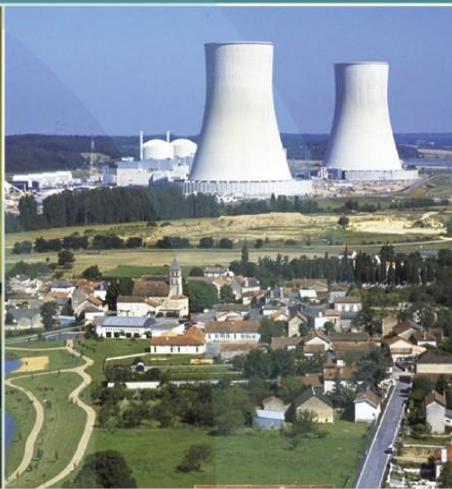




**IRPA**

**INTERNATIONAL RADIATION PROTECTION ASSOCIATION**

# IRPA EXECUTIVE COUNCIL REPORT FOR THE TERM 2012 – 2016



**IRPA EXECUTIVE COUNCIL  
REPORT FOR THE TERM  
2012 – 2016**

EDITION 2016

## IRPA EXECUTIVE COUNCIL REPORT FOR THE TERM 2012 – 2016

### 1. Introduction

The International Radiation Protection Association (IRPA) is an independent non-profit association of national and regional radiation protection societies (the Associate Societies - AS).

#### The Mission Statement of IRPA is as follows:

IRPA is the international professional association for radiation protection. It promotes excellence in the practice of radiation protection through national and regional Associate Societies and radiation protection professionals by providing benchmarks of good practice and enhancing professional competence and networking. It promotes the application of the highest standards of professional conduct, skills and knowledge for the benefit of individuals and society.

As part of its current Strategic Plan IRPA has declared the following Vision:

IRPA is recognized by its members, stakeholders and the public as the international

**IRPA is recognized by its members, stakeholders and the public as the international voice of the radiation protection profession in the enhancement of radiation protection culture and practice worldwide**

voice of the radiation protection profession in the enhancement of radiation protection culture and practice worldwide.

Taking account of the strategic plan for the period up to 2020, this report sets out the progress made by IRPA and the Executive Council for the period up to the IRPA14 International Congress in 2016, which will crown IRPA's celebration of 50 Years in Radiation Protection.

A fundamental assumption is that the IRPA Vision represents a major breakthrough in how we and our stakeholders should see IRPA. Bringing the vision to reality is the dominant force in all activities over the current period.

This Vision was fully supported at the General Assembly (GA) and the Associated Societies Forum (ASF) during the 2012 IRPA13 Congress in Glasgow, and it was strongly recommended to build rapidly on the 'IRPA Spring' sentiment evident at the Congress.

It is also important to ensure continuity with the strategy developed in the previous EC

### EC MEMBERS

2012-2016

IRPA EXECUTIVE COUNCIL 2012-2016	<b>President:</b> Renate Czarwinski, Germany
	<b>Vice-President:</b> Roger Coates, UK
	<b>Vice-President for Congress Affairs:</b> Thiagan Patheer, South Africa
	<b>Executive Officer:</b> Bernard Le Guen, France
	<b>Treasurer:</b> Richard Toohey, USA
	<b>Publications Director:</b> Christopher Clement, Canada
	<b>Council members:</b> Ana Maria Bomben, Argentina Eduardo Gallego, Spain Alfred Hefner, Austria Jong Kyung Kim, South Korea Sigurður Magnússon, Iceland Richard Vetter, USA



period. Hence for the period 2012–2016 the IRPA Executive Council (EC) agreed the need to drive forward with the continuing key issues and challenges as follows :

- **To continue** the aim of establishing IRPA as the international voice of the radiation protection profession through effective and focused engagement with other international organizations and professional bodies ;
- **To embed** the sharing of good practice and professionalism in Associate Societies and individual members through the development of Guiding Principles, support and coordination of education and training and the convening of effective meetings and Congresses ;
- **To foster** communication, the sharing of knowledge and the building of competence concerning global radiation safety matters between and within Associate Societies ;
- **To increase** the efforts of IRPA to support young practitioners and scientists in their work in radiation protection, in their education and training, and in their efforts to become members of the radiation protection community ;
- **To support** establishment of effective Associate Societies, with particular emphasis on less-developed countries.

An additional priority was agreed for the current cycle :

- **To promote** the public understanding of radiation risks through the sharing of good practices in public information and

engagement.



## 2. International Voice of the RP Profession

### 2.1 Cooperation and Partnership Activities of IRPA

#### 2.1.1 IAEA

IRPA is recognized by the IAEA as Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) and has the observer status in the Radiation Safety Standards Committee (RASSC).

IRPA was invited to make a Keynote Presentation at the February 2014 IAEA International Experts Meeting (IEM6) on Radiation

Protection after the Fukushima Daiichi Accident – Promoting Confidence and Understanding. The presentation focused on IRPA's priorities for the future development of the system of protection, around three related issues :

- Ensuring that the system of protection is not overly complex and is ethically and socially underpinned
- Ensuring that the system can be adequately understood by all our stakeholders, and is seen as 'believable'
- The need to put much more effort into public communication generally.

These priorities were widely supported in the discussions, which also noted IRPA's important role in the development and support of younger professionals. The importance of working with the medical community to ensure an adequate understanding of radiation issues across the healthcare profession was also recognised.

