

IRRS Good Practices

Responsibilities and Functions of the Regulatory Body (Module 3)

Communication and consultation with interested parties

Czech Republic – Follow-up Mission

Mission Date: May 2017

Good Practice

The State Office for Nuclear Safety (SÚJB) was actively engaged in communication with the public using a Web Conference.

Observation

SÚJB was actively engaged in communication with the public through a Web Conference, on which publicly answers were supplied to any relevant question from the public in a timely manner and in a language adapted to laymen.

Basis

GSR Part 3 Req. 2.36 states that *“The regulatory body shall establish mechanisms for communication and discussion that involve professional and constructive interactions with relevant parties for all protection and safety related issues.”*

IAEA Comments/Highlights

No comments or highlights on this good practice.

Nigeria – Initial Mission

Mission Date: July 2017

Good Practice

The Nigerian Nuclear Regulatory Authority (NNRA) conducted routine workshops and training for the news media to inform them about the possible radiation risks associated with facilities and activities, and about the processes and decisions of the regulatory body.

Observation

NNRA proactively reached out to inform the media about the possible radiation risks associated with facilities and activities, and about the processes and decisions of the regulatory body.

Basis

GSR Part 1 (Rev 1) Requirement 36 states that *“The regulatory body, in its public informational and consultation, shall set up appropriate means of informing interested parties, the public and the news media about the radiation risks associated with facilities and activities, the requirements for the protection of people and the environment and the processes of the regulatory body”*

IAEA Comments/Highlights

NNRA had a strategy for public information that was included in the NNRA Strategic Plan (2016-2019). NNRA through its Information Unit organized press conferences and media workshops to develop better awareness and understanding of nuclear and radiation safety issues.

NNRA organized workshops and stakeholders’ meetings to promote information exchange with interested parties. NNRA also utilised print and electronic media including its website to disseminate information to interested parties. Annual Reports produced by NNRA were distributed in both hard and soft copies (electronically) to improve their circulation and availability. Furthermore, the authorized parties were required to inform interested parties within the vicinity of the installation about safety aspects.

Belgium – Follow-up Mission

Mission Date: December 2017

Good Practice

Belgium had been organizing and carrying out several campaigns with regard to justification of medical exposures using methods such as mottos, brochures, posters, videos and radio spots to enhance the public’s and referring medical practitioners’ awareness.

Observation

Several awareness campaigns had been carried out in Belgium to make people aware of the justification process in medical exposure.

Basis

GSR Part 3 Requirement 37 states that *“relevant parties shall ensure that medical exposures are justified”*.

IAEA Comments/Highlights

In the Belgian regulatory framework, the principle of justification was clearly addressed. The Belgian Medical Imaging Platform (BELMIP) in cooperation with the College of Radiology developed referral criteria to help referring medical practitioners justify the examinations on an individual basis.

Good Practice

The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) was very committed to ensuring a high level of transparency and openness, through an established, systematic, accountable and comprehensive set of activities that ensure transparency, openness, involvement, dialogue and accountability with the public, stakeholders and interested parties about its regulatory activities and decisions.

Observation

The IRRS Team noted that the CNSC was very committed to ensuring a high level of transparency and openness.

Basis

GSG No-6, para. 2.4, 2.5 and 2.6 state that:

2.4: “The concepts of transparency and openness should underlie the regulatory body’s strategy for communication and consultation with interested parties, so that trust in its independence, competence, integrity and impartiality can be established.

2.5.: The regulatory body should be committed to ensuring a high level of transparency and openness. To this end, the regulatory body should communicate proactively, and initiate dialogue, with the public, and should demonstrate a willingness to listen and respond to a broad variety of concerns. The regulatory body should also enable genuine participation of the public in the regulatory decision-making processes.

2.6.: When necessary, the regulatory body should ensure that interested parties are involved at the earliest opportunity; in certain situations, such involvement should be ensured even before formal regulatory activities have been launched, for example in review and assessment activities relating to radioactive waste.”

IAEA Comments/Highlights

The CNSC interacted with a variety of stakeholders on a regular basis, aiming to be a trusted and timely source for safety and science-based nuclear regulatory information. The strategy was to earn trust and confidence by maintaining a high level of transparency and engagement throughout the regulatory process.

The target audiences were those impacted or potentially impacted by the CNSC’s decision-making, those who have demonstrated a general interest in the CNSC’s activities, and those who actively participate in the regulatory process.

The CNSC’s external website was the main source of information to the public and contained a wide range of material and media. The CNSC was also active on multiple social media platforms. Open public hearings were webcast live and later made available on the CNSC’s external website. Detailed records of regulatory decisions were also published to explain the

regulatory basis for its licensing decisions.

The CNSC staff interacted directly with members of the community and participated in regular bilateral meetings with government counterparts to become aware of any new initiatives and to inform them of items of regulatory interest. In addition, regular interactions with members of the media are conducted to inform them of CNSC's regulatory activities, and correct any misinformation that may have been previously reported.

The Participant Funding Programme (PFP) also gave the public, indigenous groups and other stakeholders the opportunity to request funding from the CNSC to participate in its regulatory process and to be heard before the Commission as intervenors. This funding demonstrated the clear commitment to transparency.

Licensees were required to inform the public about possible radiation risks associated with their facilities and activities through a public information programme. Licensees were also required to submit and publish event reports and notifications for situations or events of high safety significance and that may require short-term action by the CNSC as per their licensing basis.

Finland – Initial Mission

Mission Date: 3 to 14 October 2022

Good Practice

STUK's practices regarding education and engagement of the media were found to be remarkable for effective communication and consultation with interested parties.

Observation

STUK educates and engages the media through inviting the media to various activities related to nuclear and radiation safety matters and setting expectations for STUK staff to be direct and responsive in their interactions.

Basis

GSR Part 1 (Rev. 1) Requirement 36 para. 4.49 states that *“the regulatory body, in its public and informational activities and consultation, shall set up appropriate means of informing interested parties, the public, and the news media about the radiation risks associated with facilities and activities, the requirements for protection of people, and the environment, and the processes of the regulatory body. In particular, there shall be consultation by means of an open and inclusive process with interested parties residing in the vicinity of the authorized facilities and activities, and other interested parties, as appropriate. Interested parties including the public shall have an opportunity to be consulted in the process for making significant regulatory decisions, subject to national legislation and international obligations. The results of these consultations shall be taken into consideration by the regulatory body in a transparent manner”*.

IAEA Comments/Highlights

STUK (Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority in Finland) goes beyond communicating on regulatory matters to educating and engaging stakeholders regarding radiation risks. This builds a common understanding of the relative risks of regulated activities and furthers deeper engagement among stakeholders. STUK utilizes the internet to inform the public and interested stakeholders about general nuclear and radiation safety, safety requirements, the roles and responsibilities of STUK, STUK's organization, current activities and operating experience, significant regulatory decisions taken, events and publications, and safety research.

STUK encourages its staff to communicate about these issues on social media as well.

As a particular strength, STUK is proactive in educating and engaging the media in addition to providing information on regulatory activities. Specifically, STUK organizes and participates in topical meetings on nuclear and radiation safety matters, and invites the media to these meetings. In addition, STUK has offered tours of its facilities to members of the media to further engagement and understanding, is very responsive to media requests, and encourages direct interaction between its staff and the media at all levels of its organization. STUK's practices regarding education of the media were found to be remarkable for effective communication and consultation with interested parties.