**HAZMAT Working Group HWG 1/3**

**1st Coordination Meeting Lisbon, 09 January 2014**

**25 February 2014**

**SSN HLSG document on the HAZMAT Working Group**

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| *Summary* | This document provides the SSN HLSG 9.3.2 document presented at the 9th meeting of the SSN HLSG (Brussels 19 June 2013) and the outcome of the discussions. |
| *Action to be taken* | As per paragr. 2. |
| *Related documents* | 1. Directive 2002/59/EC as amended (Art. 13 and Annex I.3) 2. SSN 20.1.3 point 2.2 3. HLSG 9.3.2 |

**1.0 background information**

This document provides the relevant SafeSeaNet High Level Steering Group (SSN HLSG) document 9.3.2 which is attached with the Terms of Reference of the HAZMAT Working Group.

During the SSN HLSG meeting, EMSA explained the need of further improvement in practice and quality of HAZMAT reporting in SSN, on the basis of a comprehensive survey. The approach and suggestion for the establishment of an ad hoc Hazmat working group was supported and accepted by the group. Several MS pointed to the need to align with the work on the FAL documents and the need to work for simplified notifications and have a harmonized implementation and timing. Some also pointed out that this is a core matter in SSN and will help further enhance the trust and credibility of the system and thereby its use.

A draft ToR document was discussed and a small adjustment regarding the need for consultation also with Industry stakeholders as well as coordination with the work ongoing in the eMS group. The changes are indicated in track mode in the attached ToR.

**2.0 Actions required**

The members of the HAZMAT working group are invited to note the information.

**9th SafeSeaNet High Level Steering Group**

**Brussels, 19 June 2013**

**Meeting document:**

**Improving Hazmat reporting to SafeSeaNet (SSN)**

**(Agenda item 3.2)**

# Introduction

The purpose of this document is to propose measures to improve the reporting practice and data quality of the mandatory dangerous and polluting goods (Hazmat) reporting in SafeSeaNet (SSN).

# Background

In accordance with Articles 13 and annex I(3) of Directive 2002/59/EC as amended, the notification of dangerous and polluting goods (Hazmat) includes the following:

* + the correct technical names of the dangerous or polluting goods;
  + the United Nations (UN) numbers, where they exist;
  + the IMO hazard classes in accordance with the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG), International Bulk Chemical (IBC) and International Gas Carrier (IGC) codes;
  + where appropriate, the class of the ship as defined by the International Code for the Safe Carriage of Packaged Irradiated Nuclear Fuel, Plutonium and High-Level Radioactive Wastes on Board Ships (INF Code);
  + the quantities of such goods and their location on board; and
  + if they are being carried in cargo transport units other than tanks, the identification number thereof.

EMSA carried out a comprehensive survey on the availability and content of Hazmat notification details with the objective of presenting a global overview of the situation, highlighting the main deficiencies, and proposing actions to improve the operational use of Hazmat data.

During the survey, EMSA requested Hazmat details of randomly selected Port Plus notifications via the SSN User Web Interface (UWI) or via a direct contact with the responsible services of the Member States.

# Hazmat surveys results

The main findings of the survey are:

1. **Missing Hazmat notifications**

Of a sample taken during the secondhalf of 2012, 9% of ships carrying Hazmat cargoes did not provide notifications to SSN.

The reasons for the missing Hazmat notifications are:

* masters, agents and operators do not fully comply with their reporting obligations, and Member States’ staff do not follow up to ensure compliance;
* Hazmat notifications are provided to the national SSN system, but not forwarded to SSN;
* Hazmat notifications are forwarded with errors and rejected by SSN, but are not then re-sent by Member States with corrected data;
* port authorities are not connected to the national SSN system;
* there are misinterpretations of the requirements in Directive 2002/59/EC; some Member States send reports only for some types of dangerous and polluting goods, not for all (as defined in Article 3 of Directive 2002/59/EC).

EMSA is supporting the National Competent Authorities in improving the reliability of the Hazmat reporting in SSN and the situation is improving.

1. **Shortfalls in data quality in Hazmat**

Aside from the major issue of notifications not being sent, data quality remains a major problem. The main findings were that, far too frequently, when information is supplied, it contains regular errors. The main conclusions of the survey are presented in Annex I.

There is also the potential issue that the Hazmat reports do not reflect the actual Hazmat carried on board. This aspect is difficult to assess because there are no sources of information available to compare the data reported to SSN with the actual Hazmat on board.

1. **Hazmat definition**

Another problem identified by the national authorities relates to the Hazmat substances to be reported in accordance with the VTMIS Directive (different understanding on dangerous and polluting goods to report). Some Member States have suggested the setting-up of relevant **databases of Hazmat products** to improve the Hazmat reporting through SSN.

The SSN group experts have already suggested that the current technical implementation of the **Hazmat XML message needs improvements**. The current XML message structure does not allow proper identification of Hazmat products carried in bulk (according to the IBC, IGC and the new International Maritime Solid Bulk Cargoes IMSBC code). This issue is linked with the requirements of Directive 2002/59/EC Annex I paragraph 3, which defines the cargo information to be notified and which needs to be updated.

# Proposal

A number of major accidents have occurred over recent years, raising questions regarding the lack of information in Hazmat reports and the poor quality of the Hazmat cargo manifest. In responding to accidents, responders are not necessarily confident about the accuracy of the description of the Hazmat causing some suspicion, which may influence the decision-making procedure.

Information on Hazmat is essential when allocating and providing incident response measures. How to best ascertain that Hazmat messages are accurate and available on time is therefore a major concern.

