

INTERNATIONAL PHYSICAL PROTECTION ADVISORY SERVICE (IPPAS)

NRC Office: NSIR

International Organization: IAEA

Representative: NSIR Physical Protection Experts as requested

General Description

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) International Physical Protection Advisory Service (IPPAS) provides advice to Member States to assist them in strengthening the effectiveness of their national physical protection system, while recognizing that the ultimate responsibility for physical protection is that of the Member State. The IPPAS program is not restricted to any particular group of Member States, whether developing or industrialized. It is available to all countries with nuclear materials and facilities.

1. How are IPPAS missions consistent and supportive of the specific strategies that support the goals in the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Strategic plan?

NRC efforts in strengthening international physical protection of nuclear material through participation in IPPAS missions support the NRC strategic objective to “Ensure the Secure Use and Management of Radioactive Materials.” Participation in IPPAS missions is also consistent with the NRC Strategic Plan strategy to “Coordinate with Federal and international counterparts to provide appropriate security and control to prevent the proliferation of special nuclear materials and nuclear technology and to reduce the potential for harmful use of hi-risk radioactive material.”

2. How does this committee relate to other NRC international activities?

Participation in IPPAS missions reflects the exceptional level of technical expertise and knowledge of the NRC physical protection staff selected to participate in these missions. The IAEA conducts these missions with a group of experts from various national authorities selected by the IAEA, with agreement from the host government. Experience and knowledge gained during IPPAS missions may be used to inform the NRC approach to domestic physical protection policy and implementation.

3. What is the relationship of this activity to the work of other IAEA and NEA Committees or activities (include any areas of known coordination unnecessary overlap between IAEA and NEA activities)?

The basic concepts, purposes and functions of physical protection are provided in IAEA INFCIRC/225/Rev. 4 (corrected), “The Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Nuclear Facilities,” and the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM). The guidance given in INFCIRC/225 recognizes that the implementation of these requirements will vary from country to country depending on their existing constitutional, legal and administrative systems; the assessment of the threat for the potential theft of nuclear material or sabotage of nuclear facilities; the technical skills and the professional and financial resources available to the competent authority; and social customs and cultural traditions. IPPAS missions compare

(insofar as this is possible) the procedures and practices in a Member State with the obligations specified under the CPPNM, the existing international consensus guidelines (INFCIRC/225) and equivalent good practices elsewhere.

4. What issues have the Committee addressed in the past year? What new issues does NRC staff anticipate the Committee will address in the future?

The NRC was not requested to participate in an IPPAS mission during the past year. Staff will continue to participate at the request of IAEA on IAEA-organized teams in response to country requests.

5. Does the staff anticipate seeking Commission Direction on this committee's work in the next 12 months?

When participation is requested and a schedule established, the Commission will be informed of staff plans.

6. What is the current level of annual staff involvement?

One (1) foreign trip per year, as requested by IAEA and approved by NRC