

RECORD OF THE CEG WORKSHOP
Security and Safety of Radioactive Sources:
Decommissioning and Replacement of Radioisotope Thermoelectric Generators (RTG)
16-18 February 2005, Oslo, Norway

The workshop of the IAEA Contact Expert Group (CEG) was organised according to decision of the 18th CEG meeting (October 2004, Moscow). The workshop was prepared by the Norwegian Radiation Protection Authority (NRPA) and the CEG Secretariat in close cooperation with Rosatom.

The CEG workshop was attended by representatives from 11 countries: Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Norway, Russian Federation, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States of America, Denmark, Japan and three international organisations: European Commission, IAEA and NEFCO.

During the workshop the Russian side presented general concept for the RTG management, information on the RTG design features, the order of decommissioning and disposal process, the state regulatory system for supervision of radiation and environmental safety, problems related to provision of RTG safety and security during operation and decommissioning, and also on international cooperative activities aimed at improvement of safety and security of RTGs and their replacement by alternative energy sources. It informed also on establishment under the Rosatom leadership of an inter-agencies working group on RTG decommissioning problem.


Representatives of Western countries and international organisations reported on the state of international cooperation (covering projects and regulatory issues) and plans for further activities on resolution of the RTG management problems in the Russian Federation, and also on their experience that could be applied.

As a result of discussions of the presentations made the following conclusions and recommendations were drawn by the CEG workshop:

1. Experience of the RTG operation shows their high reliability and efficiency as a power supply sources for navigation equipment for provision of safe ship navigation. However recently radiation and environmental hazard from these devices increased substantially as a result of unauthorised actions on RTG disassembling, acts of vandalism and also by possible terrorists attacks with the RTG involvement.
2. With due regard of the aforementioned, the workshop recommends to identify as the most important tasks for provision of radiation and environmental safety and security of RTGs:
 - immediate decommissioning of RTGs that expired their design life;
 - construction of regional accumulating sites and temporary storage facilities equipped with necessary safety and security systems for interim storage of RTGs withdrawn from operation and with installations for RTG disassembling where necessary;
 - increase of the RTG dismantlement rate in accordance with the transport and technology flow chart that are being implemented through upgrading and enlargement of transportation containers and transportation means fleet;
 - improvement of current regulatory and state supervision system on the RTG management activities;

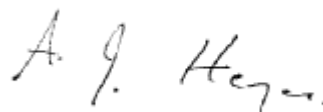
- development and implementation of security and alarm systems at RTG installations which operation should continue, and arranging emergency response measures and teams;
 - development of alternative power supply systems for navigation equipment and their implementation instead of dismantled RTGs;
 - development of the methodology for dealing with accident RTGs, elaboration of technical and organisational solutions for accident RTGs handling and their implementation.
3. The workshop recognized importance and timeliness of international assistance that has been provided by several Western countries for resolution of the tasks mentioned above. As a result, RTG hazards were substantially reduced and the RTG decommissioning activities have been intensified in the North-West Region of Russia.
 4. At the same time in other regions broadening of the international cooperation on RTG decommissioning and provision of their security in the visible future is urgently needed. This is relevant to the Far East, Northern Russia, and the Baltic Region.
 5. The workshop noticed that the legal basis for extension of cooperation on improvement of radiation and environmental safety in the Arctic Region and at the Far East already exists with the majority of countries participating in the Global Partnership Programme, the MNEPR Agreement, and with other donor-countries. Considering this fact the workshop sees no impediments for immediate broadening of international activities on decommissioning and dismantlement of RTGs and asks the Governments of countries participating in the workshop to undertake necessary actions for provision of assistance to the Russian Federation in resolution of RTG problems that are of great importance for safety and security not only in Russia, but also in the majority of countries of the Northern hemisphere of the Earth.
 6. Taking into consideration intention of a number of donor countries to join international efforts on RTG management in the Russian Federation, the workshop recognises the great importance of the exchange of information on a regular basis between all parties involved in order to eliminate duplication of efforts and overlaps, disseminate the best practise and effectively integrate activities of different countries, that will make possible to use allocated resources effectively and efficiently. With due regard of this, the workshop believes that it would be appropriate to establish an international coordination group on the issues of RTG decommissioning and dismantlement with participation of the donor-countries and Russia.

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