



Meeting of the Group of Experts referred to in Article 31 of the Euratom Treaty

Luxembourg-Gasperich, 7-8 June 2005

SUMMARY REPORT

General

This was the first meeting of the new Group of Experts (GoEs) after the new Euratom Scientific and Technical Committee (STC) had appointed the new members of the GoEs including members from the new MSs.

The Group agreed to have interpretation in EN, FR and DE.

In absence of an elected Chairman the representative from Luxembourg having the Presidency, chaired the meeting and welcomed the participants, in particular the members from the new MSs. He thanked the former Chairman for his work and support in preparing this meeting.

1. AGENDA ITEM 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Procedure for nomination of the Group by STC

The Commission described in detail the procedure for the nomination of the members of the GoEs by the STC. The STC had agreed to nominate 3 members from the large MSs (DE, FR, UK), 2 members for all other MSs except the small ones. Due to time constraints the approval of the GoEs members by the STC was executed by written procedure which allowed holding this meeting of the GoEs as originally scheduled.

The GoEs informed that they did not receive an official nomination. The Commission considered this to be the task of the STC Secretariat and will address this issue to it.

1.2. Presentation of old and new experts

All members of the GoEs presented themselves with their specific background. Also the other participants introduced themselves.

This introduction was followed by a general discussion to which extent the names of the members should be made public. It was agreed to publish just the names of the members of the GoEs but not further details.

2. AGENDA ITEM 2: APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was approved.

3. AGENDA ITEM 3: SUMMARY REPORT OF THE MEETING HELD IN LUXEMBOURG ON 3-5 NOVEMBER 2004

Since the report was dealing with a meeting of the former GoEs the present GoEs had not to approve it. The Secretary had requested by e-mail the former GoEs to provide comments but did receive only a relative small number of responses. He therefore invited again the members of the GoEs that were also members in the previous GoEs to provide additional input.

4. AGENDA ITEM 4: PROCEDURAL ASPECTS

4.1. Rules of Procedure and Code of Ethics of the Expert Group

The Commission introduced the Rules of Procedures, the Code of Ethics and the Working Arrangements.

In this context the GoEs discussed again to which extent the Summary report should be made public.

The GoEs concluded to publish the Summary Report after it has been discussed at the following meeting of the GoEs and been given approval for publication. The GoEs discussed this issue further in the context of the agenda item 6. With regard to the Summary Report the GoEs would like to have a version that displays discussion aspects. At the next meeting the GoEs will discuss the Summary Report.

4.2. Relationship with Euratom STC

The Commission explained the nature of the STC and the GoEs as groups of independent experts. According to the rules the STC and the GoEs are independent from each other and the STC has just the obligation to appoint the members of the GoEs. The STC shared finally this view. It was agreed that the GoEs Chairman can participate in the STC meetings and inform the STC on the activities of the GoEs including the activities of the Working Parties (WP) of the GoEs.

4.3. Procedure for appointment of a Chairman/Vice-Chairman

The Commission explained the procedure as laid down in the Rules of Procedure. It was emphasised that the Chairman will be elected for 2 ½ years whereas the Vice-Chairman will be serving for 3 ½ year to have an offset of 1 year.

Election of the Chairman:

A new Chairman was elected and took up immediately his duty.

He thanked the representative of Luxembourg for chairing the meeting in the beginning and underlined in particular the high quality work of the former Chairman. The entire GoEs thanked the former Chairman for his excellent work that helped the GoEs considerably to execute its work so successfully. The Chairman further confirmed that he will continue in the spirit of the former Chairman and in particular keep the spirit of openness.

Election of the Vice-Chairman (on the second day):

The Vice-Chairman was elected.

5. AGENDA ITEM 5: REVIEW OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE WORKING PARTIES (WPs)

5.1. Consumer Products

The Commission informed on the work of the WP and confirmed that the document on Consumer Goods will be available within the next few weeks. The document covers only those goods where radioactive material is deliberately added but not naturally contained; IAEA aspects of exemption and clearance (RS 1.7) have been considered but not integrated.

With the publication of the document on the Consumer Products the WP will finish its work.

5.2. Medical Exposures

The Chairman of the WP gave an overview of the activities over a range of years from 1991 and underlined the very successful work as documented by the large number of publications. The WP is considered a “standing” WP and has to be re-established with the participation from new MSs.

The GoEs confirmed the particular importance of the WP. It was agreed that the WP should not expand beyond 12 members. Former members of the old WP can participate in the meetings as invited experts.

At this occasion the Vice-Chairman of the WP introduced shortly the year 2005 medical projects of the Radiation Protection Unit. The WP will deal with these during its next meeting and input was requested from the GoEs.

5.3. Research Implications (RIHSS)

The Chairman of the WP gave an overview of the work of the WP and its goal to identify new research results that may have implications on legislative initiatives. In this context, the importance of the yearly Scientific Seminar, attached to the fall Plenary Meeting of the GoEs, was underlined. The Chairman introduced the proposed thematic area of this year’s Seminar on alpha emitters, presented a first draft programme (radon excluded), and asked the GoEs for feedback.

