

22 April 2022



Chairperson/President  
SMRRF Member Organization

On behalf of the Small Modular Reactor (SMR) Regulators' Forum (the Forum) Steering Committee, we want to thank our Member Organizations for the continued support of the Forum. The purpose of this letter is to provide an update on the status of our work.

The Forum was formed in 2015 to conduct a two-year Pilot Project to enable discussions among Member States and other stakeholders to share SMR regulatory knowledge and experience. As a group of regulators, the Forum does not promote SMR technologies or deployment models.

The Forum's main purpose is to identify, enhance understanding of and address key regulatory challenges that may emerge in future SMR regulatory decisions. This will help enhance safety, security, efficiency in SMR regulation, including licensing, and enable regulators to inform changes, if necessary, to their requirements and regulatory practices. The work of the Forum is reflected through the publication of common positions of its members, reached by consensus, in the technical areas of work chosen by them.

The Forum is managed by a Steering Committee formed by one representative from each one of its members. The IAEA functions as Scientific Secretary to facilitate and promote the work of the Forum. In this role, the IAEA provides: (1) staff to support the Forum's meetings; (2) a communications platform; (3) advice on IAEA Safety Standards; and (4) interfaces with other international organizations.

We wish to highlight that the common positions of the Forum documented in its reports are independent from those of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and are not necessarily endorsed by the IAEA. Further, the Forum's reports raise recommendations to the IAEA and may highlight the need for revision or development of new IAEA publications on the safety of SMR.

During the Pilot Project, through working groups, the Forum addressed the following issues for light-water and non-light-water reactor designs: graded approach; defense-in-depth; and emergency planning zones. The Forum issued a report documenting their activities in January 2018. The report included information on the background and structure of the Forum, as well as the objectives of the Pilot Project, the main findings and conclusions of the effort, a summary of the common positions established, and recommendations for future work.

Upon successful completion of the Pilot Project in November 2017, the Forum continued into a second phase which resulted in the development of three new working groups in the areas of (1) Licensing Issues, (2) Design and Safety Analysis, and (3) Manufacturing, Commissioning, and Operations. Each of these working groups addressed multiple topics within their areas of work. Upon completion of Phase 2 in December 2020, several new reports were issued by the working groups in June 2021. The reports provided an overview of the collaborative work performed.

The Forum is now in its third phase, addressing additional topics by the same three working groups. The products from this phase are expected in December 2023. Additional information

on the Forum and links to the reports can be found at: <https://www.iaea.org/topics/small-modular-reactors/smr-regulators-forum>.

Outputs from the Forum continue to be aimed at enabling regulators to collaborate more effectively and provide common positions and recommendations for consideration by the international community, including the IAEA. Increasingly, these cooperative activities are also being leveraged outside of the Forum's work between member regulators who are assessing the same or similar SMR concepts for potential deployment. The work of the Forum focuses on cross-cutting and technology-neutral issues and does not conduct technology-specific cooperation or assessments. Recognizing that regulatory requirements will differ between Member States, IAEA publications applicable to nuclear reactor installations serve as benchmarks for the discussions within the Forum and to compare practices when developing common positions.

The IAEA's Director General recently launched the Nuclear Harmonization and Standardization Initiative (NHSI) with a goal of harmonizing and standardizing regulatory and industrial approaches in support of the effective global deployment of safe and secure advanced nuclear reactors. This goal has a strong interface with the objectives of the Forum. We believe that the prior, current, and future work of the Forum can contribute significantly to this initiative. Recognizing the limited resources that we all have to apply to extracurricular activities, we will endeavor to coordinate with the IAEA on the most effective ways the Forum can contribute to this initiative.

Again, we want to thank you for your support of the Forum. There is a significant amount of activity worldwide related to SMRs. The Forum has been a useful and productive group for exchanging information among regulators. The information produced by the Forum has been helpful for the members of the Forum, other Member States, and the industry at large. The Forum looks forward to continuing its work and meeting its purpose of identifying and enhancing understanding of and addressing key regulatory challenges that may emerge in future SMR regulatory discussions, thereby enhancing safety, security, and efficiency in SMR regulation.

Sincerely,

Brian W. Smith  
Chairperson, SMR Regulators'  
Forum Steering Committee

Matthew Bamber  
Vice-Chairperson, SMR Regulators'  
Forum Steering Committee