The President, the Executive Officer and the IRPA Education and Training coordinator had an opportunity to represent IRPA at the 2015 IAEA Conference on Occupational Exposure. Our contributions included the initiative and guidelines on Radiation Protection Culture, drawn up by 'RP Professionals for the benefit of RP professionals', and a presentation on "The role of professional societies in promoting radiation protection education and training".

### **2.1.2 ICRP (including Ethics)**

In March 2013, IRPA became a Special Liaison Organisation of the International Commission on Radiological Protection (ICRP). As such, the President represented IRPA at Meetings of Senior Representatives in Formal Relations with ICRP held in Abu Dhabi in 2013, London in 2014, and Seoul in 2015.

In November 2012, ICRP requested collaboration with IRPA to support the work of ICRP Task Group 94 on the ethical basis of the system of radiological protection. During the next three years, IRPA Associate Societies worked with ICRP to host several of the regional workshops that laid the foundation for this work. The 1st

Asian Workshop was organised by KARP (the Korean Associate Society) in Daejeon in August 2013; the 1st European Workshop was organised by AIRP and SFRP (the Italian and French Associate Societies) in Milano in December 2013; the 1st North American Workshop was organised by HPS (the US Associate Society) in Baltimore in July 2014; and the 2nd European Workshop was organised by SEPR, AIRP, SFRP and SRP (the Spanish, Italian, French, and UK Associate Societies) in Madrid in February 2015. Many IRPA members have played an active role in these and other similar workshops on this topic in the last three years.

IRPA was also requested to assist with a special targeted consultation on the outcome of this work programme – the draft ICRP report on the Ethical Foundations of the System of Radiological Protection, by distributing copies of the draft report to all Associate Societies, and will prepare a summary of the feedback received. This type of consultation with the RP profession, through IRPA, prior to the open public consultation, is exceptional.

As this work moves towards a conclusion it is clear that there are two inter-related aspects – the ethics within the system of protection itself, and the ethics in the implementation of the system. The ICRP report will focus on the former component, whilst recognising the importance of the total picture. Over the coming period IRPA will consider whether and how it will be helpful and appropriate to give additional consideration to the second aspect – the role of ethics in the application of the system by the practitioners.

### **2.1.3 NEA/CRPPH**

IRPA participates as an observing party in the annual meeting of CRPPH at the NEA in Paris (OECD headquarters).

### **2.1.4 Other International Organizations**

IRPA works closely and constructively with several other international organisations, including ICNIRP, ICRU, UNSCEAR, ILO, PAHO, the

EC and also with NCRP in the US. We also cooperate with Image Gently.

### 2.1.5 IOMP cooperation

IRPA and the International Organization of Medical Physics (IOMP) engaged in several work areas together on several initiatives during the period 2012–2016. IRPA signed a Memorandum of Agreement between IRPA and IOMP in March 2012, the objectives of which were :

- To develop guidance for fostering and enhancing radiation protection culture in health care,
- To foster medical physics in developing countries.

Kelly Classic (USA), Bernard Le Guen (France), Ken Kase (USA) and Richard Vetter (USA) wrote a chapter on Safety and Radiation Protection Culture. This chapter was published in the book Radiological Safety and Quality – Paradigms in Leadership and Innovation, edited by Lawrence Lau and Kwan-Hoong Ng. The content was written by many international authors including Renate Czarwinski and Kim Yin Cheung, who explained the goals of IRPA and IOMP, respectively, in the Foreword of the book.

Richard Vetter represented IRPA at the March 2012 meeting of the International Congress on Occupational Health in Cancun and delivered a paper based on the above chapter and participated in a workshop on radiation protection culture. The audience was international and heard IRPA's intention to encourage improvement of safety and radiation protection culture world-wide, including radiation protection culture in medicine.

In June 2013 IOMP Science Committee Chair and IOMP Publications Committee Chair invited Richard Vetter as a representative of IRPA to co-edit a book with Magdalena Stoeva, medical physicist from Bulgaria, member of the IOMP Publications Committee, on the subject of radiation protection in medical imaging and radiation oncology. One of the goals was to produce a book with many international authors, which among other things could be used to

improve medical physics training in developing countries. This book, which represented a cooperative effort between IOMP and IRPA, was completed in December 2015. IRPA and IOMP presidents Renate Czarwinski and Kim Yin Cheung, respectively, each contributed an opening chapter describing the role of their organizations. Another notable chapter, The System of Radiation Protection, was written by IRPA EC member Christopher Clement. Thirty two authors from around the world contributed chapters on various aspects of radiation protection in medical imaging and radiation oncology. The book is available for purchase from CRC Press.com and Amazon.com.

Subsequent to a nomination by the IRPA EC, Richard Vetter served on the International Advisory Committee for the International Conference on Radiation Protection in Medicine, 30 May-2 June 2014, Varna Bulgaria. While IOMP did not serve as host, it was a major supporting organization for the meeting.

### 2.1.6 Technical Agreements with international organizations (FORO, WNA and WiN Global)

Practical Arrangements on Cooperation Activities were signed in December 2013 between IRPA and FORO (Foro Iberoamericano de Organismos Reguladores Radiologicos y Nucleares) and in April 2015 between IRPA and World Nuclear Association (WNA). IRPA President Renate Czarwinski and WiN Global President See-Moon Park signed jointly a Practical Agreement on Cooperation Activities in March 2016.



FORO is a non-profit organization, which promotes radiological and nuclear safety and security with the radiological and nuclear safety regulatory authorities in its current member countries, i.e. Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Mexico, Peru, Spain and Uruguay.

