

HERCA

Heads of the European Radiological protection Competent Authorities



Heads of European Radiological protection Competent Authorities Association

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Vienna, 23 September 2010

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(Chair of HERCA)

Summary

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Background

- Recognition of the need for increased co-operation between Radiation Protection Authorities within Europe
- Need for a common understanding, mutual approach and whenever possible harmonization
- Importance of the independent professional standing of Radiation Control Authorities

Participation

Countries

- 32 European countries in the contact list
- 12 countries have participated at all plenary meetings: Belgium, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The Netherlands, United Kingdom

Delegates

- Plenary session
 - Heads at managerial or technical level
 - Chairpersons of the working Groups
- Working Groups
 - Heads at technical level
 - Senior experts

Chairmanship

- | | |
|-------------|-------------------------------|
| 2007 – 2008 | Mr. Lacoste, ASN, France |
| 2008 – | Mr. Ole Harbitz, NRPA, Norway |

ToR: Objectives

The Association, HERCA, has the following objectives :

- to build and maintain a network of Chief radiation safety regulators in Europe ;
- to promote exchange of experience and learning from each other's best practices ;
- to develop a common approach to radiation safety and regulation in particular within the European Union ;
- to discuss and where appropriate, express its consensus opinion on significant regulatory issues.

(As in its ToR)

Need for a common understanding, mutual approach and whenever possible harmonization

ToR: Fields of competence

The fields of competence of HERCA cover :

- radiation protection during the design, the construction the operation and the decommissioning of nuclear installations
- the transport, the storage and the use of radioactive materials for industrial, medical and veterinary purposes
- *At HERCA 5 meeting: decision to include natural radiation sources*

*HERCA addresses the protection of **people** and the **environment** against the effect of ionising radiation.*

(As in its ToR)

ToR: Relationship with the EU and stakeholders

The EC is systematically invited to HERCA meetings

European Union:

- The association will keep the European Union Institutions informed of its activities.
- The association is prepared to consider requests from these institutions for advice on radiation safety and regulatory matters.

Stakeholders

- The association will ensure appropriate opportunities for stakeholders to comment on its work.

(As in its ToR)

Milestones (I)

Set up of HERCA : 2007 – Preliminary works in 2006
(ASN questionnaire)

- 1st meeting (H1) Paris, 29 May 2007
- 2nd meeting (H2) Paris, 19 May 2008
- 3rd meeting (H3) Paris, 12 December 2008
- 4th meeting (H4) Paris 1 December 2009
- 5th meeting (H5) Oslo, 30 June-1 July 2010
- 6th meeting (H6) Paris, 1 December 2010

Milestones (II)

December 2006

- ASN sent a questionnaire to European radiation control authorities in Europe asking for priorities on a list of challenges in radiation protection in Europe

HERCA 1 (May 2007)

- Establishment of 5 Working Groups (WG), based on the global score by 15 Authorities to the questionnaire:
 - *WG1 Outside workers & dose passports;*
 - *WG2 Justification of radioactive sources;*
 - *WG3 New medical techniques & patient release;*
 - *WG4 Emergency preparedness & action levels;*
 - *WG5 Stakeholder involvement & medical practices;*

HERCA 2 (May 2008)

- Preliminary reports and future plans presented by WGs
- First participation of the EC (A. Janssens)
- Mr. Harbitz (NRPA, Norway) elected Chairman of the HERCA

Milestones (III)

HERCA 3 (December 2008)

- WG reports presented and discussed
- HERCA Terms of reference adopted
- Establishment of WG 6 "On the surveillance of collective doses from medical exposures"
- HERCA input to the IAEA BSS

HERCA 4 (December 2009)

- Reorganisation of the WG to merge WGs on medical activities
 - *WG1: Outside Workers & Dose Passport*
 - *WG2: Justification and Optimisation of Radioactive Sources (non medical activities)*
 - *New Medical WG on Justification and Optimisation in medical practices (WG3 + WG5 + WG2 medical) → WG on Medical Activities*
 - *WG4: Emergency Preparedness & Action Levels (EPAL)*
 - *WG6: Surveillance of collective doses from medical exposures*
- Presentation and discussion with the EC on the draft BSS Euratom (Version October 2009)
- Setting up of a Task Force on the future and sustainability of HERCA

