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Subject: *Environment Sustainability*

CAPIEL, Co-ordinating Committee for the Associations of Manufacturers of Industrial Electrical Switchgear and Controlgear in the European Union, is a broad-based group that represents twelve national associations that comprise more than 550 manufacturers in Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, and United Kingdom.

The industries represented by CAPIEL include small, medium and large-sized companies that in total employ directly about 118,000 people in Europe alone, and have a turnover of Euro 18.25 billion altogether. On average the 25% of their production in the EU is exported outside.

The manufacturers of HV Electrical Switchgear represented in CAPIEL are fully aware of the responsibility they share with other industrial sectors and the rest of the society to reach a sustainable development.

This implies to make compatible economical and social development and environment, balancing the benefits of the industrial activity with the environmental impacts during manufacturing and operation of the equipment on air, water, earth, biodiversity and human health.

This exercise of responsibility has given rise to the commitment of the CAPIEL HV members defined in the attached Environment Sustainability Declaration.

The documents that now we are delivering to you, tries to:

- Present a clear sight of the environmental impacts due to the manufacture and use of High Voltage Electrical Switchgear.
- Supply to the interested parties reliable information relevant to their needs.
- Give a tool to help to asses the progress and improve the procedures.

The work undertaken starts analysing the impact due to the SF6, gas employed as insulating and arc-quenching medium in those apparatus using the SF6 technology. Other impacts, like the Electromagnetic Fields will be added in future editions till covering all the significant environmental aspects of HV equipment.

The chapter on SWITCHGEAR AND SF6 GAS deals with the use of the SF6 technology in High and Medium Voltage Switchgear from the environmental point of view. This is achieved by putting this use in the proper perspective, based on its excellent and broadly accepted characteristics in one hand, and in the other, on the very negligible impact on the environment that the extremely low emission rates from HV and MV Switchgear cause. The conclusion of this chapter is that the SF6 technology is fully in line with the Environmental Policy promoted by CAPIEL, defined in the above mentioned Environment Sustainability Declaration, and with the joint UNIPEDE-CAPIEL Position Paper, issued August 1998.

Finally, let me to stress the fact that Capiel manufacturing companies, grouped in the National Member Associations, represent a variety of technologies. The application and use of these technologies remain under the complete and sole decision of the manufacturers, being their commercial and technical option.

We hope this information on the ongoing efforts of this industrial sector bring forward to the society the replies that has the right to obtain. In such a case, we will consider that its elaboration has been worth.



G Eisenberg
Secretary-General