

April 4, 2006

MEMORANDUM TO: Chairman Diaz
Commissioner McGaffigan
Commissioner Merrifield
Commissioner Lyons
Commissioner Jaczko

FROM: Janice Dunn Lee, Director */RA/*
Office of International Programs

SUBJECT: STAFF PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY
AGENCY (IAEA) ACTIVITIES IN CALENDAR YEAR 2005

This paper discusses NRC staff participation in various activities of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Although a summary of IAEA and Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA) activities is provided to the Commission annually, OIP believes that a more specific report highlighting individual IAEA-sponsored meetings and missions would provide a more focused view on the level of staff involvement with the IAEA and our ability to influence nuclear safety and security.

The IAEA requests NRC staff participation in various missions, coordination and steering groups, conferences, standards committees, safeguards meetings and consultancies and technical meetings hosted in Vienna, Austria and throughout the world. On average, the IAEA requests NRC support for about 100 meetings and/or missions per year. Of those 100 requests in calendar year 2005, NRC participated in 81. A chart outlining the types of meetings, and the number of such meetings supported by NRC staff in calendar year 2005 is provided at Enclosure 1.

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NRC staff are invited to participate as experts on various IAEA-sponsored safety and security related missions. Such missions include Operational Safety Review Team (OSART) missions, International Regulatory Review Team (IRRT) missions, Transport Safety Appraisal Service (TranSAS) missions, International Physical Protection Advisory Service (IPPAS) missions, National Strategies Missions, Radiation Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources Infrastructure Appraisal (RaSSIA) missions, and International State Systems for Material Accountancy and Control Advisory Service (ISSAS) missions. Enclosure 2 provides a list of the different missions and a brief description of each activity.

The NRC continues to receive requests for IAEA missions and meetings in 2006. Staff will be participating in two OSART missions, and one pre-IRRS mission. The Commission is informed of any meetings or missions that may involve policy issues or be of particular interest.

The IAEA also sponsors several International Conferences throughout the year in which NRC staff participate as either presenters, or via paper submissions. Major conferences hosted in 2005 included the International Conference on Operational Safety Performance in Nuclear Installations, the International Conference on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Disposal, and the International Conference on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources: Towards a Global System for the Continuous Control of Sources throughout their Life Cycle. NRC senior staff are frequently invited to chair or serve as keynote speakers in these major conferences. These conferences often serve as the platform from which IAEA develops Action Plans for specific program areas.

NRC staff has the opportunity to influence the IAEA program of work at several stages of development. Staff participates in steering groups or coordination groups for a number of specific programs, including, for example, areas such as training and occupational exposure. NRC staff also serve as representatives to the Commission on Safety Standards (CSS) and its sub-committees: Transportation Safety (TRANSSC), Radiation Safety (RASSC), Waste Safety (WASSC) and Nuclear Safety (NUSSC). All of the committees meet twice a year to review draft Safety Guides and discuss future safety-related documents. With the increasing focus on security, the staff is working to improve connectivity with the Department of State, Department of Energy, and other organizations to influence the development and review of security documents at IAEA. The NRC is not currently represented on AdSEC, the review committee for security documents. However, NRC staff participates in many consultancy and technical committee meetings throughout the year to develop safety and security related documents and reports. The staff is continuing to explore ways to influence IAEA activities, and to influence the processes used by IAEA for development and review of documents to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

NRC continues to benefit from the cooperative partnership with the IAEA through the sharing of information, resources, best practices and lessons learned from operating experience and by influencing the development of standards and guidance consistent with U.S. objectives. Over the last few years, NRC has seen increased demands on agency resources to support the work of the IAEA. One of the main challenges faced by NRC staff with regard to participation in IAEA activities is how to prioritize these requests and fulfill NRC's strategic goals at the same

time. Within the past year, OIP and Program Office staff have been working closely with Ken Brockman, Director of the IAEA's Division of Nuclear Installation Safety in the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security, to develop a rolling list of projected meetings for the coming year. The list, which is updated quarterly, has served as a successful tool for Program Office staff to prioritize and budget staff and travel resources more efficiently. OIP is currently working with other divisions within the IAEA's Department of Nuclear Safety and Security to develop similar lists in the future.

Supporting these meetings and missions enables NRC staff to influence the international community for consistency with US policies and regulations, and to learn from and experience new and diverse regulatory structures. OIP and the Program Offices believe that this participation is vital to maintaining a learning organization that provides leadership in safety and security and strongly encourage continued support of IAEA activities.

