Preparedness and Response to Nuclear and Radiological Emergencies and the Covid-19 Outbreak: IAEA support to Member States and further initiatives

Elena Buglova
Head, Incident and Emergency Centre
Incident and Emergency Centre (IEC)

“To protect the public and the environment in the event of a nuclear or radiological emergency, we must build effective national and international response arrangements. The IAEA’s Incident and Emergency Centre is the global focal point for international preparedness and response to such an emergency, whether it arises from an accident, natural disaster, negligence or a security event.”

Rafael Mariano Grossi
Director General of the IAEA
IAEA response capacity for nuclear and radiological emergencies during COVID-19

• “The IAEA’s Incident and Emergency Centre (IEC),…, continues to ensure that the communication channels for notification and information exchange in nuclear and radiological emergencies irrespective of its cause remain fully operational on a 24/7 basis.”
IEC’s activities (conducted virtually)

- Conducted virtual ConvEx (Convention Exercises) to practise with MSs and relevant international organisations different arrangements within international EPR framework

- ConvEx-2b exercise was conducted on 24 – 26 March to test arrangements for request and provision of assistance
  - 37 Mss and two Regional Specialized Meteorological Centres of World Meteorological Organization participated
  - 17 event scenarios were played out
  - 74 reporting forms published on USIE website (including 17 requests for assistance, 20 offers of assistance and 17 assistance action plans)
IEC’s response activities (examples)

- Information about the fire in the Chornobyl Exclusion Zone
- Ruthenium and Cesium detections in air in Europe
- Beirut's explosion
Meetings / Webinars

• First virtual Competent Authorities Meeting – 10th CAM with over 250 participants
Meetings / Webinars (cont’)

• First virtual Technical Meeting to review GS-G-2.1
• First virtual EPRReSC Meeting
• Webinars to fill gap left by delay of in-person events
  – 40+ webinars as of April 2020
  – 5000+ participants
  – in different UN official languages
• E-learning through CLP4NET
Nuclear/radiological EPR and Covid-19 situation

- GSR Part 7, “Preparedness and Response for a Nuclear or Radiological Emergency,” establishes requirements for events that combine nuclear/radiological emergency with conventional emergency
- An example of conventional emergency is disease outbreak or pandemic, which could affect:
  - health and thus fitness of operators and both onsite and offsite emergency workers;
  - ability to perform some emergency response functions (e.g. medical treatment, if hospitals are overwhelmed, or evacuee reception/housing, if social distancing is required)
- Based upon this, it would be prudent to include disease outbreak/pandemic considerations into hazard assessment process
Nuclear/radiological EPR and Covid-19 situation: additional guidance

- For Safety Guides and EPR-Series publications currently in production process, guidance on meeting GSR Part 7 requirements is being improved
- Explanations are being incorporated into appropriate portions of:
  - GSG-14, “Arrangements for Public Communication in Preparedness and Response for a Nuclear or Radiological Emergency” – just published last week
  - GS-G-2.1, “Arrangements for Preparedness for a Nuclear or Radiological Emergency” – currently in revision
  - Preparedness and Response for a Nuclear or Radiological Emergency Combined with Other Incidents or Emergencies (EPR-Combined Emergences) – currently in publication
  - Considerations for Implementing an On-Site Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan for Nuclear Power Plants (EPR-Onsite EPlan NPP) – currently in publication
  - Developing Arrangements for Response to a Nuclear or Radiological Emergency (EPR-Method) – currently in revision
Technical Report

- Working with NE and other NS Divisions to develop a Technical Report on MS experience in maintaining safety, security and reliable operation during COVID-19 pandemic, including dedicated EPR portion(s)

- Objectives of the Technical Report in relation to EPR cover matters related to promotion of plans for preparedness, response and recovery from potential future pandemics

- Collecting information via:
  - Competent Authorities
  - EPReSC Members
Thank you!

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