

GUIDANCE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE INTERFACE BETWEEN AN NMS AND OTHER EMERGENCY RESPONSE AGENCIES IN CASE OF CHEMICAL INCIDENTS

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National level

1. The NMS should take account of existing procedures and make arrangements with agencies responsible for environmental contingency plans to assure participation of the NMS in national, provincial and local contingency planning.
2. Specific action should be taken by the NMS to obtain a registry of chemical sites and holdings. In addition, NMS could assist in developing climatologies of prevailing meteorological conditions at major chemical sites and other high risk zones. The NMS should arrange to acquire in-situ (plant site) meteorological data routinely and in real-time including remote sensing data. *Note: This is not necessarily the role of NMHSs. However it is important that having the chemicals information database co-located (or rapid access available) with the dispersion model optimizes the calculation of concentrations of the hazardous material in an emergency response situation. The chemicals information that is usually required includes the density of the substance and the threshold concentrations associated with emergency action levels (for public protection).*
3. NMS should build a knowledge base on what are the response arrangements at various levels of authorities in relation to different incidents including particularly roles and responsibilities and communication arrangements.
4. NMS should make arrangements to participate in tests and exercises related to response to chemical incidents.
5. NMS should seek information on and review dispersion models used by other national agencies and industries.

Regional (Subregional)

6. Interfaces may be required among NMSs (likely within a limited geographical region); appropriate action by NMS may include:
 - (a) Developing bi-national shared stake arrangements with neighbouring NMSs and procedures for response to agreed areas of common concern, in case of trans-national boundary incidents;
 - (b) Developing back-up arrangements and procedures for response between NMSs and/or NMS (or NMCs) and RSMCs (EER) in accordance with mutually agreed conditions.

For neighbouring States, regional and subregional operational response interfaces could be developed and implemented by the NMSs. Specific documentation on how NMS and RSMC deal with chemical accidents should be included as part of relevant contingency plans. Coordination of emergency response, for planning and response to incidents should include:

- (a) Identification of contact points (programme and operational);
- (b) Arrangements (e.g. data and information exchange, communications, security of information, exercise);
- (c) Criteria for activation and deactivation of regional or subregional interface;
- (d) Harmonizing of the authoritative information on meteorological aspects of the incident as well as the exchange of information on models and data.