The Association HERCA (Heads of the European Radiological protection Competent Authorities) has the objective to contribute to a high level of radiological protection throughout Europe.

The members of HERCA are the European Radiation Protection Authorities (RPA) represented by the Heads of the authorities.

The programme of work of HERCA is based on common interest in practical and harmonized solutions to important regulatory issues to be applied at the national level.

HERCA collaborates with relevant stakeholders and approaches stakeholder involvement with a view on maximizing the efficiency and efficacy of its efforts. HERCA will keep relevant stakeholders informed about its activities and is prepared to consider requests from them for advice on radiological protection and regulatory matters.

**Medical applications**

HERCA working group on Medical Applications has four major activities; Inspection competences of authorities, Awareness in Medical Exposure, Medical Equipment and Clinical Audits.

**Awareness in medical exposures**

In 2019, HERCA plans to launch a European Awareness initiative in a coordinated process across several European countries focused on the justification of medical imaging involving ionizing radiations. In the coming months, HERCA members will interact with their national stakeholders for presenting the initiative and gathering experience.

**Medical Equipment**

HERCA continues its work on the standardisation of Dose Area Product (DAP) units and interacts with COCIR and IEC Technical Committee 62 (TC62) which covers electrical equipment in medical practice. HERCA also interacts with EFOMP which supports HERCA activities in this field.

**Overview of HERCA activities**

HERCA current activities cover the following areas:

- Medical Applications
- Emergency Preparedness and Response
- Veterinary Applications
- Research and Industrial Sources and Practices
- Natural Radiation Sources
- Education and Training

Most of HERCA activities are related to the transposition and implementation of the Euratom BSS Directive (BSSD).

HERCA was created in 2007 and is chaired by Mrs Karla Petrova (SUJB, Czech Republic).

More information on HERCA and its current activities.
Inspection Competence in Medical Field

HERCA presented a paper at the IAEA international conference on Radiation protection in Medicine: Achieving Change in Practice (11-15 Dec. 2017) exposing the results of the European inspection campaign organised for assessing patient radiation protection in diagnostic radiology.

HERCA will organise a workshop on “how to inspect Justification and Optimisation in Nuclear Medicine” on 6-8 Nov. 2018 in Stockholm, Sweden. This second workshop, is addressed to experienced inspectors from radiation competent Authorities, members of HERCA, and will cover nuclear medicine both in diagnostic and therapeutic applications.

Other fields of activities

HERCA conducted an exploratory work on interventional radiology and radiation therapy in order to identify possible topics of interest for HERCA, including patients and occupational exposures.

Natural radiation sources

HERCA created a new working group for addressing natural radiation sources. First orientations give priority to the exchange of information with regards to national approaches, the identification of the consequences of the new radon dose conversion factors at a national level and to work towards a common approach to implementing the new dose conversion factors.

Emergency Preparedness and Response

In October 2014, HERCA and WENRA associations issues the HERCA-WENRA Approach for a better cross-border coordination of protective actions during the early phase of a nuclear accident (HERCA-WENRA Approach = HWA). Since, HERCA Working Group on Emergencies is tasked with following-up the implementation of the HERCA-WENRA Approach and with developing appropriate tools for facilitating the HWA implementation. HERCA developed several guidance or Country Fact Sheets. HERCA also works on the definition and development of a common situation report and on the coordination of cross-border protective actions.

HERCA also has worked on the experience feedback from the Ruthenium-106 release detected in autumn 2017 in Europe. At its last Board meeting, HERCA approved a position which is to “Invite Member states to share actively future monitoring results in USIE and ECURIE when clearly abnormal observations are made to ensure wider information exchange among competent authorities and to ensure that all counterparts are informed.”

Veterinary Applications

HERCA Board approved the Veterinary Guidelines for protection of veterinary professionals and members of the public during off-site x-ray examinations. Objectives of this leaflet are to highlight the local regulatory requirements and to give useful practical advice about radiation protection in an off-site setting.

This working groups also works on the release criteria and safety measures in veterinary nuclear medicine and on the different pre-purchase exams realized on horses.

Research and Industrial Sources and Practices

The HERCA working group on Research and Industrial Sources and Practices covers all radiation protection issues concerning the justification and optimization of non-medical applications of ionizing radiation. In particular, this WG works on industrial radiography, security of radioactive sources (IAEA Security Guide No.11), maintenance of industrial radiography equipment, high-activity sources inventory, ionizing radiation systems for cargo-screening and justification principle.

Other information

Next HERCA Board meeting: 30-31 October 2018 in Paris, France.

For more information: www.herca.org

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