

**Title :**

On the GHISLENGHIEN's Disaster, Belgium, July 2004 : A Dramatic Pipeline's (S) ... cra ... (tch) ... ck ?!

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**Abstract :**

On early morning of July 30, 2004, in GHISLENGHIEN's industrial area, Belgium, a worker of one of the industry field company informs the Fire Department (FD) of a potential gas-leak problem within the fully new company's building. FD and the Gaz Distribution Company arrive quickly on site for checking any potential leakages ... at 8h56 AM, a large explosion occurs spreading a 120 [m] height fire gerb, visible 15 [km] away, blasting building's debris over 6 [km] all around, leading to shock wave felt 20[km] farer. A large heavy portion (~11 [m], many tons) of 1 of the 2 large scale (DN 800 and DN 1000), 80 bars high pressure natural gas pipeline bridging the gas terminal of ZEEBRUGGE (100 [km] more in the North) to France has just been blown out nearly 200[m] away ... the intense heat felt up to 2 [km] around subsequent to the explosion makes 23 deaths & 132 injuries (mainly burned at different degrees)... This talk reviews the events and main probable disaster's causes (2nd-most critical accident in Belgium after the 1956's "Le bois du Cazier" (262 deaths). The speech wants also to put in evidence the "human factor" in terms of communication.

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