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New safety enhancement initiative by Polish chemical companies

On October 17th 2013, members of the Azoty Group met with the representatives of other Polish chemical companies in the city of Tarnów, where they signed a declaration of intent to improve work safety, fire safety and environmental protection standards throughout the chemical industry.

The declaration was signed in the presence of Ms Iwona Hickiewicz, Chief Labour Inspector, general Wiesław Leśniakiewicz, Commander in Chief of the National Fire Service, and Mr Andrzej Jagusiewicz, Chief Environmental Protection Inspector, who are all directly involved in the pilot version of the new initiative.

The purpose of the agreement "...is to develop a model for cooperation in developing process safety, with a view to reducing the kinds of risks that can potentially lead to serious industrial failures." The signatories have all pledged to share their experiences in process and work safety and to implement the Zero Accidents and Failures prevention programme.

Part of their joint work will be to evaluate the feasibility of a new model for comprehensive operational safety inspections of production assets. The new inspection model is currently in testing, and is based on a series of checklists prepared jointly by the participating chemical companies and the Chief Labour Inspectorate, Chief Environmental Protection Inspectorate and the Main Headquarters of the National Fire Service. To check the feasibility of the Provincial Inspectorate of Environmental Protection (WIOŚ), National Labour Inspectorate (PIP), and State Fire Service (PSP) being able to conduct such comprehensive inspections simultaneously, the state agencies and chemical companies together prepared an ammonia storage facilities checklist, which has already been used to conduct inspections at Anwil Włocławek, Grupa Azoty S.A., and Grupa Azoty Zakłady Azotowe Puławy. Their experiences of the pilot inspections are being discussed in working group meetings, and will be used to design the final inspection model.

The declaration signed today is an open access initiative, providing a platform for the ongoing exchange of experience with companies outside the Group, in the realms of work safety, process safety, and environmental protection. It is expected that a comprehensive, systematic approach to conducting inspections will offer a great improvement on existing safety systems.