Promoting a wider understanding of nuclear energy among key international influencers, WNA is an international organization representing the global nuclear industry.

WiN Global currently has 25,000 members including national chapters' members and individuals from 107 countries. WiN has over 30 national, regional and international chapters throughout the world, and is still growing. Membership includes women and men working professionally in medicine and health care, in regulatory authorities, in industry and as independent researchers. The members have a common commitment to provide information and communicate with the public.

One topical area of common interest is to cooperate with WiN Global concerning the implementation of the statement of WiN Global "International nuclear safety and security standards should be implemented globally". This statement was adopted at the WiN Annual Conference 2015 in Vienna.

Believing that FORO, WNA, WiN and IRPA each have their specific contributions to the use of radiation protection, collaboration between IRPA and the respective organizations in areas of common interest contributes to the overall joint goal of the safe use of radiation without compromising on quality. The ultimate purpose of these collaborations is to recognize that all organizations can complement each other in promoting their respective objectives and to enhance the cooperation between both organizations in the field of radiation protection

Thanks to these practical arrangements, the organizations will :

- organize joint events or sessions
- provide each other the link to their own website on their webpage

- inform on and possibly invite a designated representative of the other organisation to participate in respective events and venues
- send an official letter of invitation for attendance of meetings.
- explore possibilities of cooperation in projects

Currently, similar practical arrangements are being developed between IRPA and the International Society of Radiographers and Radiological Technologists (ISRRT).

#### **2.1.7 IRPA Participation to the Meeting of Health Authorities in the Region of Latin America and the Caribbean**

IRPA was represented at the "Meeting of Health Authorities in the Region of Latin America and the Caribbean to Analyse the Implementation of the BSS (GSR Part 3) with Regard to the Medical sector", organized by the IAEA in Santiago de Chile, March 2015. The workshop participants made a remarkable exercise of self-criticism with regard to their respective national circumstances and the conclusions could be considered representative of the situation in the countries of the region. A lecture was delivered with the title: "Importance of establishing an effective radiation protection programme in medical application - The role of professional associations". IRPA activities were presented as well as the guidance documents produced by IRPA with regard to RP Culture and the stakeholder engagement in decisions affecting RP. The workshop identified the urgent need to design and put in place an effective communication strategy targeting high ranked authorities and decision makers within health authorities of the region. The cooperation between IAEA, PAHO, FORO, the US NRC and IRPA may contribute to the effectiveness of future seminars and training activities by sharing examples of good practice.

### 2.1.8 IRPA participation to the “Ibero-American Conference on Radiation Protection in Medicine” (CIPRaM 2016)

IRPA is cooperating with the organisation of the “Ibero-American Conference on Radiation Protection in Medicine” (CIPRaM 2016), to be held in Madrid, 18-20 October 2016 (<http://cipram-madrid-2016.es/en/home.htm>). The main objectives of CIPRaM 2016 are to review advances in the implementation of the actions proposed in **the Bonn Call for Action**, to identify problems and possible solutions, to promote good practices and to define progress indicators for those actions. The conference will also serve as an opportunity to exchange information and experience gained in recent years in relation to radiation protection in medicine, and to establish/strengthen ties between Ibero-American countries for cooperation in this field.

### 2.2 Discussion / consultation on System of Protection

A defining feature of many international meetings and conferences during the 2012-2016 term has been the emphasis given to the future development of the system of protection, particularly (but not solely) in the light of experiences of the Fukushima accident. This has focused the minds of many international organisations, including IRPA. Following opportunities to present and engage in discussion with many interested parties, including the Japanese Health Physics Society, the above mentioned IEM6 Meeting of the IAEA and the ICRP ethics workshops, IRPA Vice President Roger Coates prepared, as a personal initiative, an invited editorial for the Journal of Radiological Protection on the topic of Radiation Protection – Where are we after Fukushima? This aimed to give a practitioner's viewpoint on how the system of protection could be re-emphasised and presented in a more practical and common-sense way and give a better context for wider understanding.

The Executive Committee considered that, whilst it was a personal perspective, the editorial raised important issues, which should be considered more widely. The IRPA President commenced a consultation across the Associate Societies on the presentation of the system of protection. The preliminary outcome of this consultation will be discussed at the Associate Society Forum at the Cape Town Congress, and the initiative will continue into the next term with the aim of sharing the views of the practitioners with our international organisation partners.

### 2.3 Eye Dose Task Group

In order to follow up on the issues raised in the first Eye Dose TG report in July 2013, the TG was re-established in January 2015 with the aim to report the evaluation of the radiation protection community with reference to the best applied methods for monitoring dose to the lens, possible critical points in relation to the dose limits, with attention also to methods used to reduce dose to the eye; to the ongoing path towards the implementation at the legislative level in the different countries; and moreover to monitor how it is taken into consideration the wider generic issue of tissue reactions.

The TG has representation from eight Associate Societies, and prepared a questionnaire covering four topics :

- 1) Implications for Dosimetry ;
- 2) Implications for Methods of Protection ;
- 3) Wider Implications of Implementing the Revised Limits ;
- 4) Legislative and other general aspects.

