

## **Argentina's Regulatory Body:**

### **Its Communication Activities**

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#### **Abstract**

The NUCLEAR REGULATORY AUTHORITY of Argentina (ARN) is empowered to regulate and control the nuclear activity with regard to radiation and nuclear safety, physical protection and nuclear non-proliferation issues. It must also advise the Executive on issues under its purview.

The objective of the Nuclear Regulatory Authority is to establish, develop and enforce a regulatory system applicable to all nuclear activities carried out in Argentina. Two of the goals of this regulatory system are to provide an appropriate standard of protection for individuals against the harmful effects of ionizing radiation, and to maintain a reasonable degree of radiological and nuclear safety in the nuclear activities performed in Argentina.

The responsibility of the radiation protection community in performing the tasks to accomplish this goals is twofold. On one hand, it must ensure a high technical quality in performing these functions. It must also provide information on its activities which has to be accurate, comprehensive and understandable.

The way a society understands the concept of "risk" needs to be kept in mind. Risk perception is the subjective judgment that people make about the characteristics and severity of a risk. Cultural theory refers to theories of risk perception that focus on culture, rather than individual psychology as an explanation for differences in risk judgments.

It is widely agreed that trust is a key factor in influencing people's perceptions of risk. It is understood there are two main ways trust may impact in risk perceptions: an activity is perceived as more risky if the people or agencies managing it are perceived as untrustworthy; and information presented by trusted sources is given more credibility than information from untrusted sources.

One of the primary purposes of ARN's Communication Program is to provide a means whereby those engaged in radiation protection activities may communicate more readily with each other and the public and through this process advance a more objective radiation protection knowledge. This information should include relevant aspects of such branches of knowledge as science, medicine, engineering, technology and law, involved in providing for the protection of man and the environment from the hazards caused by radiation.

Such information contributes to the establishment of an environment which facilitates the safe use of medical, scientific, and industrial radiological practices for the benefit of mankind. The paper will discuss these issues and describe and assess the activities performed by ARN in this realm in the past two years.