To improve Hazmat reporting, the following actions are proposed:

1. **Data quality**

* **Hazmat Guidelines** – draft a guidelines document, following the methodology applied in the case of the Incident Report Guidelines (what, when, how and who to report to SSN). This document would be drafted by the SSN Group, through a Hazmat Working Group, composed of Member States’ experts;
* **Hazmat Reference Database** – the objective is to develop and maintain a reference database at central level for Hazmat products that might be notified in accordance with Directive 2002/59/EC. The requirements would be also specified by the Hazmat Working Group.

1. **Time plan**

The following time plan is suggested:

* EMSA, with the support of the SSN group, will draft the technical improvements for the Hazmat message format by September 2013.
* The Hazmat working group will start drafting the Hazmat Guidelines in December 2013, to be concluded by September 2014;
* The Hazmat working group will start drafting the requirements of the Hazmat Reference Database in December 2013, to be concluded by September 2014.

***Actions proposed***

The Commission invites Member States to:

* agree to establish a Hazmat working group, which will be operated in accordance with the draft terms of reference presented in Annex II;
* communicate their intention to participate in the Hazmat working group during HLSG 9.

Annex I: Hazmat survey - main conclusions

Annex II: Draft terms of reference of the SSN “Hazmat Working Group”

**Annex I**

**Main conclusions**

The main conclusions are as follows:

* Hazmat notifications without Dangerous Goods Classification (or with incorrect classification) were provided;
* the cargo names (the ‘proper shipping name’ or the ‘product name’ or the ‘technical name’) and UN numbers were incorrect or missing;
* IMO Hazard Class was missing or incorrectly declared;
* reporting of quantities was not harmonized (e.g. in terms of the diverse units used or when reporting ‘not-cleaned’ or ‘non-gas free’ tanks);
* the location of cargo on board was either missing or reported incorrectly in 70% of the cases;
* some types of cargoes (IMSBC, IGC, INF) were not reported by certain Member States;
* the phone and fax solution was still employed by some Member States;
* in some cases, bunkers on board were declared as dangerous or polluting goods (DPG).

The findings are summarised in Table 1 below:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| NO | Attribute | Incorrect | | Missing | N.A[[1]](#footnote-1). |
| **1** | **DG Classification** | **34%** | **43%** | | **-** |
| **2** | **Technical name** | **22%** | **6%** | | **-** |
| **3** | **UNNumber** | **7%** | **8%** | | **46%** |
| **4** | **IMOHazardClass** | **12%** | **10%** | | **44%** |
| **5** | **Quantity** | **9%** | **5%** | | **-** |
| **6** | **Location on board** | **24%** | **46%** | | **-** |

Table 1 – HAZMAT details survey results

**Annex II**

**SSN “Hazmat Working Group”**

**Terms of Reference (draft)**

**Mandate**

The SSN “Hazmat Working Group (WG)” should develop and propose measures for improving the Hazmat reporting in SSN, taking into account existing specifications of the SSN system and the findings of the EMSA survey on Hazmat reporting.

**Deliverables and Working methodology of the WG**

The WG should draft dedicated guidelines on Hazmat notifications, and should also draft the requirements for the Hazmat reference database.

The work plan should be as follows:

* December 2013: start working by correspondence;
* February 2014: organise a first coordination meeting
* March 2014: prepare a first draft of the documents;
* April 2014: continue work by correspondence on the final draft of the Hazmat Reporting Guidelines and the requirements for the Hazmat reference database;
* May 2014: submit the draft documents at the SSN WS 21;
* June 2014: gather Member States’ comments and prepare the final documents;
* October 2014: submit the documents for approval at SSN WS 22.

**Resources and members of the Group**

Each country participating in SSN, with an interest in Hazmat information, as well as the European Commission, has the right to nominate members.

EMSA will provide the secretariat, and will coordinate, collate and amalgamate the information sources identified by the members of the group into working documents for ongoing dissemination and agreement.

The working group will work mainly by correspondence, but will organise at least one coordination meeting. When meeting outside EMSA’s premises, travel costs shall be covered by each participant. EMSA may chair the meeting if requested by the hosting MS.

**Reports**

The working group report will be coordinated by EMSA, and will cover the agreed objectives, reflect the views of the participants, and assess the need for continuing the work.

**Timing**

The final draft of the deliverables will be sent to SSN Group members at least one month before the SSN Workshop 22 (October 2014) in order to allow for effective feedback. The chair of the working group will present the document at the workshop.

Once agreed, bearing in mind the goal of rationalising the efforts, it is proposed that Hazmat Reporting Guidelines should reflect technical improvements to the Hazmat message format and the Hazmat Reference Database.

The following, provisional time plan is proposed:



**Acceptance**

The final documents, encompassing the results of the working group, will be submitted to the SSN Group for validation (at SSN 22) in accordance with the time plan proposed above.

**Duration of these ToR**

At SSN 22, the mandate of this working group will expire, or, if necessary, be renewed with new ToRs.

**SSN “Hazmat Working Group”**

**Terms of Reference**

*(as approved at the 9th SSN HLSG)*

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1. **Resources and members of the Group**

Each country participating in SSN, including representatives of industry with an interest in Hazmat information, as well as the European Commission, has the right to nominate members.

EMSA will provide the secretariat, and will coordinate, collate and amalgamate the information sources identified by the members of the group into working documents for ongoing dissemination and agreement. Coordination with the eMS group will also be ensured.

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1. Some IMO codes do not require specific attributes, therefore there is a percentage of Not Applicable (N.A.) cases [↑](#footnote-ref-1)