

Foreign Travel Trip Report

Trip Dates: December 1 – 5, 2014

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Trip Purpose:

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), staff traveled to Vienna, Austria, in order to participate in a meeting at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), entitled, "Design of the Technical Cooperation Model Interregional Project and Caribbean Project on 'Cradle-to-Grave' Control of Radioactive Sources and Applications."

Results Achieved:

During the IAEA meeting, the NRC successfully engaged with countries from the Caribbean and Mediterranean regions, in order to design the framework, approach, and criteria for the interregional and Caribbean radioactive sources projects. In addition, the NRC presented during an IAEA information session on the NRC's bilateral and multilateral engagement in support of the, "IAEA Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources" (Code).

Summary of Trip:

The first four days of the meeting were focused on the development of the projects. The first day of the meeting included briefings and discussion about the successes of the current and ongoing Mediterranean project, and the issues to consider for the expansion of this project for an interregional project, and the strategy for applying the same components to the Caribbean region. The second and third days of the meeting included break-out sessions into three groups of the 1) Mediterranean countries, 2) Caribbean countries, and 3) IAEA experts and donor countries. During the second and third days, groups one and two discussed the relevant approaches and areas of concentration for each project; and group three discussed the criteria for countries receiving funds under each project, what countries should be considered for each project, and approaches for developing regulatory framework, sources inventories, transport, emergency preparedness, security, and communication with political officials in each region and prospective donor countries. On the fourth day, all three groups finalized the criteria for countries to join each project and all parties agreed that the Mediterranean project will be more selective for countries with established regulatory organizations and infrastructure, while the Caribbean project will remain open to countries that have yet to establish formal legislation for a regulatory authority but are working toward this purpose. However, both projects recognize that there is an important need to ensure that governments are committed to enhancing the safety and security of radioactive sources in their respective countries, and that each project will focus on obtaining political commitment. The fourth day also included planning for the information session and engagement with the Missions.

In addition to developing the Mediterranean and Caribbean projects, the fifth day featured an information session for the Missions in Vienna, in order to create interest for recipient and donor countries to join the respective projects. The session included a

presentation from NRC, and a question and answer session, which focused on lessons-learned and ways to enhance radioactive source safety and security world-wide.

Pending Actions/Planned Next Steps for The Nuclear Regulatory Commission:

OIP is planning to participate in the Mediterranean and Caribbean regional projects, but no financial support from NRC is contemplated at this time. IAEA is currently requesting NRC expertise to contribute to engagement with countries related to each project. These activities will include workshops and IAEA field missions. Formal activities associated with each project are not expected to begin until 2016, pending a vote by the IAEA Board of Governors to approve each project during October 2015.

Points for Commission Consideration/Interest:

None at this time.

On the Margins:

The NRC participated in various activities on the margins of this IAEA meeting.

The NRC met with Louis Longoria, Director, Division of Technical Cooperation for Latin America, IAEA, in order to confirm NRC's anticipated funding support for Technical Cooperation projects for 2015. NRC confirmed its plans to continue funding for 2015 at the same levels as 2014. Mr. Longoria emphasized that, in addition to continue previous funding levels from 2014, NRC support would be most useful in the form of engagement with Caribbean nations that have recently joined IAEA, and most importantly Caribbean nations that plan to join IAEA, as IAEA funding support is not permitted for these countries. The NRC confirmed its interest in plans for continuing ongoing projects, and for engaging with new Caribbean nations.

The NRC met with Ahmad Al Khatibeh, Section Head, Regulatory Infrastructure and Transport Safety Structure, Division of Radiation; and the U.S. Department of State, in order to discuss ongoing efforts and funding for the Nonproliferation and Disarmament Fund.

The NRC met with Mr. Salah Moulaye Ahmed, President, and Mauritania National Authority for Radiation Protection, Safety, and Nuclear Authority. During the meeting, Mauritanian officials explained that the majority of their radioactive sources inventory is complete, but that they require assistance with finalizing the inventory and sources that are located in the interior of the country. The NRC discussed a plan with the Mauritians for a strategy to identify sources and finalize its national inventory; and for workshops discussing the transport of radioactive sources.

The NRC participated in a video teleconference (VTC) with the European Commission. The VTC included discussion of the ongoing interregional project and plan develop a similar project for the Caribbean region.