



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR ENERGY

DIRECTORATE D – Nuclear Energy, Safety and ITER
Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety

Meeting of the Group of Experts established under Article 31 of the Euratom Treaty

Luxembourg, 12 – 13 June 2019

SUMMARY REPORT

(Approved by the Group of Experts at the meeting 13 – 14 November 2019)

INTRODUCTION

The Director of Directorate D, *Nuclear Energy, Safety and ITER*, and the Head of Unit *Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety* opened the meeting and welcomed the Group of Experts and introduced the EU policy context of the current and next mandate of the Group of Experts.

The Secretariat informed the experts on recent changes in the membership of the Article 31 Group of Experts (resignation of an expert from RO), on presence and apologies for this meeting and introduced a new colleague from the Commission who will be sharing the responsibility for the secretariat of the Group of Experts.

1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The draft Agenda was adopted without amendments.

2. APPROVAL OF THE SUMMARY REPORT OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14 – 15 NOVEMBER 2018

The Summary Report of the meeting held in Luxembourg on 14 – 15 November 2018 has been approved with one minor amendment and is published on the Europa website¹.

3. INFORMATION BY THE COMMISSION

The Head of Unit D3, *Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety*, updated the group on key priorities for the Commission's work in the areas of nuclear safety, radiation protection and emergency preparedness and informed the Group of Experts on the ongoing audit on nuclear safety by the European Court of Auditors.

The Head of Unit D1, *EURATOM Co-ordination, Legal matters and International Relations*, and the Head of Unit D2, *Nuclear Energy, Nuclear Waste and Decommissioning*, presented the current key activities within their units highlighting the areas of relevance for the work of the Group of Experts.

¹ The approved Summary Report of the November 2018 meeting can be found under <https://ec.europa.eu/energy/en/group-experts>

4. FOOD AND FEED – EXTENSION OF THE POST-CHERNOBYL LEGISLATION

At the November 2018 meeting, the Article 31 Group of Experts adopted an Opinion on the Prolongation of the latest Post-Chernobyl Regulation – Council Regulation 733/2008² amended by Council Regulation 1048/2009³, to establish a legally binding instrument extending the latest Post-Chernobyl measures beyond 31 March 2020 for another period of 10 years. In that Opinion, the Group of Experts further confirmed that the currently applicable maximum permitted levels of radioactivity should be maintained.

Further to this, the Secretariat informed the Group of Experts that the Commission Legal Service on request advised to prolong the measures in the form of an implementing regulation under Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety (1), and in particular Article 53(1)(b)(ii) thereof.

At this meeting, the Commission presented to the Group of Experts a draft implementing regulation imposing conditions governing the import of food, minor food and feed originating in third countries following the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power station. In addition, the Secretariat presented the draft opinion for discussion and adoption.

The Group of Experts noted that the scope of the proposed implementing regulation covers food, minor food and feed as defined in Council Regulation 2016/52⁴, and defines applicable maximum permitted levels of radioactivity in terms of ¹³⁴Cs and ¹³⁷Cs in line with the Opinion given in November 2018. In discussion, several experts reported that in recent years, the number of cases in which the permitted levels have been exceeded has been low. The EU's Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) offers information on all cases notified by Member States in which the permitted levels have been exceeded with summary information. The system is open for public access (<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/rasff-window/portal/?event=searchResultList>). Some experts pointed out that in the future, it could be useful to gather further evidence on the specific situation in Member States.

The Group of Experts confirmed that each consignment of mushrooms shall continue to be accompanied by a valid export certificate. The Group of Experts considered it appropriate to require documentary checks on all consignments of mushrooms and random identity checks and random physical checks, including laboratory analysis on the presence of ¹³⁴Cs and ¹³⁷Cs. For products other than mushrooms, the experts recommended to maintain current control requirements in terms of certificates and measurements.

² Council Regulation (EC) No 733/2008 of 15 July 2008 on the conditions governing imports of agricultural products originating in third countries following the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power station (codified version), Official of the European Union, L 201, 30.07.2008, p. 1 – 7.

³ Council Regulation (EC) No 1048/2009 of 23 October 2009 amending Regulation (EC) No 733/2008 on the conditions governing imports of agricultural products originating in third countries following the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power station, Official of the European Union, L 290, 6.11.2009, p. 4–4

⁴ Council Regulation (Euratom) 2016/52 of 15 January 2016 laying down maximum permitted levels of radioactive contamination of food and feed following a nuclear accident or any other case of radiological emergency, and repealing Regulation (Euratom) No 3954/87 and Commission Regulations (Euratom) No 944/89 and (Euratom) No 770/90

Finally, the Article 31 Group of Experts adopted an *Opinion on the draft proposal for an implementing regulation imposing conditions governing the import of food, minor food and feed originating in third countries following the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power station*. The Opinion is published on the Europa website⁵.

5. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

The contractor presented the recently completed “*Study on good practices in implementing the requirements on public information in the event of an emergency, under the Euratom Basic Safety Standards Directive and Nuclear Safety Directive*”.

