6th Meeting of the Emergency Preparedness and Response Standards Committee (EPReSC)

12 – 14 June 2018
(Agenda Item Nr 3.2)

Draft Safety Guide on Arrangements for Public Communication in Preparedness and Response for a Nuclear or Radiological Emergency (DS475)

For information (at Step 9)

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Background

• Safety Requirements No. GSR Part 7
  – Requirement 13:
    • Communicating with the public throughout a nuclear or radiological emergency
  – Requirement 10:
    • Providing instructions, warnings, and relevant information to the public for emergency preparedness and response

• Safety Requirements No. GSR Part 3
  – Requirement 43:
    • An emergency management system providing for essential elements at the scene, and at the local, national and international level, as appropriate, including providing reliable communication, including public information
Background (cont.)

• Safety Guide DS475 is intended to:
  – Provide guidance for meeting the relevant Requirements of GSR Part 7 and of GSR Part 3
  – Provide guidance and recommendations on developing arrangements at the preparedness stage, for communicating with the public and media and for coordinating with all sources of official information in the preparedness and response to a nuclear or radiological emergency

• With the objectives to:
  – Protect the public
  – Inform the public about the hazards, protective actions and other response actions
  – Build and maintain public trust
  – Address public concerns regarding potential health effects
  – Prevent panic and help ensure actions taken do more good then harm
  – Minimize rumours and respond to misinformation
  – Enable interested parties to make informed decisions
Current Status – Step 9
Addressing MS comments

• Total of 238 comments:
  - Finland - 48
  - Japan - 41
  - USA - 38
  - China - 36
  - Germany - 22
  - Russian Federation - 14
  - Pakistan - 11
  - Canada - 10
  - Australia - 8
  - Poland - 5
  - Argentina - 3
  - India - 1
  - Hungary - 1
Current Status – Step 9
Addressing MS comments
Consultancy - Purpose

• To review DS475 to consider the Implications of the UNSCEAR 2012 report on Attributing Health Effects to Ionizing Radiation Exposure and Inferring Risk

• Attendance:
  – Argentina
  – Australia
  – Finland
  – Russian Federation
  – Sweden
  – IAEA

• Held 5-6 April 2018, Vienna
Consultancy - Objectives

• Consider the Implications of the UNSCEAR 2012 report on Attributing Health Effects to Ionizing Radiation Exposure and Inferring Risks for DS475, 5-6 April 2018

• Review DS475 to consider how the concepts of attribution of health effects to radiation exposure and of inference of risks differentiated in the UNSCEAR 2012 report are reflected

• Consider how DS475 can be strengthened in addressing these concepts for the sake of effective public communication and protection of the public
Consultancy - Conclusions

- Radiation health effects that are objectively demonstrable and therefore attributable to radiation exposure have been considered in parallel with the possibility of risks associated with radiation exposure that may be subjectively inferred -> resulted in communication problems, which have done more harm than good

- The concepts of attribution of health effects to radiation exposure and of prospective inference of radiation risk are of relevance -> DS475 will benefit from additional clarification of UNSCEAR 2012 Report concepts

- In communication about radiological health hazards it is important to underline that theoretical calculations of risk at low doses are done for precautionary radiation protection purposes but it is incorrect to extrapolate from these calculations health effects in the affected population and to communicate on them -> DS475 may benefit on a background discussion on different connotations behind the term ‘risk’
Consultancy - Conclusions

• Putting health hazards in perspective is important for communication -> Clarify the concept of ‘radiological health hazards’ in DS475 and link to the treatment of radiation induced health effects as used in the UNSCEAR 2012 report

• To improve the system for placing the health hazards in perspective:
  • Simplify language and phrases used to be easily understandable
  • Emphasize the need for projections of health effects at low doses to be done for precautionary radiation protection purposes only (not for public communication purposes)
  • Emphasizing that the system supports the public protection and does not prevent protection
Consultancy - Conclusions

• DS475 should target public communicators and radiation protection experts and emergency preparedness and response experts

• Public communication is required to explain the difference of approaches at different phases and how work done at preparedness stage can support effective communication during response

• Communicating on health effects including projections will be influenced by cultural values - How DS475 is implemented should take into account these cultural values
Next steps

• Finalizing Member State comments’ resolution
• Addressing the recommendations from the consultancy
• Submission of DS475 for second review by Committees (at Step 11) at the next meetings
Thank you!