

THE CANADIAN RADIATION PROTECTION ASSOCIATION  
A BRIEF HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION OF ITS CURRENT ACTIVITIES

by

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The Canadian Radiation Protection Association was formed in 1979 and currently has over 300 members. This formation was initiated by the efforts of R.V. Osborne, who earlier had circulated a questionnaire to Canadian members of the Health Physics Society and others asking them whether they saw a need for a Canadian organization for radiation protection, and outlining several choices for such an organization. Among the choices were:

- An independent organization representing radiation protection in Canada
- A Canadian chapter of the Health Physics Society
- A division of an existing Canadian association, such as the Canadian Association of Physics

The majority of respondents saw a need for a Canadian organization, and felt that the membership of such an organization would be served best if it was completely independent. Consequently, an Ad Hoc Committee was formed to organize the proposed Association, and to draft a Constitution and Rules. The work of this Committee resulted in the formation of the Canadian Radiation Protection Association and its Constitution and Rules were unanimously approved in principle at an open meeting in April 1979, attended by over 100 potential members. However, it required a further three years and considerable effort before the Association was legally incorporated in 1982.

Besides working towards the incorporation of the Association the main activities of the CRPA in the first three years of existence were:

- To establish an efficient system of committees and procedures to run the Association. This is particularly important in a large, sparsely populated country such as Canada.

- To organize annual general meetings (AGM). Following the organizational meeting in Toronto in 1979, annual meetings have been held in Montreal, Ottawa, Vancouver and Toronto. Besides the business meeting of the Association, these meetings contain a technical program of invited and contributed papers lasting for about two days and technical exhibits. They have been attended by 100 to 150 members and non-members. Abstracts of papers presented at the meeting are distributed to all members and are published routinely in the Health Physics Journal.
- To produce a quarterly Bulletin. This bulletin is the main instrument for communication within the Association. Besides containing information about the business of the Association, it contains notices of upcoming events, short scientific and technical reviews, reviews of conferences, job openings and other items of interest to members.

Once the committees and procedures of the Association, the AGM and the Bulletin were firmly established, the officers of the Association decided to poll the membership to see what areas they would like to see the Association spending more effort on, and what areas they would like to see the Association take initiatives in. The result of the poll can be summarized as follows:

- CRPA should take a more active role in the public information forum, on its own and by supplying information, visual aids, etc. to members.
- CRPA should establish a program to assist members in keeping abreast with developments in radiation protection. This should include both the technology and the concepts of radiation protection.
- CRPA should initiate work on specific topics in radiation protection which are of current or future concern in Canada. This could be achieved by presenting briefs to the appropriate authorities, by organizing or sponsoring workshops and seminars, by supporting graduate level education in specific areas, or other appropriate means.

The officers of the CRPA have discussed the results of the poll in detail and are currently studying ways by which the recommendations of the membership can be implemented. It is felt that some progress has been made on the last recommendation, in that the CRPA is co-sponsoring an International Conference on Occupational Radiation Safety in Mining in Toronto, Canada, 1984 October 14-18. In addition, the possibility of holding workshops on the Criteria for Radioactive Waste Disposal and on the new (Canadian) Atomic Energy Control Regulations are being discussed.

Currently, the project that has the highest priority is the preparation of a proposal to host the next IRPA Congress in Toronto, Canada in May, 1988.