this regard. IMPEL also organizes a seminar on Lessons Learned from Industrial Accidents every two years in France

(https://www.impel.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Brochure_IMPEL2017_EN.pdf;
<https://www.impel.eu/projects/environmental-incident-and-emergency-response/>).

The meeting participants took note on the information and considered developing a joint information repository (idea developed at last inter-agency meeting in 2016), containing links to guidance materials developed by various organizations and to the lists of focal points; additional discussion is needed to determine an agency which has resources to put this in practice and take the lead. The Interagency Coordination Group also concluded that for future promotion a common factsheet on the scale and impacts of accidents would be useful. Acknowledging the current absence of sound statistical information, at least the various information bits available could be pooled together. This could be done in a collaborative process similar to the earlier development of the brochure.

5. Capacities & Competence Building

5.1. The International Training Centre

The International Training Centre is hosting the Chemical Incident Management e-learning course which has been presented to the meeting participants. Public Health Management of Chemical Incidents (WHO “Blue Book”), International Health Regulations 2005: Chemical Risk Assessment and Notification (WHO / GSAHG), Management of Shoreline Incident Response (EU Arcopol Project), Cross Border Maritime Incident response (EU Mariner Project). Courses are aimed at incident planners and responders, and provide a mix of interactive learning materials, case studies and self-assessment activities and included lectures, presentations, interactive questions, situational tasks.

The meeting participants discussed needed for development of a comprehensive (not sector specific) training course with the organizations part of the Inter-agency group; the e-learning course can be considered as a technical platform for that.

5.2. EU's "CBRN Centres of Excellence" initiative

The European Union’s Chemical Biological Radiological and Nuclear Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence Initiative (or EU CBRN CoE) was launched for preventing CBRN risks globally. CoE initiative helps countries to work together to mitigate CBRN risks. Currently, the 57 partner countries globally are partners of the Initiative. Coordinated by Europe AID the initiative has a bottom-up approach and aimed at strengthening countries coordination and cooperation at the regional level. In avoiding a traditional top-down approach, the initiative encourages local ownership of CBRN action plans, policies and project proposals. The CoE aims to strengthen regional security by

increasing local ownership. The CoE initiative has expressed initial interest in projects addressing industrial accidents and cooperating with the Interagency Group or individual agencies.

The meeting participants welcomed the interest and saw value in intensified cooperation. The representative of the European Commission was requested to continue exploring with the CoE colleagues how interagency organizations working in CBRN area can support the initiative implementation in the regions.

6. Contribution to other processes and activities

6.1. GAR-2019

Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction: 2015-2030 has seven global targets, agreed by Member States. The Framework explicitly links to the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the United National Framework Convention on Climate Change. The goal is focus not only on reducing existing risks also on preventing new risks and strengthening resilience. Globally comparable and objective indicators were defined by the Open-ended International Working Group. To help with improving the understanding of technological hazards management and it relates to disaster risk reduction, the Words into Action Guide “Man-made/technological hazards” has been developed under the leadership by the UNEP/OCHA Joint Environment Unit in cooperation with UNISDR, and with the input from other organizations part of the interagency group, in particular UNECE and OECD . The Guide is still undergoing public consultations. Global Assessment Report (GAR) is being prepared for publishing in 2019 to contextualise a progress in realising global targets of Sendai Framework and the SDGs and to contribute to the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. GAR19 will include analysis of progress, examination of global trends in risks; drill-down of national and local implementation, introduction of additional hazards and risks (technological, biological, environmental). GAR will re-examine of the current multi-hazard global risk assessment to cover the full scope of Sendai Framework.

The group discussed what kind of contribution can be provided to the GAR-19, the understanding of all hazards approach in relation to Sendai framework, existing examples and the EU-generic models.

The meeting participants agreed:

to take actions to inform decision-makers in different interagency organization about GAR and to provide and to provide input to the UNISDR Global Assessment Report (GAR-19), by submitting case studies, experiences and good practices by the different organizations/agencies on technological DRR in the field of industrial / chemical hazards.

6.2. SAICM beyond 2020

International chemicals management Conference at its Forth session requested the SAICM Secretariat to develop proposals for global process in the area of chemicals management beyond 2020. The First meeting of intersessional process for considering SAICM and the sound management of chemicals and wastes beyond 2020 took place in Brasilia, Brazil, November 2017 followed by regional meetings in Jan-Feb 2018 and the second intersessional meeting took place in Stockholm, Sweden in March 2018. The meeting of Open-ended Working Groups is scheduled for Feb 2019. The main topic for discussion include assessment of a progress since 2006, vision of chemicals

management beyond 2020, main principles of policy and measure, objectives and milestones. At this stage of discussion chemical emergency situations are addressed in the discussion documents. There are a number of options that can be considered to raise awareness on chemical events in the framework of SAICM beyond 2020 discussions.

