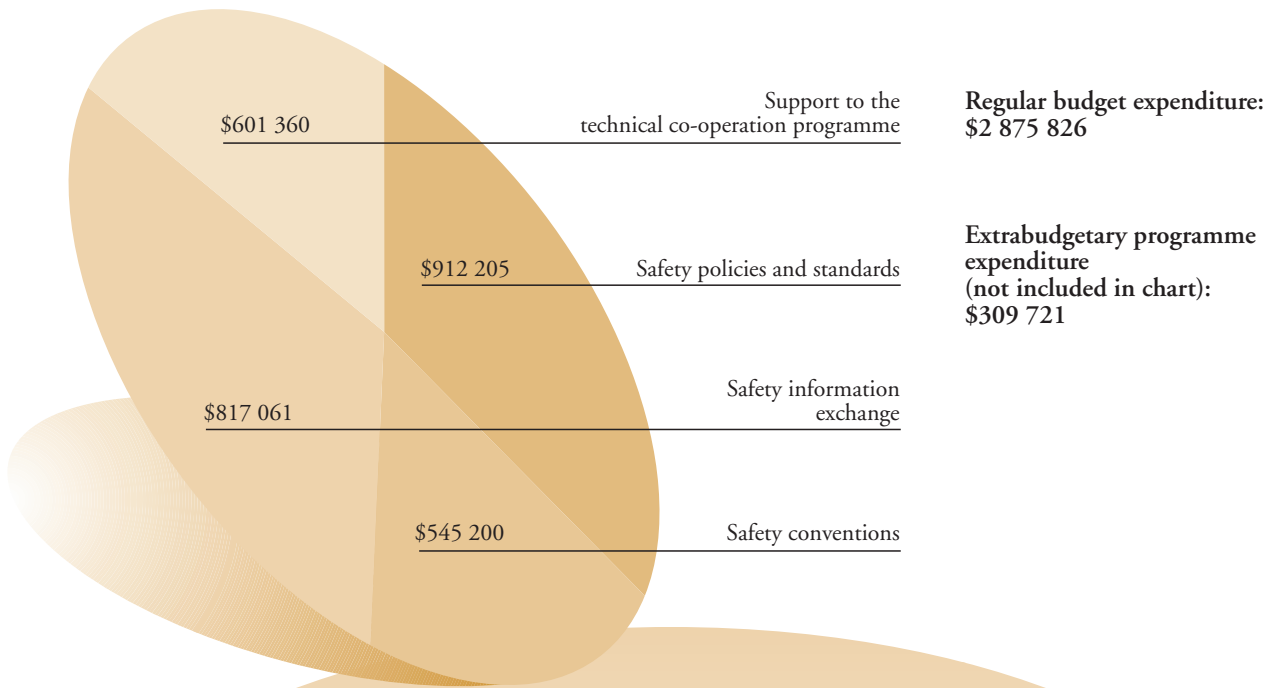


# CO-ORDINATION OF SAFETY ACTIVITIES



To ensure technical consistency and co-ordination of the activities carried out by the Agency in performing the safety related functions, either laid down in its Statute or entrusted by the parties of international conventions, as well as coherence with the corresponding safety activities carried out by Member States and other international organizations, through interaction with the topical programmes of nuclear safety, radiation safety and radioactive waste safety.

## Programme objective

The safety activities co-ordination programme aims to ensure that there is technical consistency between the Agency's nuclear, radiation and radioactive waste safety activities. This involves work in four main areas: co-ordinating the development and review process for the Agency's safety standards; administering and, where appropriate, implementing the safety related conventions; supporting research and development; promoting safety related information exchange; and co-ordinating the technical input to safety related projects in the Agency's technical co-operation programme.

## Safety policies and standards

The focus of work was on the development of guidance on legal and governmental infrastructures for the safety of nuclear facilities. Drafts of four Safety Guides on staffing and organization, review and assessment, inspection and enforcement, and the required documentation for the authorization process of nuclear facilities were prepared for review by the standing advisory committees on safety standards. A glossary covering terms from nuclear, radiation, radioactive waste and transport safety was compiled to harmonize

the terminology used in all Agency publications dealing with these areas. Under the Peer Discussions on Regulatory Practices (PDRP) scheme, three meetings were held on the regulation of the life-cycle management of nuclear installations. The purpose was to assist Member States in the formulation and enhancement of policies, principles, requirements and regulatory control over plant life-cycle management by identifying commonly accepted good practices. A report summarizing the discussions is being prepared.

Demand for the International Regulatory Review Teams (IRRT) service continued to increase. Missions to Romania, Slovakia, Switzerland and Ukraine were carried out, with the waiting list now covering more than two years. A significant development was that whereas previous IRRT missions had been mainly to the States of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, requests were received for the first time from States outside of these areas (e.g. Switzerland). Another development was the expansion of the scope of the missions to include regulations for radiation and waste safety.