Milestones (IV)

HERCA 5 (Oslo, 30 June – 1 July 2010)

- Update and progress of the working groups – among others:
 - *Proposal of a draft European dose passport*
 - *Proposal on justification of full body scanners using X-rays for security reasons*
 - *Proposal on a common European strategy in an emergency*
 - *Proposal on patient release in I-131 therapy*
- Report on stakeholder dialog with the CT-producers
- Report and discussion of Task force proposals on sustainability
- Presentation of IAEA BSS by RASSC-chair
- Comparison of Euratom BSS and IAEA BSS

Achievements

Through the establishing of HERCA, a forum for closer co-operation between the radiological protection authorities in Europe is established.

Close contacts to the European Commission enables us to avoid unnecessary duplication of work.

- A common European passbook has been produced by one of the HERCA working groups and will be soon implemented in Europe;
- A common view on the justification of full body scanners using x-rays for security reasons is being finalised;
- Criteria for patient release after I-131 therapy are being developed;
- A dialog with important stakeholders (e.g. the major CT-manufacturers worldwide) is established discussing a future plan of action to ensure avoiding unnecessary and not justified high doses to patients;
- A common European strategy in a nuclear emergency situation is under discussion;
- Data on the collective dose contribution from the top 20 most important CT-investigations have been published.

These are some good examples of the outcome of the HERCA association. Now, the challenge is to consolidate this important arena for discussion and harmonisation.

Sustainable Future of HERCA (I)

Since the beginning:

- good start in establishing HERCA
- positive view on the outcome of the co-operation enhancing the level of radiation safety, without duplicating work going on in other forums.

Time has come

- to strengthen the associations' working efficiency and
- to go further and ensure sustainability.



Creation of a Task Force (TF) on HERCA's future & sustainability at HERCA 4

- Outcome and proposals from the Task Force discussed in HERCA 5
- Proposals and discussions on: programme of work, governance, follow-up and assessment of impact, communication of HERCA activities and outcomes, stakeholder involvement, HERCA internal communication, secretariat and financing/funding. The creation of a website, logo and a template for HERCA's presentation was also discussed.

Sustainable Future of HERCA (II)

TF Agreement: HERCA has become a valuable asset to radiation protection in Europe

Some of the conclusions:

- HERCA should seek to bring together all European Radiological protection Competent Authorities
- Creation of a website → available in a near future
- Adoption of a HERCA branding style: logo, template,
- Frequency of HERCA Board of Heads meetings twice per year. Alternating reporting from the working groups could be envisaged
- Basis for internal functioning: programme of work, governance
- ...

HERCA Interaction with other institutions/associations

Increasing demand for interaction with HERCA



Agreement: HERCA will develop a policy paper to deal with interactions other organisations/associations/platforms

- **EC** : natural participant as observer at HERCA meetings
HERCA has been invited to Euratom Art. 31 meetings as other international organisation/associations to present the ongoing work.
- **IAEA** : has expressed its hoped to be invited to HERCA meetings as an observer both to the plenary meetings and to the WG meetings →to be discussed further at the next HERCA meeting
- **WHO**: observer in the WG Medical Applications
- **USA Authorities** (FDA,NCRP...): established contacts through the WG MA to be continued for other RP issues

Other interactions

Invitations from ENETRAP-II , EFOMP, European Lamp Comp. Federation , ERPAN ...

Conclusions

- Final objective: guaranty a high level of radiological protection throughout Europe
- Seek to bring together all European RPAs from all European countries
- Uniqueness: composed of the Heads of the Authorities → decision capacity → influence on national policies
- Achievements → valuable asset to RP

Young association at a key moment of its “life”, now facing a few specific challenges

- Outcomes from the Task Force
 - Impact and assessment of achievements
- Communication of HERCA activities and with other stakeholder