

Regional workshop on denials of shipment of radioactive material for Latin America Montevideo, Uruguay from 12 to 13 July 2007

Under the framework of the TC Project RLA/9/053 “Strengthening National Regulatory Infrastructures for the Control of Radiation Sources” a regional workshop on denials and delays of shipment of radioactive material was held in Montevideo, Uruguay, 12 and 13th July 2007. This 2-day workshop followed the structure of the first meeting of the International Steering Committee on Denials of Shipment. Presentations from the IAEA, WNTI (World Nuclear Transport Institute) and IATA (International Air Transport Association) helped participants to be acquainted with the problem and to be familiar with format and contents of the action plan prepared and adopted in November 2006.

Participants were senior technical staff from organizations undertaking the transport of radioactive material by all modes of transport, carriers, managers and senior technical staff from organizations providing advice to the competent authority. Officials of national regulatory bodies also attended. The workshop was attended by delegates from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela.

As expected, presentations from participants showed a number of causes and provided good basis for the discussions and preparation of a regional set of actions. After the presentations the participants were divided in 3 groups, each one in charge of two out of the six areas of actions (harmonization, awareness, economics, education, communication, and lobby). Results from the working groups were presented and discussed in plenary. Conclusions and actions to minimize instances of denials and delays are as follow.

- There is a need for qualified information on transport of radioactive material. This seems to be the cause of misunderstanding and misinterpretation of requirements and denials and delays in transporting this class of dangerous goods.
- Communication among authorities both at a country and at regional level is not satisfactory. A number of reported instances could be avoided if a efficient communication in the region exist.
- Front line personnel (cargo handlers, customs, shipping agents, carriers) need education and training.

Actions

1. To continue the communication among the participants in order to keep the Latin America group informed on problems and maintain the discussion to identify solutions;
2. To create a regional data bank on denials and delays of shipments. This bank is to be compatible with the database developed by the international steering committee and use the same form to report instances.
3. To provide continuous information to the international steering committee on instances of denials and delays and regional actions and results.