The meeting participants took note of the information and agreed on a submission of proposal for a side-event at the ICCM meeting in February 2019 as part of the SAICM inter-sessional process (lead by WHO), possible cooperation on a statement, information note and joint presentation (based on the inter-agency brochure).

7. All hazards approach and chemical accidents in the general framework of CBRN events

7.1. WHO guidance document on assessment of national capacities to respond to CBRN events

Concept of all hazards approach lies at the heart of global and regional strategic documents. To facilitate its application as well as application of multi-disciplinary approach at national level WHO promotes pilot testing of the WHO CBRN National Assessment Toolkit. The main aim of the pilot testing in Ukraine in 2018 was to initiate a revision of documents given new realities. The next steps planned are field missions to a variety of different regional offices in order to introduce the toolkit at a regional level and ensure it is useable within different field settings.

7.2. OECD report “Towards all hazards approach to emergency preparedness and response”

The OECD has recommended that its members “establish and promote a comprehensive, all hazards and transboundary approach to country risk governance to serve as the foundation for enhancing national resilience and responsiveness”. The document describes an experience and lessons learned from major accidents and based on individual countries good practice provides information on preparedness and response to crisis situations.

The meeting participants took note of the information.

8. Upcoming events and other cooperation opportunities among the inter-agency organizations

The meeting participants were invited to circulate information on and participate at upcoming events:

- UN/OECD Workshop on Natech Risk Management (5-7 Sept 2018, Potsdam, Germany);
- 28th WGCA meeting (23-25 Oct 2018, OECD Headquarters, Paris);
- Special Session on Chemical Accidents Prevention, Preparedness and Response in Latin America
- The 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (4-6 Dec 2018, Geneva), including Seminar on risk assessment methodologies (December 2018).

The meeting participants took note of the information.

9. Other business

Date and place of the next meeting of the group will be discussed and announced later. ILO agreed to give consideration to hosting the next Inter-agency meeting in spring 2019, and would confirm its readiness in this respect by end-2018. OPCW also expressed openness to considering the possibility of hosting a future meeting of the Inter-agency group. Hosting meetings by agencies which did not yet host the meetings thus far would be in line with the practice of rotating meeting hosting, organization and follow-up.

Closing of the meeting

The meeting was closed at 17.15 PM by the meeting chair Prof David Russell, WHO CC.

Annex 1

Agenda

Tuesday 29, May 2018

- 09:30 – 09:45 **Welcome and introduction**
Dr Ian Mathieson, Cardiff Metropolitan University
Prof David Russell, WHO Collaborating Centre for the Public Health Management of Chemical Exposure
- 09:45 – 10:00 **Presentation of the WHO Collaborating Centre** for the Public Health Management of Chemical Exposure
Prof Raquel Duarte-Davidson, Prof David Russell, WHO CC
- 10:00 - 11:00 **Tour de Table**
Update on agencies activities in 2016-2017
- 11:20 – 13:00 **Capacities & Competence Building**
 - The International Training Centre
 - EU's "CBRN Centres of Excellence" initiative
- 14:00 – 15:20 **Contribution to other processes and activities**
 - GAR-2019
 - SAICM beyond 2020
- 15:20 - 16:00 **All hazards approach and chemical accidents in the general framework of CBRN events**
 - WHO guidance document on assessment of national capacities to respond to CBRN events and lessons learned from testing of the guidance in countries will be presented;

OECD report "Towards all hazards approach to emergency preparedness and response"
- 16:00 – 16:30 **Upcoming events and other cooperation opportunities among the inter-agency organizations**
 - Workshop on NATECH Risk Management (Sept 2018, Potsdam)
 - Special Session on Chemical Accidents prevention, preparedness and response in Latin America (Oct 2018, Paris)
 - Tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the UNECE Industrial Accidents Convention (Dec 2018, Geneva)

Discussion on cooperation opportunities and modalities through the inter-agency coordination group
- 16:30 – 17:00 **Closing of the meeting**
Wrap up and dates/hosting of the Inter Agency meeting in 2019

Annex 2

Participants

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