

## IAEA Press Releases

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# International Nuclear Safety Experts Conclude IAEA Peer Review of Canada's Regulatory System

**Ottawa, 12 June 2009** | An international team of nuclear safety experts today completed a two-week IAEA review of the regulatory framework and effectiveness of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC). The team identified good practices within the system and gave advice on some areas for improvement. The IAEA has conveyed initial findings to Canadian authorities; the final report will be submitted by autumn.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) assembled a team of nuclear, radiation, and waste safety experts at the request of the Government of Canada, to conduct an Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) mission.

The mission from 31 May to 12 June was a peer review based on IAEA Standards, not an inspection, nor an audit.

The scope of the mission included sources, facilities and activities regulated by the CNSC: the operation of nuclear power plants (NPPs), research reactors and fuel cycle facilities; the refurbishment or licensing of new NPPs; uranium mining; radiation protection and environmental protection programmes; and the implementation of IAEA Code of Conduct on Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources.

The 21-member team from 13 IAEA States and from the IAEA itself reviewed CNSC's work in all relevant areas: legislative and governmental responsibilities; responsibilities and functions; organization; activities of the regulatory body, including the authorization process, review and assessment, inspection and enforcement, the development of regulations, as well as guides and its the management system of CNSC.

The basis for the review was a well-prepared self-assessment by the CNSC, including an evolution of its strengths and proposed actions to improve its regulatory effectiveness.

Mr. Shojiro Matsuura, IRRS Team Leader and President of the Japanese Nuclear Safety Research Association, said the team "was impressed by the extensive preparation at all CNSC staff levels."

"We identified a number of good practices and made recommendations and suggestions that indicate areas in which improvements are necessary or desirable to continue improving effectiveness of regulatory controls," he said. "These are made to an organization that seeks to improve its performance. Many of them are related to areas in which CNSC has already or is in the process of implementing a programme for change."

Mr. Tomihiro Taniguchi, IAEA Deputy Director General and Head of the Department for

Nuclear Safety and Security, added: "Through the IRRS missions, both a host country and the reviewers share their experiences and lessons learned for regulatory improvements. Canada, as a mature nuclear country has also significantly contributed to this goal."

Among the particular strengths of CNSC, its policy, its regulatory framework and its regulatory activities identified by the IRRS team were:

- The Canadian legislative and regulatory framework is very comprehensive, and the legal regime is effectively applied through an appropriate range of instruments.
- CNSC has done commendable work over the last years in establishing and implementing a strong management system that seeks continuous improvement within the organization.
- The consistent harmonized plan that considers the results of all recent audits and assessments brings together all improvement initiatives under one plan and optimizes the use of resources to deliver further improvements in key areas.
- The recommendations made by the Talisman International LLC report on the NRU and reviewed by the IRRS team have been adequately addressed by the CNSC.

The IRRS team also made recommendations and suggestions that may significantly enhance the overall performance of the regulatory system. Examples include:

- CNSC should initiate a periodic strategic planning programme to define both short- and long-term research activities needed to support pending and potential regulatory decisions. Sufficient resources should be allocated to support the results of the programme.
- CNSC should continue developing a methodology and implementing Management System reviews to be conducted at planned intervals by internal and/or external resources and should develop the internal audit programme. This would help identify opportunities for improvement, monitor actions taken to improve and check their effectiveness.
- CNSC should ensure that its operational and technical support branches work together in a more harmonized manner to assure security measures do not compromise safety and vice versa.
- CNSC should refine existing plans and confirm its readiness to support the transition from the project planning phase to the technical review of new design applications, inspection of construction activities and oversight of the start-up and operations.
- CNSC should consider updating the 1998 Memorandum of Understanding with Health Canada to define the roles and responsibilities of the Federal Provincial Territorial Radiation Protection Committee and to ensure comprehensive and consistent safety regulation and oversight.

For the review, team members met key personnel at CNSC and other organizations, such as the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (NRCan); Chalk River Laboratories (CRL) and NRU research reactor; Fuel Cycle Facilities (Cameco-Zircatec, Port Hope and GE-Hitachi, Peterborough); McArthur River Uranium Mine and Key Lake Uranium Mill; OPG Western Waste Management Facility (Bruce Site); Darlington (OPG) and Bruce (Bruce Power) NPPs; Calgary (Radiation Devices); Laval Irradiation Facility (MDS Nordion) and the Ottawa Hospital.

### Related Resources:

- » [Integrated Regulatory Review Service \(IRRS\)](#)
- » [Peer Review of Spain's Nuclear Safety Regulation](#), 13 November 2008
- » [Globalized Peer Evaluation Exercise Lauded by Member States](#), 28 March 2008
- » [IRRS Report: Germany](#), September 2008
- » [IRRS Report: Spain](#), January–February 2008
- » [IRRS Report: Australia](#), June–July 2007
- » [IRRS Report: France](#), November 2006
- » [IRRS Report: United Kingdom](#), March–April 2006

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### About the IAEA

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) serves as the world's foremost intergovernmental forum for scientific and technical co-operation in the peaceful use of nuclear technology. Established as an autonomous organization under the United Nations (UN) in 1957, the IAEA carries out programmes to maximize the useful contribution of nuclear technology to society while verifying its peaceful use.

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