A total of twenty two ASs, covering 40 countries from North and South America, Europe, Asia and Africa, actively responded. Analysis of the responses is currently on-going, with the principal themes as follows: the issue of how to take account of personnel wearing protective eyewear; the perceived problems in achieving compliance in wearing eye dosimeters; the implications for dose recording and tracking itinerant workers; the need for a survey about



the exposure dose level for some specific medical procedures and for a greater administrative attention to prevent exceeding the limit; the different forms of involvement of the ASs in the national consideration of the new limits, at legislative level, from consultation to advisory; and the need to continue studying, for a better understanding, the mechanism of a possible change in circulatory diseases following the exposure of low- moderate-dose of radiation.

The report from this TG has been issued for review, and the TG is also preparing an "IRPA guideline protocol for eye protection and eye dose monitoring of workers".

### 3. Good Practice and Professionalism

#### 3.1 New Societies and Associate Society Development

During this term two new Associate Societies have been accepted into the IRPA family. At the 65th meeting of the EC in July 2013, we admitted the Cameroon Radiological Protection Society, and in September 2014 we resolved to admit the Tunisian Radiation Protection Association.

Finally, immediately before the IRPA14 Congress in Cape Town the EC agreed the admittance of both the Ghana and Nigeria societies into IRPA. The IRPA family now covers 67 different countries, with over 18,000 individual members. We are currently working with several other national societies on their journeys towards membership of IRPA.

Working through the newly-constituted Societies Admissions and Development Committee (SADC), we have prepared and published on the website a clear and succinct statement on the Benefits of a Radiation Protection Society. One common issue both for new and existing societies is to provide convincing answers to the challenges – 'Why should I form an RP society' or 'Why should I join an RP society' ? The statement addresses this in a practical and helpful manner, focusing on four viewpoints :

- The Benefits of Creating and Belonging to a Radiation Protection Society
- The Benefits of Cooperation at an International Level through IRPA
- Benefits for the Employer when an Employee belongs to a Radiation Protection Society
- The Benefits to National Authorities

All societies are commended to look at this practical guidance to help them to convince colleagues of the real benefits of belonging to an association of professional radiation protection practitioners.

The SADC has updated the Model Constitution as a guide for aspirant Associate Societies, which ensures compliance with all IRPA's requirements. The committee is also working on the development of a web-based 'good practice' sharing system where each AS can post what it believes are good ideas and suggestions which could be of interest to other AS.

#### 3.2 Education and Training

##### 3.2.1 General Education and Training (E&T)

Since IRPA13 in 2012, the activities on E&T have been mainly focused on the presence at the Regional Congresses, and specifically at the Associate Society Forums of these congresses. The main message disseminated was about the different lines of the IRPA Strategy Plan on Education and Training Activities (2008-2020), stressing the opportunities for AS to cooperate, coordinate and share their E&T activities.

In some of the regional congresses, specific activities were undertaken :

- "Fostering Radiation Protection culture : The educational aspect" presented at the European IRPA Regional Congress in Geneva 2014
- Coordination of a Workshop on E&T in AFRIRPA-04 in Rabat 2014, with a presentation on "The role of IRPA on Education and Training activities (2008-2020)".

- "The role of professional associations and IRPA in promoting E&T in RP" presented at the Latin-American IRPA Congress in Buenos Aires 2015

With a few exceptions, evaluation questionnaires on the Refresher Courses were distributed in all regional congresses, with the purpose of getting useful information in order to improve their interest and quality. However, unfortunately, no feedback has been received from the organizers. To avoid losing this valuable information, and facilitate accreditation of IRPA refresher courses, the inclusion of an evaluation procedure of these courses and seminars has been included in the annex of the IRPA rules for regional congresses.

Complementing the E&T activities, the competition for young scientists and professionals has been established as part of all the IRPA Congresses, in which at least two members of the Executive Council have always been part of the jury.

In March 2013 the 5th International Conference on Education and Training in Radiological Protection (ETRAP 2013) was organized by Seibersdorf Laboratories together with the European Nuclear Society in Vienna. The conference was organized in collaboration with the IAEA and supported by IRPA, EUTERP, EFOMP and ÖVS. More than 150 scientists and professionals from 37 different countries all over the world attended this conference. IRPA was represented by Alfred Hefner and Eduardo Gallego in the Organizing and the Scientific Committee.

Cooperation with international and regional organizations dealing with E&T in RP has continued to be very effective. In particular, with the participation at the IAEA Steering Committee on E&T in Radiation, Transport and Waste Safety and in the Advisory Board of the European Network on Education and Training in Radiological Protection (ENETRAP) and the European Training and Education in Radiation

Protection Foundation (EUTERP). This IRPA cooperation can contribute to better implementation of the current challenges after the new IAEA and EU BSS on RP in different countries and regions. Also, there is an interest to share contents of the EUTERP database on E&T events and providers, with those of the IRPA database on E&T events and resources, which is being launched.

As part of this cooperation, there was a participation as invited speaker and panellist in "Topical Session 12 : Education and Training in Occupational Radiation Protection" at the IAEA "International Conference on Occupational Radiation Protection : Enhancing the Protection of Workers - Gaps, Challenges and Developments", held in Vienna in December 2014, with an invited contribution entitled "The role of professional societies in promoting radiation protection education and training".

Looking into the future, all the described activities should be fully consolidated. In particular, the evaluation of Refresher Courses at Regional Congresses should be implemented. The 6th edition of the ETRAP Conference is being prepared with the co-organization of IRPA, to be held in Valencia, Spain, in 2017.

