

# THE REGIONAL PROJECTS FOR THE SAFE TRANSPORT OF RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL

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## **Background**

IAEA recognises the benefits that can be achieved by the creation of regional networks dedicated to strengthening the safety of the transport of radioactive material and has requested the Secretariat to encourage and promote the creation of these networks.

Several of these networks are currently being developed, notably in Africa, Asia, the Pacific Islands, the Caribbean Islands, and the Mediterranean Region. An existing network, the European Association of Competent Authorities (EACA) which was created in 2008 by the European Union competent authorities, brings together on a voluntary and non-legally binding basis, the Competent Authorities and transport safety regulators for radioactive material of the Member States of the European Union.

## **The Regional Projects for the Safe Transport of Radioactive Material**

The mission of the regional projects is to foster a coordinated approach amongst the Member States of the region in order to develop a common or harmonised view for the interpretation and implementation of the regulations for the transport of radioactive material in the region. The aim is to provide proactive means of maintaining and developing a consistent high level of safety for the transport of radioactive material in the individual region and also in relation to and with the neighbouring networks.

## **Objectives**

The objectives are fairly simple:

- Develop common understanding and promote more effective interaction between competent authorities at a working level
- Share knowledge and relevant good practices and, potentially, resources
- Identify needs and participate in joint working groups with defined outputs, and
- Establish working links between the neighbouring networks.

## **Relations with Other Neighbouring Networks for Transport of Radioactive Material**

Relations with neighbouring networks for transport of radioactive material will be beneficial for all the parties concerned. Sharing of documents that have been developed in one network is also encouraged. For example, guidance on inspection of transport packages being developed by EACA will be shared with the Mediterranean transport network, in order to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of the inspections completed in the Mediterranean region. Similarly, transport experts from EACA are being engaged to provide guidance to the members of other networks in the form of providing lectures at workshops held for other regional transport networks. This occurred this year at the transport workshop for the Pacific Islands, and is scheduled to occur at the next workshop for the Mediterranean region in 2015.

## **Mode of Operation of the Networks**

The networks will provide opportunities to establish personal contacts in order to promote confidence and mutual respect of competences amongst the network members to facilitate the development of an effectively functioning network. In the main, exchanges will be carried out by e-mail or video conferences if there is a need for discussing a particular issue amongst the members (most likely between a few members at a time and not necessary between all members).

## **Ownership of the Network**

It is important to stress that these are networks of the participating members, which will determine the issues to be discussed, the timetable of their work and, the actions/measures to be taken as an independent body. With funding provided by the USA and the European Union, the IAEA is providing the networks with all necessary support for the successful development and operation of the networks. The success of a network will entirely depend upon the efforts and ambitions of the participating members involved.

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## Membership to the networks

Membership to the networks is restricted to regulators for the transport of radioactive material in order to promote open discussion between the members. Membership is on a voluntary basis and is non-legally binding: there is no legal obligation on any participating member to apply/implement documents or approaches that have been discussed/developed in common within the network.

## Past meetings

Several meetings have already taken place in the various regions.

For the Pacific Islands and Caribbean transport networks, the first meetings consisted of an introduction to the basic international requirements for the transport of radioactive material. These meetings, which occurred in April and June of this year, respectively, included the following elements:

- Safe Transport of Radioactive Materials
- IAEA, UN and International Regulations
- Radioactive Material Transport Package Types
- Radioactive Materials in Medical Applications
- Transport Documentation and Package Labelling
- Denial of Shipment
- Self-Assessment
- Thematic Safety Area (TSA) 7 for Transport
- Building a Transport Network

These workshops included participants from over twenty countries including (for the Pacific Islands) Fiji, Marshall Islands, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Cook Islands, Kiribati, and the Solomon Islands. From the Caribbean, it included Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Panama, Puerto Rico (United States), Trinidad and Tobago, and the British Virgin Islands (United Kingdom), Antigua and Barbuda, Turks and Caicos Islands, Barbados, Guyana, and Saint Kitts and Nevis

These workshops were very well received and provided the opportunity for those working in transport safety in the various countries to meet their counterparts in other countries in the region, in some cases for the first time. The delegates were able to work together in working groups in practical exercises on basic regulatory controls and emergency response to radiological incidents during transport. The sharing of information and basic safety practices was invaluable as the delegates developed “plans of action” for their individual countries. One delegate from the Pacific Islands indicated that she finally had the “basis” that she needed, referring to a specific paragraph in the IAEA transport safety regulations, to ask the appropriate questions in the process of issuing licenses for the use of radioactive material in her country.

Other networks, such as the Mediterranean and Asian networks, where the countries generally have a more developed infrastructure, the objectives were to initiate the process for self-assessments of their members’ regulatory infrastructure for transport (TSA-7), carry out “peer reviews” of the Self- Assessment exercises and develop plans of action for transport, both for individual countries as well as for the regions as a whole. The countries participating in these meetings and workshops included (for the Mediterranean) Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Montenegro, Portugal, Turkey, Lebanon, Syria, Tunisia, and Morocco. From Asia (for the most recent meeting) it included Bangladesh, China, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, T.T.U.T.J of T. Palestinian A., Philippines, Qatar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Yemen.

## Moving Forward

Amongst the specific actions identified as a first priority in common for most of the networks will be to compile a list of import-export and transit requirements, and develop an approach for compliance inspection and approval of packages. SharePoint sites have been established to facilitate the easy access to and sharing of information pertinent to transport in each of the regions.

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<b>Regional Transport Network Participants</b>			
<b>Asia</b>			
Bangladesh, Cambodia Lao PDR, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Bahrain, Iraq, Iran, Oman, Syria, TTUJ of T. Palestine A., Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen			
<b>Pacific Islands</b>			
Fiji, Marshall Islands, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Cook Islands, Kiribati, Solomon Islands			
<b>Mediterranean</b>			
Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Greece, Montenegro, Portugal, Turkey, Lebanon, Syria, Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, FYROM			
<b>Africa</b>			
South Africa, Botswana, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Ghana, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, Tanzania, Morocco, Burkina Faso, Gabon, Madagascar, Niger, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire			
<b>Caribbean</b>			
Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Panama, Puerto Rico, British Virgin Islands, Antigua and Barbuda, Turks and Caicos Islands, Barbados, Guyana, Saint Kitts and Nevis			
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Figure 1 Asian Transport Network Meeting in Malaysia

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Figure 2 Pacific Islands Network Meeting in New Zealand



Figure 3 Caribbean Islands Network Meeting in Panama



Figure 4 First Meeting of the Mediterranean Network in Vienna