

Note to the Associate Societies

Outcome from the IAEA Radiation Safety Standards Committee (RASSC), June 2016

It is IRPA's intention to keep the AS, and through them the individual members, better informed on developments at an international level which could have an impact on the profession. This is the first in what will be a series of notes on interactions in relevant fora. We must not overload the AS, and hence only key issues will be raised. In the case of the documents discussed at RASSC (see attached list), any issues should generally be addressed through your relevant member state authority. However, if you believe that there should be more widespread interest from the profession on any particular document or issue, then please advise the IRPA Executive Officer [leguen@irpa.net].

There was a general discussion on the control of NORM residues. Practitioner input noted the importance of avoiding over-regulation of low doses, and there was widespread acceptance of the need for more practical guidance and case studies on the application of the graded approach, especially in regulation. On a wider discussion on graded approach it was also recognised that further attention was necessary, and IAEA will convene work on this shortly. IRPA noted that our intended reflection on the application of ALARA could provide some input here.

IAEA have proposed to completely rework RSG-1.7 on clearance and exemption, noting that much of the existing document, including the numerical clearance values, has been integrated within the BSS. The intention, now agreed in principle, is to prepare two separate new guides covering respectively the implementation of clearance [including surface contamination, conditional clearance, liquids/gases], and a separate guide on exemption focussing on activity in commodities in international trade. The Agency has no appetite for revising the numerical values for clearance, although IRPA pressed for recognition that the values are over-restrictive, which in practice results in extremely low doses at least two orders of magnitude below the required criterion. This results in huge unnecessary expenditure and misuse of national resources. [Note: the President presented a paper on this at the Cape Town Congress – available on request]. A few Member States supported the view that, whilst there is a need for stability over the immediate future, some work to review the clearance values should be initiated in order to be prepared for the next opportunity for revision. The views of IRPA Societies on this topic would be welcome.

Work is ongoing to update the Transport Regulations to cover a new category of surface contaminated objects (typically large objects from decommissioning), the transport of aged containers (eg used for interim waste storage), together with better integration with other hazardous goods transport.

IAEA have available a series of explanatory Fact Sheets on many aspects of the BSS. These are freely available [<https://www-ns.iaea.org/standards/review-of-the-bss.asp?s=11&l=88>].

There was considerable discussion on ICRP's proposed new dose conversion factor for radon. RP professionals should be aware that the proposals effectively increase the assigned dose from a given Bq/m³ by a factor of around 2.5. Preliminary discussion did not identify any immediate urgent issues for the BSS, but there could be many impacts for the profession to consider. The difference in risk between smokers and non-smokers is an issue of interest and discussion.

Roger Coates OBE, IRPA President, June 2016

Annex: Relevant Draft Documents, RASSC June 2016

Approved for Member State 120 Day Consultation

Draft Safety Guide: Arrangements for the Termination of a Nuclear or Radiological Emergency

Draft Safety Guide: Management of Radioactive Residues from Uranium Production and Other NORM Activities

Draft Safety Requirement: Regulations for the Safe Transport of Radioactive Materials (update)

Approval for Publication

Related Environmental Safety Guides:

- Radiation Protection of the Public and Protection of the Environment
- Prospective Radiological Environmental Impact Assessment for Facilities and Activities
- Regulatory Control of Radioactive Discharges to the Environment

Approved for further development

Guidance to replace RSG-1.7 on Clearance and Exemption

Guidance on Living in Contaminated Environments

Code of Conduct Supplementary Guidance on Management of Disused Radioactive Sources

Guidance on the Use of a Graded Approach

General Information on RASSC and other IAEA Safety Committees

<http://www-ns.iaea.org/committees/>

<http://www-ns.iaea.org/committees/rassc/>