Finally, an IRPA database on E&T events and resources was presented at the Regional Congresses, but lack of availability by its coordinator (Eduardo Gallego) has impeded its practical launching and use by the AS. To correct this circumstance, an online training session on the use of the database will be organised after summer 2016 and a practical guide of use will be disseminated through all AS.

### **3.2.2 Task Group on Certification of the Radiation Protection Expert**

This Task Group was created with the aim to develop a guidance document for the development and implementation of a certification process for Radiation Protection Expert (RPE) that would be useful to IRPA AS that

would like to initiate such a certification process or improve an existing process in their countries. The TG is chaired by Kent Lambert (HPS) and Colin Partington (SRP), with Eduardo Gallego as liaison with the EC.

By exchanging documents and distributing a survey to the AS, the TG has reviewed the various certification processes currently being used by the IRPA AS and countries, through a representative sample. The poll was answered by representatives of 23 AS, thus giving a reasonable overview of the current practices. The TG has analysed the strengths and weaknesses of the processes for certification and guidance on qualification reviewed and has elaborated a draft document with guidance for the development and implementation of a certification process, and annexes describing current practice in different countries and the participation of AS in certification. The aim is to collect comments from the AS looking to have a final version to be approved by the EC in Autumn 2016.

The Task Force on Education & Training in Radiation Protection from the association of the Heads of the European Radiological Competent Authorities (HERCA) organised a Workshop on the "Implementation of Radiation Protection Expert & Radiation Protection Officer", in Paris, July 2015. IAEA, EC and IRPA were invited to attend the workshop and help framing the international experience. Eduardo Gallego presented the IRPA definition of RPE, the IRPA Strategy Plan on Education and Training Activities (2008-2020) and the results of the survey to the AS.

### 3.3 Young Professionals Program

Following the IRPA 13 Conference in Glasgow, where young persons agreed the need for a support network, the responsible EC Member Alfred Hefner tried to organize a more formal organisation of the group within IRPA. A questionnaire was sent out to be informed where groups of Young Scientists and Professionals are currently in existence. The result was that there

are currently not many of such groups. Hence it is vital to inform the different AS that today it is most important to have such groups, because the overall membership of the AS within IRPA is growing old and we need to have more young blood coming in. This is work in progress.



IRPA13: The Young Professional's Award.

At their Prague meeting in September 2015 the European IRPA Associations decided to propose Mr. Christoph Stettner, a member of the Austrian Radiation Protection Society, to the AS Forum and the GA as the new coordinator the ongoing work for the Young Scientists and Professionals Group.

One positive outcome was the invitation of the IAEA for the 2015 Conference on Occupational Radiation Protection to hold a special session including a round table of young people, also facilitating their wider engagement in the lectures and discussions. After five days of presentations and intensive discussions one of the identified nine key areas of focus was "Developing young professionals in the area of radiation protection, particularly for developing nations, through communication, networking, training, research hands-on experience and participation in technical meetings and conferences". This result helps to provide an impetus to the ongoing IRPA work for the Young Scientists and Professionals.

During the 2012-2016 period each Regional Congress has given emphasis and encouragement to the participation of Young Scientists and Professionals. Every Congress has had a Young Scientists and Professionals Award Competition, and the organisational rules for this

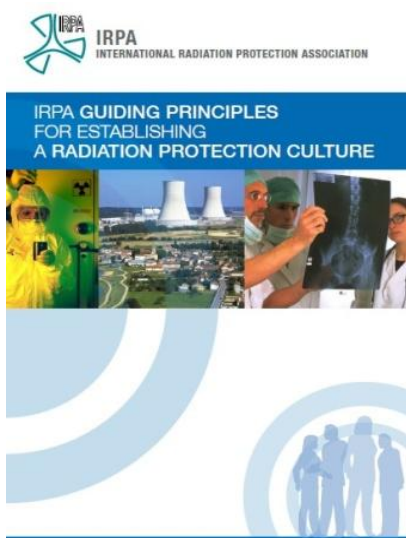
competition have now been defined by IRPA. Congresses should also provide specific opportunities for the networking of the younger members of our profession. This is now a clear expectation for all future IRPA Congresses.

### 3.4 Radiation Protection Culture : General and Medical

The proposal to develop a set of Guiding Principles for Establishing a Radiation Protection Culture was endorsed at the 2008 IRPA Congress in Buenos Aires. Four IRPA workshops were organised in Europe, Asia and the United States, followed by the Glasgow Congress which was yet another opportunity to organise a session and collect opinions before finalization of the initial draft. Each Associate Society had an opportunity to react and respond to the drafts that were posted on IRPA website.

For IRPA, sponsoring this topic all these years has been a unique opportunity to meet with its members and those of other institutions such as the NRC, the FDA and professional organisations such as AAMP, WHO and the IAEA.

All this work culminated in the publication of the IRPA Guidance Document in 2014; it was officially presented at the European Regional Congress in Geneva.



The purpose of 'IRPA Guiding Principles for Establishing a Radiation Protection Culture' is to capture the opinion and standpoint of radiation

protection professionals on the essential components of a radiation protection culture. Embedding RP at a cultural level within an organization is by far the most effective way of delivering the performance to which we all aspire.

Because at the level of principle there are no differences between sectors (medical, nuclear, industry), radiation protection culture can be understood as a combination of habits and knowledge of RP in all its aspects for workers, patients, population and the environment, and in all exposure situations, combining scientific and social dimensions.



