

IAEA Mission Sees Significant Progress in Georgia's Regulatory Framework, Challenges Ahead

Thursday 1 March 2018 13:30 CET

10/2018

Tbilisi, Georgia



(https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/styles/hd_1920x1080/public/georgianflag812.jpg?itok=SZPIMyGI)

(Photo: Frank Miller)

An International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) team of experts said Georgia has made significant progress in strengthening its regulatory framework for nuclear and radiation safety. The team also pointed to challenges ahead as Georgia seeks to achieve further progress.

The Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) team concluded a 10-day mission on 28 February to assess the regulatory safety framework in Georgia. The mission was conducted at the request of the Government and hosted by the Agency of Nuclear and Radiation Safety (ANRS), which is responsible for regulatory oversight in the country.

IRRS missions are designed to strengthen the effectiveness of the national safety regulatory infrastructure, while recognizing the responsibility of each State to ensure nuclear and radiation safety.

Georgia uses radioactive sources in medicine and industry and operates radioactive waste management facilities. It has decommissioned its only research reactor and has no nuclear power plants. In recent years, the Government and ANRS, with assistance from the IAEA, introduced new safety regulations and increased the number of regulatory inspections.

"Georgia has significantly strengthened its safety and protection regulatory framework," said IRRS team leader Catherine Haney, Region II Administrator at the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission. "The IRRS mission's recommendations and suggestions, in addition to those enhancements currently underway or planned by Georgia, will contribute to further strengthening the framework."

The team of senior nuclear and radiation safety experts said Georgia is committed to strengthening its regulatory framework for safety and faces challenges in the coming years. These include the need to develop competencies for safety professionals, separate the roles of the regulatory body and the operator of radioactive waste facilities, and define a plan for radioactive waste disposal.

The 12-member IRRS team comprised experts from Bulgaria, Canada, the Czech Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovenia, the United States and Zimbabwe as well as two IAEA staff members.

"This is the first time that Georgia has hosted an IRRS mission," said Vasil Gedevanishvili, Head of ANRS. "The team has undertaken substantial appraisal and analytical work. Therefore, I am certain that the recommendations and suggestions made by the mission will lay out a roadmap to strengthen the regulatory infrastructure in line with IAEA safety standards, with the emphasis on the most recent reforms in this sphere."

The IRRS review covered areas including: responsibilities and functions of the Government and of the regulatory body; the global safety regime; activities of the regulatory body including authorization, review and assessment, inspection and enforcement processes; development and content of regulations and guides; emergency preparedness and response; occupational radiation protection; patient protection; discharges and material clearance; transport; waste management; and decommissioning. Promoting safety culture and enhancing regulatory effectiveness and competence were also discussed.

The IRRS team observed regulatory activities and met with ANRS staff, and visited a storage facility for radioactive waste, a well logging facility and a medical centre. The IRRS team representatives met with officials from the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs, and the Georgia National Academy of Sciences.

"The message carried over by this IRRS mission is full of significance," said Peter Johnston, Director of Radiation, Transport and Waste Safety in the IAEA Department of Nuclear Safety and Security. "It gives prominent visibility to the work accomplished by Georgia to enhance its regulatory effectiveness through the commitment made by ARNS to implement the IAEA safety standards which serve as the international benchmark for this review."

The IRRS team identified the following good practice:

- The creation of an electronic portal to enhance communications with license applicants and authorized parties.

The mission provided recommendations and suggestions for further regulatory enhancements, including:

- The Government should ensure that all facilities and activities that pose a radiation risk are subject to authorization and are authorized.
- ARNS should further develop safety regulations and guides in line with international standards.
- ARNS should further develop human resources and competences for personnel responsible for safety.

The final mission report will be provided to the Government of Georgia in about 3 months. The Government plans to make the report public.

24

7

Related Resources

- 🔗 [Integrated Regulatory Review Service \(IRRS\) \(https://www.iaea.org/services/review-missions/integrated-regulatory-review-service-irrs\)](https://www.iaea.org/services/review-missions/integrated-regulatory-review-service-irrs)
- 🔗 [Nuclear safety and security \(https://www.iaea.org/topics/nuclear-safety-and-security\)](https://www.iaea.org/topics/nuclear-safety-and-security)

More

Last update: 14 March 2018

International Atomic Energy Agency

Vienna International Centre, PO Box 100
A-1400 Vienna, Austria
Telephone: +43 (1) 2600-0, Facsimile +43 (1) 2600-7

✉ [Official Email \(/contact/official-mail\)](/contact/official-mail)

© 1998–2017 IAEA, All rights reserved. [Terms of Use \(/about/terms-of-use\)](/about/terms-of-use)