A European regional technical co-operation project on nuclear safety regulatory infrastructures focused on: RBMK pipework cracking; IRRT, International Peer Review Service (IPERS) and seismic safety missions; and Year 2000 computer system problems. The project made a significant contribution to the ability of the participating nuclear regulatory bodies in the region to carry out their assigned regulatory functions in accordance with Agency standards and internationally recognized good practices.

## Safety conventions

Two informal meetings of signatories and other interested States were held in preparation for the first review meeting of the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management. Draft guidelines for the review process, for the preparation of national reports, and the drafting of financial and procedural rules have been developed as a result of these meetings. By the end of 1998, five States had ratified the Convention.

Following the Preparatory Meeting of Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety in 1997, an organizational meeting and several briefing meetings

were held to prepare for the first Review Meeting of Contracting Parties in 1999. For the first time, national reports provided by the Contracting Parties for the Review Meeting were collected and distributed. By the end of 1998, 49 States had become Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety.

Two States, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Moldova, became Contracting Parties to the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident, bringing the total to 82 (79 States and 3 international organizations) at the end of 1998. Although the Convention was not invoked during 1998, the infrastructure designed for notification of nuclear accidents was used to disseminate information to Member States on less significant events, notably the release of caesium-137 from a steel mill in Algeciras, Spain, in May.

The Republic of Moldova became a Contracting Party to the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency, bringing the total to 77 (74 States and 3 international organizations) at the end of 1998. In this connection, assistance was provided in response to radiological emergency situations in Bangladesh, Georgia and the Russian Federation.

## Safety information exchange

A conference was held in Vienna on topical issues in nuclear, radiation and radioactive waste safety, with the objective of consolidating an international consensus on the present status of the issues, the priorities for future work and the need for strengthening international co-operation. Though many technical aspects were discussed and various recommendations made, attention was also paid to the 'softer' aspects of safety. For example, there was great interest in the effectiveness of safety management and the role of safety culture, transparency in decision making and the criteria used, and the effectiveness of the regulator.

A handbook on communication in the areas of nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety, designed for regulatory authorities, was prepared to promote a consistent approach in communications with the public, media and decision makers. The handbook explains the role of regulators in nuclear safety communication, the major public concerns in each area of

activity based on frequently raised issues and the key messages to be communicated. It also provides guidance on how to develop and implement a programme on communication.

The nuclear safety information centre provides information on nuclear, radiation and radioactive waste safety. To date the centre has over 6000 acquisitions in the form of publications, journals and books. The centre was re-organized and the database for registering documents was upgraded in 1998. In addition, a Web site for the Advanced Nuclear Safety Information Registry (ANSIR) (<http://www.161.5.37.17/ansir>) was established offering desktop computer access to the database and other information products. Stored internal and external full text documents are searchable by electronic means.

The International Nuclear Event Scale (INES) service disseminated information on 19 events. In addition to the reporting activities of the information programme, INES official documents (i.e. the information leaflet and user's manual) were refined. Training in the use of the rating procedures was also conducted at the request of Hungary and Egypt.

## Support to the technical co-operation programme

Two components of the integrated strategy for assisting Member States in establishing and strengthening their nuclear safety infrastructures were implemented. First, questionnaires were sent on nuclear safety infrastructure, derived from the Agency's safety requirements on legal and governmental frameworks, siting, design, operation and quality assurance. Second, nuclear safety profiles covering legislative, regulatory and operational nuclear safety activities were prepared for 23 Member States either receiving Agency assistance and having nuclear power plants in operation or embarking on nuclear power programmes.

Similar work was initiated on safety profiles for radiation and waste safety. Questionnaires on infrastructure for radiation protection, safety of sources, waste safety and transport safety were updated in accordance with the International Basic Safety Standards for Protection against Ionizing Radiation and for the Safety of Radiation Sources (BSS).

Extensive technical support was devoted to the Model Project on upgrading radiation protection infrastructures to prepare and fine tune the technical documents and tools required for the prompt and harmonized implementation of the project. Major activities included the preparation of a document, *Organization and Implementation of a National Infrastructure Governing Protection against Ionizing Radiation and the Safety of Radiation Sources*. Distributed and in use in the more than 50 Member States receiving assistance under the Model Project, this document, in addition to offering guidance on how to establish, optimize and sustain a regulatory framework, included model legislation and regulations based upon the BSS as well as other model regulations covering radioactive waste management and radioactive transport safety. In order to reach the widest possible audience, these regulatory models were also translated into Arabic, French, Russian and Spanish.

Another activity connected with the Model Project was the preparation of a technical document describing the methods and review plans to facilitate the authorization and inspection of radiation sources, including information on how to prepare and conduct an inspection and follow-up actions. The document includes specific checklists for the principal common practices involving the use of radiation sources to assist regulatory authorities in reviewing safety in the process of authorization and inspection.

A software inventory, monitoring and control tool, the Regulatory Authority Information System (RAIS), was developed and is being used by more than 35 Member States. The system is composed of five modules covering: inventory of radiation sources and installations; the authorization process; inspection and enforcement; dosimetry of occupationally exposed personnel; and performance indicators for individual installations as well as for the overall regulatory programme. The system will also be available in Arabic, French, Russian and Spanish.

