
Irish Ports Association

Submission To The Department Of Enterprise, Trade & Employment On The Review Of The Dangerous Substances Acts

Recommendations 11, 12 & 13

Recommendation 11 recommends the setting up of ‘a national support network ... for local authorities and other bodies’ [emphasis added], but this appears to be inconsistent with recommendations 12 & 13 which recommend (R 12) the encouragement of local authorities [and nobody else] to pool resources & coordinate activities and (R 13) the removal of Harbour Companies’ powers to issue licences.

Remarkably, Arup’s case for the removal of licensing powers from Harbour Companies in respect of retail & private petroleum stores (Recommendation 13) seems to be based only on the fact that this is not the system in other countries!

We support Arups’ proposal for the setting up of a national support network, and we wish to actively participate in it, but we do not accept the removal of our existing powers, as no substantive case has been made for the removal of licensing powers from Harbour Companies.

Recommendation 20

Recommendation 20 (to relieve Harbour Companies of the authority to licence bulk stores) is also unacceptable to the Harbour Companies. The Harbour Companies and their predecessor organisations have licensed bulk stores without major mishap since September 1979 and we do not accept that this is outside our core competence. Many of our members have developed the expertise, for example, to handle and store other hazardous cargoes, and there is no reason in principle why we cannot operate to the best industry standards in relation to hydrocarbons. Those Harbour Companies which have licensed bulk stores have already developed the expertise to do so, and are willing and keen to “up their game” as required. To that end they will participate in and support the national support network (Recommendation 11) and take any other actions necessary to maintain their expertise at the appropriate level.

Recommendation 26

We welcome Arups’ statement in Section 8 of their report that the Harbour Companies “should continue in their role as the bodies responsible for issuing written consents for jetty operations”, although strictly speaking this power/responsibility is, under current legislation, assigned specifically to Harbour Masters, rather than generally to the Harbour Companies as suggested by Arups.

In relation to Recommendation 26 which states that “consideration should be given to extending the written consent procedure to other dangerous goods in addition to petroleum products” we believe that the procedure should be extended to specifically include the handling of LPG on jetties.

31st March 2009