

REPORT OF AN AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL TRIAL INSPECTION  
BASED ON THE PROVISIONS OF THE ANNEX TO ARTICLE VI [2]

Introduction

The future Convention will ban the development, production, stockpiling, transfer and use of chemical weapons. It is recognised that it will be necessary to monitor the civilian chemical industry to ensure that chemical weapons are not produced or their precursors diverted for purposes prohibited by the Convention. In order to expedite work on the Convention and to develop and assess provisions relating to on-site inspections, to provide the necessary assurance that civil facilities are used only for purposes not prohibited by the Convention, Australia and The Netherlands conducted Trial Inspections of chemical facilities in 1986 and reported their results to the Conference on Disarmament (CD/CW/WP.140 and CD/CW/WP.141 to 144). The experience gained from these inspections strengthened the view that an adequate system of verification can be developed and obtained at a reasonable cost, taking into account the legitimate concerns of the chemical industry. These results have been reflected in the subsequent development of Article VI of the Rolling Text.

In April 1988, the Delegation of the Soviet Union suggested that interested Delegations of the CD should conduct National Trial Inspections (NTI) based on the provisions of the Annex to Article VI [2], and then report the results to the CD. These results could then be discussed and, using the lessons learnt, a second round of inspections be conducted, this time in the presence of "international observers" from other delegations participating in the experiment.

During the summer session of 1988, informal open-ended consultations were held in the CD to prepare for these multilateral trial inspections in the chemical industry. The result of these consultations, contained in document CD/CW/WP.213, were introduced to the Conference at its plenary meeting on 13 September 1988, to assist the participating States in their preparations for the national trial inspections.

Preparations for the Australian NTI were made on the basis of CD/CW/WP.213, and conducted over a six-week period during October/November including an initial visit and the negotiation of a detailed Facility Attachment. The NTI was conducted at a multipurpose complex of an agricultural chemical company that produces mainly herbicides. This working paper presents the results of this NTI on the basis of the format contained in document CD/CW/WP.213.