Enclosures: As stated

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**NRC STAFF SUPPORT IN IAEA ACTIVITIES FOR CALENDAR
YEAR 2005**

Enclosure 1

	OSART	IRRT	SALTO	RaSSIA	National Strategies	Conferences	Other	CSS	Safeguards	C
NMSS							2	7		
NSIR	2					1	1		9	
RES	1					1	1			
NRR			6			3	5	2		
COM						3				
HR							2			
OIP						1	2			
OEDO						1	1	3		
RI					1					
RII	1									
RIII										
RIV				1						
Total	4	0	6	1	1	10	14	12	9	

Total meetings: 81

OSART - Operational Safety Review Team

IRRT - International Regulatory Review Team

SALTO - Extrabudgetary Program on the Safety Aspects of Long Term Operation of Water Moderated Reactors

RaSSIA - Radiation Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources Infrastructure Appraisal

National Strategies Missions - assists in the development of a national strategy for improving control over radioactive sources

Conferences - International Conferences sponsored or co-sponsored by IAEA

Other - Meetings not covered in other categories

CSS - Commission on Safety Standards (and committees)

Safeguards Meetings - Hosted by Department of Safeguards

Consultancy Meetings - Travel and per diem is occasionally reimbursed by the IAEA

Technical Meetings - Travel and per diem is paid for by individual Program Offices

International Regulatory Review Team (IRRT)

The purpose of an IRRT mission is to review the effectiveness of a regulatory body and to exchange information and experience in the regulation of nuclear, radiation, radioactive waste and transport safety. The mission is conducted by a team of international counterparts who will provide advice and assistance to Member States in order to strengthen and enhance the effectiveness of their nuclear safety regulatory body, while recognizing the ultimate responsibility of each Member State for regulating nuclear safety. The review is not a regulatory inspection or an audit against set codes and standards.

The review focuses on the organization of the regulatory body, legislative and governmental responsibilities, review and assessment, inspection and enforcement, development of regulations and guides, emergency preparedness, radioactive waste management and decommissioning, radiation protection and transport safety.

While most IRRT missions have been carried out in Central and Eastern European countries, there are several more mature regulators considering hosting future missions, including Canada, France, and Spain. The NRC has committed to conducting a reactor-focused IRRT self-assessment.

Operational Safety Review Team (OSART)

The key purpose of an OSART mission is to provide the host countries (plant and utility management, the NRC and other government authorities) with an objective assessment of operational safety at the host plant with respect to proven international performance and practices. Team members review the areas of management, organization and administration, training and qualification, operations, maintenance, technical support, radiation protection, chemistry and emergency planning and preparedness.

It is important to note that OSART reviews are not an audit against set codes and standards. They are a technical exchange of experiences and practices at all levels of nuclear power plant operation. Team members and designated plant personnel will identify strengths and opportunities for improvement in the plant's program and performance. They do not attempt to assess adherence to regulatory requirements or rank a plant's overall safety performance. Each mission begins with the expectation that the plant meets the safety requirements of the host country.

NRC hosted an OSART mission at Brunswick Nuclear Power Plant from May 7-26, 2005. A follow-up mission is scheduled for December 4-8, 2006.

Transport Safety Appraisal Service (TranSAS)

The objective of a TranSAS mission is to assist a country in achieving a high level of safety in the transport of radioactive material. This is achieved by reviewing the implementation of the IAEA Transport Regulations (TS-R-1) and making recommendations for improvement. Teams are composed of independent experts from Member States and IAEA staff members. Team members interview officials from the government agencies that regulate transportation of radioactive material, including the regulatory bodies, transportation officials, and the military. In addition, the team conducts visits to temporary storage areas, nuclear power plants, nuclear fuel fabrication facilities, and/or emergency response facilities. NRC staff has recently recommended to the Commission that the NRC not commit to a TranSAS mission at this time, but reevaluate the request at a later date.

International Physical Protection Advisory Service (IPPAS)

The purpose of an IPPAS mission is to provide 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 key objectives of an IPPAS mission are to enhance the national physical protection system by providing assistance to national competent authorities on how to strengthen the effectiveness of their national physical protection system for nuclear materials in storage, transport and use. The IPPAS is intended to be a review of the national physical protection system conducted by a team of international experts who will also use their experience and guidance to suggest the improvement of that system. Judgements are made on the basis of the combined expertise of the international team. The mission is therefore not a regulatory inspection or an audit against set codes and standards. Instead, it is a comparison of the existing practices of a country with the existing international consensus guidelines and an exchange of experiences and equivalent good practices aimed at strengthening the organization and the procedures and practices being followed.

Although the NRC did not participate in IPPAS missions to 2005, the IAEA has requested future NRC support.

National Strategies Mission

The purpose of a National Strategies Mission is to provide advice to Member States on the development of a national strategy for improving control over radioactive sources by performing an in-depth review of radioactive source inventory, including quality and historical development. Missions involve customs, police and intelligence agencies, and government bodies that use sources or that are responsible for industries that use sources.

Radiation Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources Infrastructure Appraisal (RaSSIA)

The purpose of a RaSSIA mission is to provide an appraisal/inspection of the regulatory infrastructure for radiation safety against the IAEA's safety standards by reviewing the current status of a Member State's radioactive source inventory. Missions involve regulatory bodies and source users. The NRC participated in one RaSSIA mission in 2005. The IAEA has not yet requested NRC assistance for 2006.

International State Systems for Material Accountancy and Control Advisory Service (ISSAS)

The ISSAS is a new initiative designed by the IAEA to provide recommendations for strengthening the SSAC (State Systems for Accounting and Control). ISSAS missions compare the procedures and practices in member states with the obligations specified under safeguards agreements, with international consensus guidelines and against equivalent practices in other countries. ISSAS missions are a new initiative to provide national competent authorities and facility operators with recommendations and suggestions on improvements that could be made to their SSAC systems. Due to the relative newness of ISSAS missions, NRC has not yet participated in a mission, but has already received a written request from the IAEA to participate in the future.

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