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Radiation Protection

Main Conclusions of the Commission's Article 35 verification

URANIUM MINING, PROCESSING, FUEL FABRICATION AND NATIONAL MONITORING NETWORKS

ROMANIA

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INTRODUCTION

Article 35 of the Euratom Treaty requires that each Member State shall establish facilities necessary to carry out continuous monitoring of the levels of radioactivity in air, water and soil and to ensure compliance with the basic safety standards ⁽¹⁾.

Article 35 also gives the European Commission (EC) the right of access to such facilities in order that it may verify their operation and efficiency.

For the EC, the Directorate-General for Energy (DG ENER) and in particular its Radiation Protection Unit (at the time of the visit ENER.D.4, now ENER.D.3) is responsible for undertaking these verifications.

The main purpose of verifications performed under Article 35 of the Euratom Treaty is to provide an independent assessment of the adequacy of monitoring facilities for:

- Liquid and airborne discharges of radioactivity into the environment by a site (and control thereof).
- Levels of environmental radioactivity at the site perimeter and in the marine, terrestrial and aquatic environment around the site, for all relevant pathways.
- Levels of environmental radioactivity on the territory of the Member State.

On 4 July 2006 the Commission published a Communication in the Official Journal (OJ 2006/C 155/02) with a view to define some practical arrangements for the conduct of Article 35 verification visits in Member States.

From 20 to 22 August 2012 a verification team from then DG ENER.D.4 visited the former uranium mining, the uranium processing and the nuclear fuel fabrication installations in Bihor, Banat, Feldioara and Pitești as well as parts of the national environmental radioactivity monitoring network in these regions including some of its regional (local) laboratories.

The visit included meetings with representatives of various national authorities having responsibility in the field of radiation protection. A closing meeting was held, with all parties involved during the visit, at the premises of the National Commission for Nuclear Activities Control (CNCAN).

The present document gives an overview of the main conclusions by the verification team and corresponding recommendations. More detailed information concerning the verification is available at the technical report of the verification.

The report is based on the verification findings, on information collected during the verification including documents received and on discussions with various persons during the visit.

MAIN CONCLUSIONS

All verifications that had been planned by the verification team were completed successfully. In this regard, the information supplied in advance of the visit, as well as the additional documentation received during and after the verification, was useful.

¹ Council Directive 96/29/Euratom of 13 May 1996 laying down basic safety standards for the protection of the health of workers and the general public against the dangers arising from ionizing radiation (OJ L-159 of 29/06/1996, page 1).

- (1) The verification activities that were performed demonstrated that the facilities necessary to carry out continuous monitoring of levels of radioactivity in the air, water and soil around the uranium mining sites in Bihor and Banat, the uranium milling and processing site at Feldioara, the nuclear fuel production site at Pitești, as well as the verified parts of the national monitoring system for environmental radioactivity are adequate. The Commission could verify the operation and efficiency of these facilities. However, the verification team notes that with regard to the situation at some of the former uranium mines remediation work is on-going and significant changes can be expected in future.
- (2) A few pertinent suggestions and recommendations are formulated. These aim at improving some aspects of discharge monitoring and environmental radioactivity surveillance with regard to uranium production sites and the national monitoring system. The recommendations do not discredit the fact that environmental radioactivity monitoring around uranium production sites as well as the verified parts of the national monitoring system for environmental radioactivity are in conformity with the provisions laid down under Article 35 of the Euratom Treaty.
- (3) The detailed verification findings and ensuing recommendations are compiled in the 'Technical Report' that is addressed to the Romanian competent authorities through the Romanian Permanent Representative to the European Union.
- (4) The Commission services ask the Romanian competent authority to inform them of any progress or significant changes with regard to the situation at the time of the verification. In particular, they will closely follow up the progress made with respect to point (2) above.
- (5) Finally, the verification team acknowledges the excellent co-operation it received from all persons involved in the activities it performed.

C. Gitzinger

Team Leader