Also this WP is considered to be a “standing” WP; the GoEs agreed to re-establish the WP and to increase the number of its members.

The representative from the NEA welcomed the work of the WP and informed that there are related NEA activities. It was concluded that co-operating more closely would be very beneficial for both sides.

5.4. Training and Education

The Commission presented the progress made during the last years. The basic problem to be solved is the fact that mutual recognition regarding educational degrees (e.g. “Qualified Expert”) is still not satisfactory and thus hindering the free movement of people in the EU. To solve this problem the Commission has worked on the creation of a so-called Education and Training Platform that will bring together all the stakeholders. With the initiation of this Platform the WP ended its work and the Platform will take over. The Platform project will be launched this year.

5.5. Harmonisation Intervention Levels (HIL)

The Chairman of the WP presented the work of the WP and referred to the final report that may need some improvement. An intensive discussion followed concluding that there is an urgent need for harmonisation in the field of emergency, not from a point of science but of policy. The representative of the IAEA confirmed that the IAEA has a similar view.

The GoEs concluded that there is a need for action and requested to publish as soon as possible the report and that the German report covering the new MSs should be considered.

5.6. Collective Dose

The Commission informed that the WP has never met but that a related project was launched and is running now. There will be a meeting with the contractor in November 2005; an intermediate report is available now. The WP should be re-established.

5.7. General review of Working Parties (dealt with the 2nd day, sub-points 1 and 2 were discussed together)

WP MED:

The WP was re-established with 12 members with a Chairman and Vice-Chairman. Secretary will be provided by the Commission. The first meeting of the new WP MED was scheduled to 8 July 2005. At this meeting the WP will mainly deal with the medical projects presented under pt 5.2.

WP RIHSS

The WP was re-established with 5 members with a Chairman and Vice-Chairman. Secretary will be provided by the Commission. Even though the membership should be restricted to GoEs members it was agreed that former members of the WP will be invited in order to continue the preparation of

the Scientific Seminar. The WP will have its first meeting either on 19 or 20 July.

The establishment of the WP was followed by further discussing the Scientific Seminar.

WP Education and Training

Even though the WP has practically ended its work with the launch of the Platform project the GoEs concluded that 2 members of the GoEs should be members of the Steering Group of the Platform.

WP HIL

Considering the completion of the HIL report the WP was decided to be closed.

WP Collective Dose

After a short discussion the WP was established with 4 members. It was proposed to discuss the draft report prepared by the contractor at a date close to the meeting of the GoEs in November. Several new thematic areas were proposed that should be addressed in more detail at the meeting of the WP.

WP Basic Safety Standards (BSS)

In the context of the next ICRP Recommendation the revision of the BSS was considered as one of the most important activities of the GoEs. Therefore a new WP was established to identify in a brainstorming approach those items in the BSS that may need revision or even newly taken up and to start to draft a Working Paper on the plan for the new BSS. 7 members agreed to participate in this WP. A Chairman was elected; the Secretary will be provided by the Commission. It was agreed that the WP should first meet in September.

6. AGENDA ITEM 6: CODEX PROPOSAL ON FOOD STUFFS; OPINION ON A NEW DRAFT

The Commission presented the history and the recent developments regarding the Guidelines. At a recent CODEX meeting in Den Haag the position of the Commission, representing entirely the EU MSs, had been fully considered: The scope of the Guidelines restricted to the case of emergency and a separate consideration of infant food. It was agreed that a new international Working Party under the lead of the IAEA and the EC will draft a new proposal.

The GoEs congratulated the Commission to this success and thanked her for the excellently prepared new draft proposal.

After a discussion of the draft proposal and of the related draft Opinion the GoEs requested a few changes regarding the raising of issues. After modification by the Commission the GoEs approved the Opinion.

The Commission informed the GoEs on the further steps. It will use the draft proposal together with the approved Opinion in the future negotiations with the other members in the international WP mentioned above.

In this context the WP discussed the publication of Opinions. Informed by the Commission that Opinions have to be made public the GoEs concluded to integrate the Opinions into the minutes.

7. AGENDA ITEM 7: FOLLOW-UP TO THE EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON THE NEW DRAFT 2005 ICRP RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1. Highlights of the Conference

The Chairman of the WP RIHSS informed in detail on the last Conference with the presentation of specific issues by ICRP representatives and then critically reviewed by so-called “challenging” speakers. This approach has led to a very open and intensive discussion. The previous GoEs concluded the results of the Conference by approving a so-called “Highlights” paper summarising the critical issues, problems, and questions.

7.2. Discussion on the implications of the Conference (sub-groups 1 and 2 were integrated)

The Commission reported on the following steps. On the basis of the “Highlight” paper the Commission has prepared the EC position paper and has sent it before the end of 2004 to the ICRP. This Commission position paper provided also the basis for input to other organisations such as the IACRS.

