

INTERNATIONAL DECOMMISSIONING PEER REVIEWS

OVERVIEW

Objective

The objective of the international decommissioning peer review service mission is to provide an independent review of activities associated with the planning and implementation of decommissioning. It aims to assist the decommissioning implementer to identify opportunities for improvement to their decommissioning project planning and execution, based on the international safety standards, good international practice and other relevant recommendations in this field.

The mission will also facilitate the sharing of good practices identified in the review and will provide feedback to the development of the international standards and recommendations.

Background

The IAEA has been assisting its Member States in the field of decommissioning through two main mechanisms:

- (a) developing internationally agreed safety standards (e.g. fundamentals, requirements and guidance)
- (b) providing for the application of the safety standards and good practice through various mechanisms, such as peer reviews, technical cooperation projects, training, etc.

Since 2005 the IAEA has been working on the preparation of a formalised peer review mechanism to assist operators in the planning and conduct of decommissioning of NPPs, research reactors and other facilities using radioactive material. This service aims to complement the existing IAEA services, such as OSART (Operational Safety Appraisal Review Team), IRRS (International Regulatory Review Service) and WATRP (Waste Management Assessment and Technical Review Programme). IAEA attaches great importance to the Peer Review process as a methodology for supporting both self-improvement of operations and the wider international sharing of experience and good practice. It is very timely to seek to include decommissioning as part of this powerful process, given the large number of nuclear facilities which have reached, or are reaching, the end of their operational lives.

Peer Review Process

The overall peer review process consists of five phases:

(a) Preparation and initiation - A preparatory meeting between the IAEA and the requesting Host Organization will be held to further clarify: (i) the terms of reference; (ii) the scope of service; (iii) the work plan; (iv) appropriate reference material.

(b) Initial information - This phase includes self-assessment by the Host Organization on the basis of questionnaires to obtain information about the Host Organization's decommissioning programme and its implementation. The questionnaires are developed on the basis of IAEA safety standards and other relevant IAEA documentation on decommissioning, together with other relevant good practices, and

will cover the scope agreed with the Host Organization. The questionnaire responses will be used by experts from the international review team for the preparation and conduct of the mission.

(c) Review mission - The mission will be carried out through review of written documents provided by the Host Organization, presentations by the Host Organization (e.g. in response to issues raised following review of the questionnaire responses), visits to facilities, and discussions with the Host Organization and any other relevant national competent authorities and organizations involved in decommissioning as agreed with the Host Organization. During the review, the team will visit appropriate site/facility areas and will meet with local experts to exchange views and experience on specific issues related to the review. The preliminary conclusions of the mission will be presented to the Host Organization at the end of the mission.

(d) Reporting the outcome of the peer review - The draft report will be prepared within one month after the completion of the mission and will be sent to the Host Organization for factual verification. A response is expected within two weeks of receiving the draft report. The final report will be issued within two months after the completion of the mission.

(e) Follow-up mission - A follow-up mission can be performed at the request of the Host Organization. Its objectives would be to review progress in implementing improvements resulting from mission recommendations or suggestions; and to provide further reviews in areas where significant changes have occurred since the mission or in other areas as requested.

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February 2008