

62nd REGULAR SESSION OF THE IAEA GENERAL CONFERENCE

SENIOR REGULATORS' MEETING

Thursday, 20 September 2018

Session II

Role of the regulator in the national framework for preparedness and response to nuclear or radiological emergencies

Chairperson's summary

The meeting was divided in two parts:

Part 1 was dedicated to discussing the role of the regulatory authority in developing national emergency preparedness and response (EPR) regulations and off-site emergency plans, including actions to harmonize EPR arrangements in case of a transnational nuclear or radiological emergency.

Part 2 was dedicated to discussing the role of the regulatory authority during a nuclear or radiological emergency and how that can differ depending on whether the regulatory authority is designated by the country as a competent authority under the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency.

For the part 1 on preparedness, I would particularly start by highlighting a few important elements:

- The IAEA Safety Standards GSR Part 7 includes requirements for the role of a regulatory body in the national framework for EPR. These requirements form the basis for the Module 10 of the IRRS mission.
- As widely accepted, the IAEA Safety Standards in EPR area provide a solid basis to achieve strengthened and harmonized EPR arrangements.
- National EPR arrangements are expected to define specific roles for the regulator at the preparedness and response stages, based on country specific framework and needs.
- The development of regulations for on-site and offsite related aspects of EPR utilizing the IAEA Safety Standards may contribute to achieving robust EPR arrangements nationally and internationally

Following the presentations and the discussion the following has been achieved:

- An improved awareness about the importance of the role of the regulator in achieving robust EPR arrangements and supporting harmonization.
- Different options were discussed on how to harmonize these arrangements while properly considering specific country structure, needs and resources
- An improved awareness about how IAEA services and tools can contribute to better support the development of robust and sustainable national EPR arrangements.

For the part 2 on response, I would also like to start by highlighting a few important elements:

- The IAEA has emergency contact points worldwide that can use various channels to communicate with the Agency through its Incident and Emergency Centre (IEC). The IAEA's IEC maintains a list of emergency contact points in Member States, States Parties to the Conventions on the Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency, and in other relevant international organizations.

- Which organization is an emergency contact point for the IAEA is a national decision and depends on national arrangements. Majority of these emergency contact points (>80%) represent regulatory bodies.
- Regulatory bodies possess important information, which is exchanged during an emergency on behalf of the country. If regulatory body is not designated by a country as an emergency contact point for the IAEA, there should be strong national arrangements in place, which would ensure timely provision of such information to the IAEA through the designated contact point.
- Regular exercises are key for efficient response to events (no matter how small the likelihood for their occurrence is).

Following the presentations and the discussion the following has been achieved:

- An improved awareness on the different roles (nationally and internationally) of the regulators during the response to nuclear or radiological emergencies (whether or not regulator is a designated emergency contact point).
- The need to establish and exercise national arrangements for timely obtaining and sharing of information within the country was discussed.
- An improved awareness on the role of the regulators in promptly sharing of information internationally, through the IAEA channels for emergency communications, for the events with media or public interest.
- The need to include IAEA's IEC as a player in the national or regional exercises was discussed as it will help in raising awareness and ensuring hands-on experience with the application of international arrangements.
- The public reliance on social media was identified as a very specific challenge and the meeting appreciated initiatives from the IAEA to address these in the future.