8. AGENDA ITEM 8 : INFORMATION FROM INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

8.1. IAEA

The representative of the IAEA presented the activities of the IAEA (copies of his document were handed out to the GoEs). He emphasised the urgent need for the revision of IAEA’s BSS (10 years old) and mentioned in particular the topics justification, exclusion/exemption, and natural sources. He underlined the strong interest of the IAEA to closely co-operate with the EC to ensure the highest possible degree of consistency of the BSS. He further addressed the need for guidance on the justification principle and for the improvement of the protection of patients.

8.2. ICRP

The representative of the ICRP presented the activities of the ICRP in its 4 Committees (copies of his document were handed out to the GoEs) and addressed in particular the response on the request for comments on the draft ICRP Recommendations. The ICRP received about 200 replies with more than 600 pages of comments. The ICRP considers the comments provided by the EC as particularly important and announced that these will be taken into account. He further addressed the Foundation Papers that should have been

published first but were not. These Papers have been published in the mean time but revised versions are foreseen for September 2005. He announced that the next Recommendations will be published by the end of 2006/beginning of 2007.

8.3. NEA

The representative of the NEA presented the activities of the NEA (copies of his presentation were handed out). He thanked the Commission for the invitation to this meeting and underlined the broad overlap of interests.

9. AGENDA ITEM 9: WORK PROGRAMME OF THE NEW ART. 31 GROUP OF EXPERTS

9.1. Preparation of the new BSS (the sub-points 1 to 3 regarding titles III, VII, and IX were discussed altogether with Agenda Item 10)

The Commission underlined again the strong impact the new ICRP Recommendations will have on the revision of the EC BSS. The points 1 to 3 are not exhaustive. The Commission particularly emphasised the topics exemption, clearance levels, prior authorization, etc., and underlined the need for harmonisation, preferably in co-operation at international level.

9.2. Other legal initiatives

The Commission addressed the Medical Directive and claimed that there will probably not be much impact of the new ICRP Recommendations. The Commission concluded that it would be better to support implementation by providing guidance than to revise the Medical Directive.

In the following discussion several critical medical issues were addressed. The GoEs concluded that these issues are better discussed in the WP MED.

10. AGENDA ITEM 10: SEE 9.1

11. AGENDA ITEM 11: INFORMATION FROM THE COMMISSION

11.1. Discussion of status of legal developments

The Commission presented a review of the latest developments with particular consideration of the new MSs (copies of the presentation were handed out). The HASS Directive was addressed and the relation to the Shipment's Directive discussed. Transport regulations and shipment are dealt with under different legal basis (EC, EURATOM).

Further addressed was the initiative on Orphan Sources which came up upon political pressure and seemed to ignore the HASS Directive. The Commission requested input from the GoEs.

The Commission reported on the Drinking Water Directive. Even though there had been 2 years ago an agreement on a draft of the annexes II and III of the Directive for the radioactivity parameters, the Commission wanted to

deal simultaneously with Zn, Cu and Pb. After further input from the EC Legal Service and further discussions with the experts (committee and Art. 35-36 representatives) a new draft has been delivered as a Commission Directive. There is no need for an Opinion since the adoption is under the EC Treaty.

11.2. Projects in the field of Waste Management, Transport and Safety

The Commission presented the history and present status of projects in this field in particular the Nuclear Package (copies of the presentation were handed out). The Decommissioning Funds were addressed as well: They are independently dealt with now. A proposal for an EC Recommendation is under preparation and questionnaires have been sent to all nuclear installations. A 2nd report is planned for the end of 2005.

Legislative initiatives cover the transport of radioactive materials (for which licensing needs harmonisation) and the Joint Undertaking regarding the management of waste and spent fuel, which is considered the most cost effective instrument for that purpose.

11.3. Completed studies

The Commission mentioned the report on Air Crew Exposure prepared by the EURADOS working group. Members of the GoEs asked the Commission to further support EURADOS.

The updating of publication RP 88 and the possible help by EURADOS were addressed as well. It was mentioned that EURADOS may be partially supported by FP6 (6th EC Research Framework Programme) but the situation is not clear. In this context some members of the GoEs would like to receive information on funded research projects within the FP.

12. AGENDA ITEM 12: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

12.1. Conferences

The Commission briefly informed on the ETRAP Conference to take place in Brussels on 23-25 November.

12.2. Miscellaneous

Nothing was reported

13. AGENDA ITEM 13: NEXT MEETINGS

13.1. Dates

The GoEs decided to hold the next meeting on 21-22 November 2005 with the Scientific Seminar to take place in the afternoon of 21 November.

13.2. Languages

This issue was discussed at the very beginning of the meeting.

The Chairman thanked all participants and interpreters and emphasised the intensive and open interaction in the Group. He underlined the importance of the establishment of a work programme for the possible revision of the BSS. He further expressed his hope that working papers will be provided in due time and closed the meeting.