

RECORD OF THE CEG WORKSHOP
*Strategic Aspects of Radioactive Waste Management
and Remediation of Contaminated Sites*

26-27 April 2006, Aronsborg Conference hotel, Stockholm, Sweden

The workshop of the IAEA Contact Expert Group (CEG) was organised according to the decision of the 19th CEG meeting (October 2005, Ottawa, Canada). The workshop was prepared by SKI-ICP, Sweden and the CEG Secretariat in cooperation with Rosatom. Financial support for the workshop was provided by Sweden.

The CEG workshop was attended by representatives from 10 countries: Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Russian Federation, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States of America, and three international organisations: European Commission, IAEA, and EBRD.

The workshop discussed two major issues:

- Strategic aspects and national system of radioactive waste management, and
- Strategic and practical aspects of remediation of contaminated sites.

On the first issue Belgium, Finland, France and Sweden presented general organisation of the RW management in their respective countries and the Russian Federation presented the current state of and the plans for a new Russian State system for RW management. These issues, especially the revised Russian RW system, were extensively discussed. It was recognised that in general the Russian plans, which include the creation of presently missing components of the radwaste management system (e.g. a funding system and a special State waste management organisation), update of several existing elements (e.g. the legislative basis for the new system) and elimination of unnecessary elements aggravating the implementation of the system, correspond to international practice. The discussions and the comments made may be of great value for the Russian agencies and organisations in their work to further detail and implement the proposed Russian waste management system in a safe and cost effective way.

The workshop recognised training of personnel and competence management as important factors of the RW management in the long-term perspective especially in the countries with relatively limited nuclear power activities.

Public involvement in the decision making process related to nuclear activities, especially establishment of new nuclear facilities and remediation of the sites was recognised by the workshop. The key aim of obtaining trust and ownership of eventual decisions was seen as vital. It was further recognised that building confidence is a multi-faceted and a long-term commitment. Russian progress in NW Russia in this area was very much appreciated.

A number of Western presentations addressed waste acceptance criteria and technical factors of importance for the cost-effectiveness of a national system for waste management, providing valuable information for similar future work in the Russian Federation. Standardisation of containers, RW handling and transportation equipment, RW management procedures, etc. have been recognised as valuable means to reduce the overall costs, improve the safety and reduce the radiological impact on the personnel. Best Western practice and

particularly 'lessons learned' could benefit to the activities of the Russian Federation on improvement of RW management during the nuclear clean-up work.

On the second issue the Western side presented general and site specific approaches to and results of remediation of contaminated sites and a number of examples of specific activities carried out. Also the Russian Federation presented its general regulatory approach on site remediation as well as specific problems and achievements especially related to sites like Andreeva and Gremikha. It was agreed that the endpoint of rehabilitation of contaminated sites must take into consideration specific characteristics of the individual sites like future use of the site and accessibility of the site. The present work in Russia to develop normative documents on this issue is considering those factors and is done in line with corresponding international norms.

A series of presentations gave examples of methods and techniques that successfully have been applied for remediation of sites and facilities in Russia, UK, France, Norway and other countries. The presentations clearly showed that there are methods and techniques that can be used even under very difficult circumstances.

The workshop recognised the importance of the IAEA contribution to give guidance to the countries dealing with the remediation activities.

The introduction in Russia of an additional waste category - very low level waste – which already has been done in some European countries would facilitate efficient and cost-effective management of large quantities of radioactive waste generated especially at contaminated sites like Andreeva Bay and Gremikha, without compromising safety. The ongoing work in Russia on this issue was considered very important and strongly supported by the participants of the workshop.

In conclusion, the workshop has been timely and valuable considering the ongoing activities in the Russian Federation and presented those responsible in Russia for remediation of nuclear sites with a range of potential options and techniques to consider. The presentations and discussions have been very useful both for the countries and international funding organisations participating in co-operating projects with the Russian Federation and for the Russian participants in their work to upgrade the Russian waste management system, and make the international co-operation more efficient.

The CEG expressed its thanks to SKI-ICP for all their work in making the workshop a success and contributing to the objectives of the Group.