



European Maritime Safety Agency

Workshop Report

**Training for Bulgaria and
Romania on the HNS Convention,
held in Lisbon on the 20th of
November 2006**

Workshop Report: Ratification and Implementation of the HNS Convention

Background

The International Convention on Liability and Compensation for Damage in connection with the Carriage of Hazardous and Noxious Substances 1996 (HNS Convention) establishes rules of civil liability for damage caused by HNS substances. It provides for a limited liability of a ship-owner and a supplementary liability of an HNS Fund, created from the fees paid by the importers of HNS substances. The Fund should be able to provide compensation up to 250 million SDR.

The Convention will enter into force 18 months after the following conditions have been fulfilled: when 12 States have accepted the Convention, four of which have not less than two million units of gross tonnage, and provided that persons in these States who would be responsible to pay contributions to the general account have received a total quantity of at least 40 million tonnes of cargo contributing to general account in the preceding calendar year. Out of the EU Member States only two of them (Cyprus and Slovenia) have so far ratified the Convention.

During the HNS workshop organised by EMSA in Brussels on the 21st of February 2006, it was noted that certain issues were raising problems for the ratification and further implementation of the HNS Convention. Therefore it was emphasised that Member States would benefit from the exchange of experience between the experts responsible for the implementation of the HNS Convention in their countries. A project of trainings was designed for the new Member States and the acceding countries. The first training took place in Latvia, on the 19-20 September 2006. The second one was organised for Bulgaria and Romania in Lisbon on the 20th of November 2006.

Training Objectives

The Workshop had the following objectives:

- To provide the officials from the administrations involved in the implementation of the HNS Convention in Bulgaria and Romania with the opportunity to exchange views with the officials from the administrations in the countries where a progress has been made towards the ratification of the Convention;
- To focus on particular problems brought up by the Bulgarian and Romanian colleagues;
- To speed up the process of ratification and implementation of the HNS Convention in those countries.

Training Programme

The workshop was opened by a greeting of Emilio Martin Bauza, Head of Unit E in EMSA.

Then, Mrs Dominika Lempicka presented briefly the activity of the Agency and in particular the technical assistance programmes and the project of assistance in the process of implementation of the HNS Convention.

Afterwards, Mrs Catherine Grey from the International Oil Pollution Compensation Funds made a presentation of the HNS Convention and all the relevant issues related to it, like the reporting system, the identification the receiver, the HNS Contributing Cargo Calculator and others.

Following this, three “national experiences” were presented in relation to the implementation of the HNS Convention: the UK example by Mr David Bolomini from the UK Department for Transport, the Dutch example by Mr Jan de Boer from the Netherlands Ministry of Transport and the Danish example by Mrs Birgit Olsen from the Danish Maritime Authority.

Afterwards, the Bulgarian and Romanian colleagues presented their views on the issue of implementation of the Convention in Bulgaria (by Mrs Daria Pisheva from Bulgarian Maritime Administration) and Romania by (Mr Gheorghe Naumof from Romanian Naval Authority).

A discussion followed which consisted of a useful – according to the participants – exchange of opinions and experiences.

Conclusions

Even if the process of the ratification of the HNS Convention is in a rather early stage in Bulgaria and Romania, it was important to present the issues that are crucial for the implementation of the Convention to the participants of the training.

The meeting was an opportunity for the officials from the Bulgarian and Romanian administration that may in near future be involved with the implementation of the Convention to exchange views and practices with the officials from the parallel administrations in the UK, the Netherlands and Denmark.

The participants found the training very useful. They requested to have similar projects organised in Bulgaria and Romania for a wider range of stakeholders, like representatives of shipping companies, port and terminal operators, ship agents, cargo agents, customs authorities, environment authorities, statistics institutions and relevant organs of public administration e.g. finance, economy and trade, environment and transport.

Attachments:

- (1) Agenda of the workshop
- (2) List of participants

Presentations from the workshop are available at:
<http://www.emsa.europa.eu/end187d010.html>