Following this experience, IRPA, in cooperation with IOMP and WHO, has now launched a new initiative for capturing the opinion of all stakeholders with a view to developing a framework document providing guidance for the establishment and maintenance of a radiation protection culture, as part of a sustainable safety culture program in health care settings. The first step of this new project was the organization of two Regional Workshops, the first one with the contribution of Latin American countries in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in April 2015 and the second one with European countries in Geneva in December 2015, including representatives from health professional sectors (radiologists, radiographers, medical physicists, nuclear medicine physicians, radiation oncologists, interventional cardiologists, dentists, paediatricians), regulatory bodies, health authorities, manufacturers, and patients' associations.



The aim was to collect feedback and key elements of Radiological Safety Culture in Health Care, such as :

- Raising awareness and developing attitude
- RP in management and QA-systems, with a strong leadership and commitment to RP
- Reporting events, learning, and improving
- Strengthening the role of manufacturers (stakeholders' involvement)
- And enhanced involvement of professional societies (stakeholders' involvement)



The objective is also to set priorities for establishing and maintaining a strong culture on all continents, with examples from diagnostic radiology, image-guided interventions, radiation therapy, and nuclear medicine and from organizational matters. This area will also be looking at how to engage patients to improve Radiological Safety Culture and how to develop tools and indicators for assessing the level of Radiological Safety Culture in quality assurance programs in medicine.

IRPA 14 will provide an opportunity to present the results of these meetings and further discuss the way forward with the participants of the congress. This will include experiences with wider implementation of an RP culture in all fields, as

well as further discussion on the specific aspects of RP culture in health care.

### 3.5 Public Understanding

In 2013 the IRPA Executive Council (EC) approved the Terms of Reference for a Task Group on Public Understanding of Risk. The purpose for the Task Group was to encourage and support the Associate Societies and IRPA in the development of effective means of enhancing public understanding of radiation risk through the sharing of good practice, ideas and resource material. Terms of Reference defined Objectives, Membership, and Working Methods of the Task Group, and nominations were received from 12 Associate Societies.

All IRPA Associate Societies were invited to submit examples of web pages they had developed to communicate to the public on issues including position papers, question and answer pages, press releases and media communications, school events and wider education programs, and other issues. Using email and one intranet video conference, a subcommittee of the Task Group examined all materials submitted by the Associate Societies and selected high quality web pages to use as examples of good practices for communicating risk. The subcommittee used those pages to create a draft Public Understanding Webpage. This draft webpage was shared with the EC and revised to accommodate feedback. In early 2016 the final Public Understanding Webpage was uploaded to the IRPA Website and a letter from IRPA President Renate Czarwinski was sent to all Associate Societies informing them of the new webpage and encouraging them to use it in developing their own webpages, if they did not already have such webpages. The final Public Understanding Webpage can be viewed at <http://irpa.net/>.

### 3.6 Security of Sources

In June 2013 IRPA established a Task Group on Radioactive Source Security, with the brief to support and encourage the awareness and

development of a strong responsibility and knowledge amongst radiation protection practitioners regarding the security of radioactive sources, including the promotion of an enhanced security culture. Unfortunately the TG found difficulty in making progress with this task, and considered that in some ways it was potentially duplicating the work of other international groups such as IAEA and WINS. IRPA will consider whether to continue with this TG.

## 4. Enhancing Effectiveness of IRPA

### 4.1 General

In order to deliver appropriately on the identified key activities, at the start of this term it was realized that IRPA needs to become much more effective in its ways of working and particularly in its interactions with the wider membership - both the ASs and the individual members. To ensure a broad involvement of radiation protection experts in this process and to enhance its effectiveness, IRPA has revised the framework by establishing new and revised committees and Task Groups. The work of all Committees, Commissions and Task Groups is based on clearly defined Terms of Reference which will be reviewed every at least every four years, generally, at the mid-point of each term based on the reported results as well as on reports from regional and international congresses. These Terms of Reference and the membership of each group are on the IRPA website.

### 4.2 Financial Management and the Montreal Fund

In general, IRPA finances remained stable during this period, due to both a dues increase to \$3.50 per member (discounted for Associate Societies in developing countries, based on their per capita income level), and the proceeds received from the IRPA-13 Congress in Glasgow (\$140,000). The EC decided to take half these proceeds (\$70,000) to support increased stakeholder engagement activities (in particular

to support a wider interaction with the principal international organisations), and reserve the other half for the next term (2016-2020). Consequently, the monies spent on stakeholder engagement increased from a budgeted amount of \$85,000 to approximately \$170,000. This includes EC member travel to various conferences and meetings to "show the IRPA flag," an increase of \$20,000 in the international congress loan to IRPA-14 (to be repaid from congress proceeds), a grant of \$5,000 to AFRIRPA-4 in Morocco, and grants to associate societies of \$7,000.

The Montreal Fund, which exists to provide bursary support for the attendance of professionals (particularly younger persons, and those from lesser developed countries) at IRPA congresses and other significant conferences, received contributions from the Australasian, Colombian, Mexican, Netherlands, Russian Federation and UK Associate Societies in the amount of \$30,200, and disbursed \$6,000 to AFRIRPA-4 and \$25,000 to IRPA-14 for support of young professionals. Currently the Montreal Fund contains \$52,000.

### 4.3 Publications and Communication

The Commission on Publications (CoP) is chaired by the IRPA Publications Director, Christopher Clement. The ex-officio Vice-Chair is IRPA Executive Officer Bernard LeGuen.

