



UNECE

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Workshop on the prevention of water pollution due to pipeline accidents

Berlin, 8-9 June 2005

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Setting the scene

- Why is safety of pipelines addressed?
- Why in the transboundary UNECE context?
- What is the role of this workshop in drawing up safety guidelines?



Why safety of pipelines?

- In general, pipelines are a practical, economic and safe means of transport of large volumes of hazardous substances from their producer to a wide range of customers over long distances
- Among these hazardous substances, crude oil and its derivatives and natural gas dominate



Why safety of pipelines?

- The consumption of crude oil and natural gas in the UNECE region is and will remain on the rise in the years to come and so will the importance of pipelines to transport them



This new 1,600 km pipeline was opened in May 2005



Why safety of pipelines?

- Like fixed installations handling hazardous substances, pipelines may be a threat to our health and our environment
- Pipeline accidents unfortunately take place, those involving gas often have an effect on human health, while those involving oil or petroleum products often have a devastating effect on the soil and water



Why safety of pipelines?

- In view of many countries there is a need to improve the safety of pipeline operation
- There is a need to raise awareness, share experience and good practices among the authorities, operators and the public



Why in the transboundary context?

- Most pipelines cross at least one border and some cross several of them
- The effects of pipeline accidents are often transboundary in nature and require an efficient, coordinated emergency response from two or more countries



Why in the transboundary context?

- Regulations and requirements concerning the safety of pipeline operation differ from country to country
- Pipeline operators must often fulfil different requirements of competent authorities in different countries

Why in the UNECE context?





Why in the UNECE context?

- There are extensive pipeline networks in Europe, North America, Caucasus and Central Asia - UNECE
- There is a vast range of different experiences and solutions in addressing the issue of industrial safety including pipelines
- Some countries are more advanced than others



The UNECE is the right place

- Enhancement of cross-border cooperation and promotion of good practices is within the mandate of the UNECE
- Sharing of experience and provision of assistance to countries, which are economically weaker, is one of UNECE's priorities
- The UNECE offers a platform open to all interested stakeholders on an equal footing.



The UNECE is the right place

- Furthermore, the existing framework of multilateral agreements (Conventions on Industrial Accidents, Water and EIA), including their networks of experts will assist us in moving towards increased safety of pipeline operation in the UNECE region



The UNECE is the right place

- Therefore, the UNECE member countries launched a process to draw up safety guidelines/good practices for pipelines
- Workshop is an important step in this process



UNECE process to draw up safety guidelines/good practices for pipelines

Mandate received from:

- Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents
- Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes



UNECE process to draw up safety guidelines/good practices for pipelines

Work also supported by:

- Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context



UNECE process to draw up safety guidelines/good practices for pipelines

- The task to draw up the guidelines was given to the joint expert group on water and industrial accidents (JEG)
- A special open-ended steering group was established to help the JEG to carry out the expert work
- Two expert workshops will be held – to receive input from all stakeholders



The process so far:

- JEG's 4th meeting (Kaliningrad - October 2003)
- JEG's 5th meeting (Budapest - October 2004)
- Steering group's 1st meeting (Berlin - March 2005)
- **Workshop on the prevention of water pollution due to pipeline accidents (Berlin - June 2005)**



The future of the process:

- Steering group's 2nd meeting (Berlin – June 2005)
- Workshop on prevention of accidental releases into the air due to pipeline accidents (Netherlands, early 2006)
- Further meetings of the steering group to finalize the guidelines and of the JEG to endorse them
- Adoption of the guidelines/good practices by the governing bodies of both Conventions



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Thank you