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## IAEA Press Releases

Press Release 2011/22

### International Nuclear Officials Discuss IAEA Peer Reviews of Nuclear Safety Regulations

**28 October 2011** | *Washington DC* -- Senior nuclear regulators today concluded a *Workshop on the Lessons Learned from the IAEA Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) Missions*. The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) hosted the workshop, in cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency, in Washington, DC, from 26 to 28 October 2011. About 60 senior regulators from 22 IAEA Member States took part in this workshop.

The IRRS programme is an international peer review service offered by the IAEA to its Member States to provide an objective evaluation of their nuclear safety regulatory framework. The review is based on the internationally recognized *IAEA Safety Standards*.

"The United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission was pleased to host the IAEA's IRRS meeting this week. The discussions over the past three days have provided an important opportunity for regulators from many countries to come together to strengthen the international peer review process," said U.S. NRC Chairman Gregory B. Jaczko. "Especially after the Fukushima Daiichi accident, the global community recognizes that IRRS missions fill a vital role in strengthening nuclear safety and security programs around the world, and we are proud to be a part of this important effort."

The IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety<sup>1</sup> includes actions focused towards strengthening the existing IAEA peer reviews, incorporating lessons learned and improving their effectiveness. The workshop provided a platform for the exchange of information, experience and lessons learned from the IRRS missions, as well as expectations for the IRRS programme for the near future. Further improvements in the planning and implementation of the IRRS missions in the longer term were discussed. A strong commitment of all relevant national authorities to the IRRS programme was identified as a key element of an effective regulatory framework.

The conclusions of the workshop will be issued in November 2011 and the main results will be reported to the IAEA Board of Governors meeting in November.

"The strong support expressed by senior regulators for the IAEA peer reviews of the nuclear regulatory framework and their concrete proposals for improvement will contribute significantly to the effective implementation of the *IAEA Nuclear Safety Action Plan*," said Denis Flory, IAEA Deputy Director General for Nuclear Safety and Security. "There was a general recognition that these peer reviews provide national nuclear regulators with an objective view of their strengths and weaknesses and contribute to the continuous strengthening of nuclear safety."

## Background

IRRS missions are designed to strengthen and enhance the effectiveness of the national nuclear regulatory infrastructure of States, while recognizing the ultimate responsibility of each State to ensure safety in this area. The reviews are invited by individual Member States, who undergo a rigorous self-assessment in advance of the mission. In accordance with the approved *IAEA Nuclear Safety Action Plan* the host nations are encouraged to invite a follow-up mission within 3 years.

Nineteen nations have hosted IRRS reviews since the service became available in 2006, and there have been two lessons-learned workshops, in 2007 and 2008.

The IRRS reviews consider regulatory, technical and policy issues, with comparisons against *IAEA Safety Standards* and, where appropriate, good practices elsewhere.

During an IRRS mission, recommendations and suggestions are offered to the host country. Recommendations are related to items of direct relevance to safety as referenced in *IAEA Safety Requirements*, while suggestions relate to items not essential to compliance with international standards, but which might enhance the effectiveness of the national nuclear and radiation safety regime and/or improve the organization or performance of the regulatory body. Commendable good practices may be identified and documented for consideration by other States.

<sup>1/</sup> The *IAEA Nuclear Safety Action Plan* defines a programme of work to strengthen the nuclear safety framework worldwide in the light of the Fukushima Daiichi accident. The plan was unanimously endorsed by IAEA Member States during the Agency's *55th General Conference* in September.

## Press Contacts

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## Related Resources

- [Integrated Regulatory Review Service \(IRRS\)](#)
- [IAEA Nuclear Safety Action Plan Approved by General Conference](#), 22 September 2011
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