

## *IRRS Good Practices*

### **Responsibilities and Functions of the Government (Module 1)**

*System for protective actions to reduce existing or unregulated radiation risks*

#### **Canada – Initial Mission**

Mission Date: September 2019

#### ***Good Practice***

The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) had developed a targeted, multi-faceted programme for dealing with historic radium luminous devices in the public domain.

#### ***Observation***

The CNSC, in partnership with other organisations, had established a comprehensive programme for radium luminous devices, including a graded approach to their regulation, public outreach and a programme to support safe disposal.

#### ***Basis***

GSR Part 1 Requirement 9 states that *“The government shall establish an effective system for protective actions to reduce undue radiation risks associated with unregulated sources (of natural or artificial origin) and contamination from past activities or events, consistent with the principles of justification and optimization.”*

#### ***IAEA Comments/Highlights***

The CNSC, in partnership with other national organisations, had established a programme for ‘legacy’ radium luminous devices that exist in the public domain. This programme included multiple elements. These included a risk assessment which identified which types of historic radium luminous devices posed a potential hazard and the potential exposures that could be incurred. Based on the results of the risk assessment, the CNSC identified under which circumstances the radium luminous devices could be exempted from licensing and which activities needed to be licensed. This regulatory approach had been partnered with an extensive, targeted public and industry outreach programme which provided assistance in identifying devices containing radium luminous compounds, as well as providing general information on radiation safety awareness and best practices. There was also a free advisory and disposal programme operated by Canadian Nuclear Laboratories for the management of historic

radioactive artefacts found on public and private properties across Canada, which supported the safe disposal of radium luminous devices where required.

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### ***Good Practice***

Health Canada (HC) had undertaken a strategic differentiation of messages on radon in order to effectively target sub-groups of the public. This represented an innovative and effective programme for raising awareness of radon and the necessary actions to mitigate it, targeting a point of time when people were more likely to be receptive to the message.

### ***Observation***

Under the National Radon Program, HC had established a strategic communication programme to deliver targeted information on radon to the public and relevant professionals.

### ***Basis***

GSR Part 3 Requirement 50, Para 5.19 (b) states that “*Relevant information on exposure due to radon and the associated health risks, including the increased risks relating to smoking, is provided to the public and other interested parties*”.

### ***IAEA Comments/Highlights***

The responsibility for developing a national programme for radon was delegated to Health Canada (HC) through a Memorandum to Cabinet and Treasury Board Submission. This delegation ensured coordination and avoided conflicting requirements between different authorities responsible for safety.

In 2008, HC established the National Radon Program (NRP). The NRP included review and assessment of public exposure to radon and outreach activities to the public and to stakeholders to encourage inclusion of radon protection measures in practices, policies, codes and regulations. The information provided as part of the NRP included materials such as brochures, factsheets, guides and infographics to educate the public and key stakeholders (including medical professionals, provincial and territorial governments, construction and real estate professionals) about the risks from exposure to indoor radon and the increased health risks due to smoking.

HC worked effectively with a wide range of public authorities including provinces, territories and municipalities across the country, academic institutions, not-for-profit organisations, professional bodies, certification bodies, and others to deliver the NRP.

The NRP used a range of innovative solutions to raise awareness, educate key groups and promote measurement, mitigation and prevention of radon. These included the 3 Point Home Safety Checklist Campaign, which encouraged families to use smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors and radon tests, which involved the recruitment of radon leaders and champions in the childcare and the 'SmartMoves' Program in conjunction with Canada Post whereby those who changed address automatically receive information on radon at a time when they were primed to make home improvements. This programme reached more than 700,000 homeowners per year in 2019.