A revised Terms of Reference for the CoP was approved in June 2013, focusing on gathering information of broad international interest from IRPA Associate Societies, the Executive Council, and other key organisations, and communicating this to IRPA members through the IRPA website and related media.

Key achievements during the term included an overhaul of the IRPA website, establishment of a quarterly IRPA Bulletin, and significantly increased communications through the IRPA News (on the website) and twitter.

The first IRPA Bulletin was published in March 2014, and has come out quarterly since then. This is thanks to a core team of IRPA member

volunteers under the leadership of Bulletin Editors Chunsheng Li and Ali Shoushtarian. Thanks to volunteers from various Associate Societies, the issues are generally available in: Arabic, Chinese, English, Japanese, and Spanish.

IRPA members are strongly encouraged to read the IRPA Bulletin, "register for updates" through the ICRP website, follow IRPA on twitter, and send any news that may be of broad international interest to CoP@irpa.net.

An important area of work for the next term will be increased engagement with all Associate Societies, to increase awareness of IRPA as a vehicle to communicate with the international RP community, and the benefits of doing so. This communication is two-way: IRPA members (i.e. members of all IRPA Associate Societies) can tune into the various IRPA media streams (e.g. Bulletin, News, twitter feed), and Associate Societies can send information to the CoP to be broadcast through these streams.

#### **4.4 IRPA Questionnaire Outcome**

During each four year term IRPA arranges for a questionnaire seeking information and opinion from the ASs. Of the current 50 Associate Societies located in 65 countries, 27 have responded, representing a 53% response. This result is below our expectations (for example compared with 34 responses of 48 AS in 2008). The 27 Associate Societies having responded represent some 14,000 IRPA members i.e. approx. 78% of the total number of IRPA members (17,712).

According to the survey respondents, 17 Associate Societies (62%) have adopted a Code of Ethics, 16 (59%) are involved in training of professionals and 6 (22%) play a role in the accreditation of professionals. 18 Associate Societies (67%) have developed and published standards or guidance documents. In addition, 21 AS (78%) have special arrangements to promote the involvement of young members. 18 AS (67%) are involved in governmental/regulatory advisory bodies or in

responding to consultations at a national or local level.

## **5. Congresses Overview**

### **5.1 General (rules and arrangements)**

The IRPA Constitution and Rules specify several requirements relating to the organisation of the International Congress and (less so) for the Regional Congresses. However, experience has clearly shown that a greater clarity of understanding between IRPA and the congress organisers would be beneficial to all parties. For the IRPA13 Glasgow Congress a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was agreed between the interested parties, and this was deemed a great success. We have therefore developed a Model Memorandum of Understanding between IRPA and the Organising Body of a (Regional) Congress which will now be used as the basis for the organisation of all congresses. Whilst there is much flexibility in the approach, it ensures clarity on issues such as financing, surpluses and liabilities, organisational structure and programme oversight.

IRPA receives many requests to sponsor or otherwise support a wide range of conferences, congresses and meetings in the field of radiation protection and allied topics. Given our limited resources, we have developed a framework for the prioritization of our efforts in this area. The policy document is entitled Arrangements for IRPA's Support for Conferences – Waving the IRPA Flag and is available on the website.

### **5.2 IRPA13 International Congress, Glasgow – 2012**

The IRPA13 International Congress was held in Glasgow in May 2012. This flagship event in IRPA's calendar was organised by the UK Society for Radiological Protection (SRP), in association with its Partner Societies. Almost 1500 scientific delegates attended from 68 different countries, together with around 100 Accompanying Persons and 200 exhibitors staff, making the Congress the world's largest ever gathering of

international radiation protection experience and expertise.

As well as having the full scientific programme, we really wanted to weave our theme Living with Radiation – Engaging with Society into the Congress. This aimed to help delegates become more comfortable in communicating with our wider stakeholders, who are often somewhat fearful of radiation issue, and to share the experiences of communities which have been impacted by radiological issues. In living up to our theme we also arranged a special one day programme for schoolchildren. Planning for this, which was led by SRP, began with an expectation of a few hundred children coming to the venue, but the response from the local community was so overwhelming that we had to close the doors at 1200 13/14 year old students. The atmosphere around the venue on that day was almost overpowering!



IRPA13: Students event

The scientific programme included 1413 abstracts, of which 320 were given oral presentations. There were 25 Refresher Courses and 2 Medical Workshops. In a first for IRPA, 3 sessions were live webcast, and 7 were recorded for immediate release as podcasts. The programme was addressed through 67 separate scientific sessions. There were 18 entrants from the AS for the Young Scientists and Professionals Award, which was won by Jad Farah from France. The summary outcome of the scientific

proceedings was published in the Journal of Radiological Protection.

The congress was regarded by participants as a great success, in both scientific and social terms. It was also very successful financially, despite the tight world financial climate, and made a net contribution of over US\$187K to IRPA's finances.

### 5.3 IRPA Regional Congresses

Five IRPA Regional Congresses were held in this period, two of which covered the Latin America region. As we move forward, this pattern will revert to four such congresses, covering the European, African, Asia/Oceania and Latin American regions during IRPA's mid-term year. Each congress includes an Associate Societies Forum to stimulate discussion and cooperation between the regional societies, a Young Professionals Award competition to encourage the participation of those representing the future of our profession, together with Refresher Courses to provide training opportunities for delegates. The congresses benefit from close working with other international organisations, including IAEA, WHO/PAHO and IOMP.

