

***Latvijas dzelzceļš* will hold international workshop on environmental protection**

On 14-15 October in Riga will take place an international workshop on financial and environmental risk management of soil contamination of railway properties gathering the leading railway specialists and environmental experts from the Netherlands, Germany, France, Denmark, Sweden, Latvia, and the International Union of Railways (UIC). The workshop is organized by State Joint Stock Company *Latvijas dzelzceļš* (LDz) in close cooperation with UIC.

The European Commission is preparing a directive on soil protection issues; therefore, in 2007 UIC established a working group in order to get ready for the fulfilment of directive requirements in railway sector. The representative from LDz was the only one from the Baltic States participating in the working group. "The implementation of processes in railway sector requires not only considerable financial resources, but also time to get adjusted to the new practice. Therefore, we are satisfied that for the time being we are ahead of time in solving environmental issues before dangers appear," said LDz Chairman of the Board Uģis Magonis.

Māris Poikāns, Head of Environmental Management in LDz, informed that the workshop in Riga will be attended not only by railway specialists, but also by representatives from the Ministry of Environment of the Netherlands. "Environmental issues in the Netherlands are regarded very seriously. Although the Netherlands is one and a half times smaller than Latvia, the number of inhabitants there is eight times bigger than in Latvia. In the country where industry sector is so highly developed and the density of population is that high, issues of soil contamination must be considered with utmost seriousness. Therefore, we can learn much from them," explained M.Poikāns.

In comparison with the Western European countries where the density of population is very high, Latvia has few polluted areas – around 3000 polluted and potential polluted areas in the whole territory of the country; comparatively, in the Netherlands there are 18000 polluted areas of railway property alone.

The workshop will take place on 14-15 October in hotel *Tallink Hotel Riga*.

14 October: Dr.Ton Honders from the Ministry of Environment of the Netherlands and Rolands Arturs Bebris from the Ministry of Environment of Latvia will present the view of the government regarding environmental protection perspectives, and railway experts from Denmark, France and Latvia will present opinions on financial issues of environmental protection, best practices and future perspectives.

15 October: A technical visit to locomotive depot of *LDz Ritošā sastāva serviss* Ltd. in Riga is planned for the participants of workshop and the journalists. The workshop will be concluded with a visit to Latvian Railway History Museum.

The journalists who are interested in the workshop are invited to apply for an accreditation by e-mail: pr@ldz.lv (LDz Public Relations Division).

Latvijas dzelzceļš Group consists of the holding company SJSC *Latvijas dzelzceļš* and four daughter companies – freight operator *LDz Cargo Ltd.*, infrastructure construction and maintenance company *LDz infrastruktūra Ltd.*, rolling stock repair and maintenance company *LDz ritošā sastāva serviss Ltd.*, and security company *LDz Apsardze Ltd.*

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