#### 5.3.1 IXth Latin America Regional Congress, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, April 2013

Over 700 delegates from 21 countries attended this congress, which was organised by the Brazilian Radiation Protection Society (SBPR) in association with FRALC. The congress theme was 'Technology and Radiation Safety: One only commitment'.

#### 5.3.2 4th Asian and Oceanic Congress on Radiation Protection, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, May 2014

The congress was organised by the Malaysian Radiation Protection Association (MARPA). It was attended by 324 participants from 34 countries.



During the sessions, participants discussed the best methods for exchanging information in developing a worldwide network and highlighting ethical dimensions of radiation protection to enhance and improve the radiation protection.



### 5.3.3 4th European Regional Congress, Geneva, Switzerland, June 2014

636 registered scientists and professionals from 48 countries participated in this congress, which was organised by the German-Swiss Association for Radiation Protection (FS) and colleagues in the Association Romande de Radioprotection (ARRAD). The overarching theme of the congress was "Safety Culture", chosen mainly because IRPA had recently announced the results of their intensive work in this field.

### 5.3.4 4th African Regional IRPA Congress (AFRIRPA04), Rabat, Morocco, September, 2014

The congress was organised by the Moroccan Association of Radiation Protection (AMR), with support from IOMP, with the theme 'Strengthening of radiation protection infrastructures in support of the health sector in Africa'. It was attended by more than 200 participants.

### 5.3.5 Xth Latin American Regional Congress, Buenos Aires, Argentina, April 2015

This congress was organised by the Argentine Radiation Protection Society (SAR) with the support of FRALC. The congress theme was 'New Challenges for a World in Evolution'. The Congress was attended by 615 participants from

38 countries. The congress was preceded by the 1st Regional Workshop on Safety Culture in Medicine organized by IRPA, WHO and IOMP, and also by an UNSCEAR workshop.



### 5.4 IRPA14 International Congress, Cape Town, South Africa, May 2016

IRPA looks forward to this flagship international congress, which is hosted jointly by the Southern African Radiation Protection Association (SARPA) and South African Radiation Protection Services (SARPS). The congress theme is 'Practising Radiation Protection: Sharing the Experience and New Challenges'.

The Sievert Lecture will be presented by Prof John D Boice from the United States, who is the winner of the 2016 IRPA Sievert Award, given in recognition of outstanding contributions to radiological protection. Dr Boice is President of the National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurements (NCRP) based in Bethesda/Maryland, and Professor of Medicine at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, Nashville, Tennessee.



### 5.5 IRPA15 International Congress, 2020

At the IRPA13 General Assembly in 2012 the IRPA delegates awarded the Korean Association for Radiation Protection (KARP) the opportunity to prepare for the IRPA15 International Congress. KARP is proposing to hold this congress in Seoul, Korea during 11-15 May 2020. An EC delegation visited Seoul in March 2016 to review progress, and concluded that satisfactory arrangements are being made and that the proposal can be supported. Delegates to the IRPA14 General Assembly will be invited to confirm this proposal.

## 6. Challenges for the Future

The key issues for the core of IRPA's programme for the near future will be defined by the new EC after all relevant discussions during the IRPA14 Congress. However, it is always appropriate to provide a sense of continuity, and on the basis of current knowledge and expectations many of the key elements of the new programme can be envisaged as below.

It is helpful to consider the programme within three key themes:

### **(a) Effective and focused engagement with other international organizations**

As part of our vision to be the international voice of the radiation protection profession we must continue to focus on providing feedback on the system of protection between the practitioners and the international organisations. Focusing on areas relevant to IRPA's core interests implies continued working closely with international organizations and professional bodies of highest relevance to our mission.

A precondition for an excellent collaboration with international organizations is a living IRPA 'voice' internally to receive the opinion and experience of the professionals via the Associate Societies, which is the strength of IRPA. There is a need to develop and further strengthen our liaison with the RP community.

Based on this strength, IRPA should be aware of its responsibility to provide also a critical view

on developments in radiation protection : for example there is an urgent need for engagement on the review and revision of the system of protection in the light of Fukushima experiences, with particular emphasis on communication aspects.

### **(b) Embedding the sharing of good practice and professionalism in Associate Societies and individual members, and supporting the establishment and development of effective Associate Societies.**

We must continue our efforts to support the sharing of good practices amongst our AS. In particular there is a great interest in how best to communicate with the public on radiation and risk.

All AS are having to meet the challenges of securing the future of our profession. This involves both the recruitment of young persons into the profession and into our ASs, and also the need to provide special support and encouragement of our younger members through mentoring and networking.

There are many countries and regions around the world where IRPA has no presence, and many locations where there are no effective support networks for RP practitioners. IRPA must continue to give priority to support and mentor new and developing RP societies.

### **(c) Scientific professionalism at Congresses**

The IRPA International and Regional Congresses have become a cornerstone of IRPA's identity. They provide a mechanism for RP professionals to meet and network, discuss the emerging ideas with other international organisations, and provide a strong training platform for the development of practitioners. We must continue to ensure that the congresses meet the needs of the profession, including ensuring that outcomes and training materials are available to a wider audience.

**Renate Czarwinski**                      **President 2012 - 2016**  
**Roger Coates**                         **Vice President 2012 - 2016**  
**Bernard Le Guen**     **Executive Officer 2012 - 2016**  
**On behalf of the IRPA Executive Council**  
**May 2016**



[www.IRPA.net](http://www.IRPA.net)

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