The Article 31 Group of Experts took note of the findings and acknowledged the study as important piece of work in this area. During the November meeting, the Article 31 Group of Experts will be asked to further discuss issues in emergency preparedness and response and how to best to address these issues in the group's work programme in future.

6. SECURITY OF SOURCES

The Commission presented a recently published Call for Tenders for a study on “*Control of radioactive sources in the European Union*” the completion of which is expected in spring 2021.

The Article 31 Group of Experts took note of the development of this initiative and asked to be kept informed about the progress with the study and the outcomes of the study at future meetings.

7. REVIEW AND PRIORITISATION OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE WORKING PARTIES AND RELATED PROJECTS

7.1 Natural Radiation Sources (WP NAT)

The Working Party on exposure to natural sources of ionising radiations (WP NAT) reported on progress made since the last Group of Experts' meeting. The secretariat of the WP NAT reported on the status of the draft report on “*Radon in workplaces*” (version 6 June 2019).

The Article 31 Group of Experts discussed the draft report on “*Radon in workplaces*” and agreed to provide final comments on the report to the secretariat by **12 July 2019**. Based on the comments, the Commission will revise the report and distribute it to the GoE by the **end of August 2019**. The Group of Experts will be asked to approve the document by **mid-September** in a written procedure.

7.2 Medical Exposures (WP MED)

The secretariat of the Working Party reported on progress made since the last Group of Experts' meeting.

The Article 31 Group of Experts took note of the various activities of this group.

The work package of the WP MED on dose planning and verification in radionuclide therapy is expected to provide input to the 2019 Scientific Seminar on *Developments in nuclear*

⁵ The adopted Opinion on the Prolongation of the latest Post-Chernobyl Regulation – Council Regulation 733/2008 amended by Council Regulation 1048/2009 can be found under <https://ec.europa.eu/energy/en/group-experts>

medicine. The chair of the WP MED agreed to chair the seminar and to moderate the roundtable discussions.

The final workshop of the study on clinical Diagnostic Reference Levels (EUCLID project, <http://www.eurosafeimaging.org/euclid>) is planned for 9-10 December 2019 in Luxembourg.

The WP Med will continue to follow the discussions held by IAEA on *Radiation Exposure of Patients from Recurrent Radiological Imaging Procedures* (the chair of WP MED attended the last IAEA's technical meeting, held 4-6 March 2019 at IAEA Headquarter, VIC, Vienna) and will provide updates in future meetings of the Group of Experts.

7.3. Research Implications on Health and Safety Standards (WP RIHSS)

a. EU Scientific Seminar November 2017 on Epigenetic effects – potential impact on radiation protection

The Chair of the Working Party presented the final draft of the proceedings of the EU Scientific Seminar November 2017 on *Epigenetic effects – potential impact on radiation protection*.

The Article 31 Group of Experts approved the Proceedings for publication in the radiation protection series of the European Commission (RP-189).

b. EU Scientific Seminar 2018 on Management of long-term exposure after a nuclear or radiological accident

The Chair of the Working Party reported that the draft proceedings of the EU Scientific Seminar November 2018 on Management of long-term exposure after a nuclear or radiological accident was discussed during the last WP RIHSS meeting. The proceedings are still awaiting two missing contributions before they can be finalised.

It is planned to present the final version of the proceedings to the Article 31 Group of Experts for adoption at the next meeting in November.

c. Topics for upcoming EU Scientific Seminar

At the November 2018 meeting, the Article 31 Group of Experts agreed to hold the EU Scientific Seminar 2019 on ***Developments in nuclear medicine – new radioisotopes in use***.

Further to this, during its last meeting, the WP RIHSS prepared a draft programme for the seminar proposing topics for presentations and potential speakers.

The Article 31 Group of Experts discussed and agreed on the draft programme of the seminar as to include the following topics:

- 1. Radionuclide therapy in nuclear medicine – developments and challenges*
- 2. Production and regulation of radiopharmaceuticals – radiation protection issues*
- 3. Dosimetry and dosimetric tools in radionuclide therapy (covering also the results of the European survey)*
- 4. Radiation protection issues in radionuclide therapy – workers (medical staff), third persons, waste management*
- 5. Evaluation of risks of radionuclide therapy*

In the discussion, some experts suggested to revise the title of the seminar to better reflect the content, to highlight the advantage of nuclear medicine and to control the extent of the content in a way that suits the short duration of the seminar.

The Group agreed to provide proposals/suggestions including for additional potential speakers to the chair and the secretariat of the WP RIHSS within **2 weeks** time. The experts agreed to ask the speakers to provide their abstracts before the seminar with the aim to ensure that the areas of interest are covered and to avoid gaps or overlaps between the presentations.

The chair of the WP RIHSS will further liaise with the chair of WP MED to finalise the programme, decide on speakers, guidelines for their contributions and roundtable discussion topics.

8. WORK PROGRAMME OF THE ARTICLE 31 GROUP OF EXPERTS (“ROAD MAP”)

The Commission presented the latest version of the Article 31 Work programme for the coming years (version 10.05.2019).

The Article 31 Group of Experts adopted, with some amendments regarding the dates, the presented work programme. The Group agreed to review the “road map” while reflecting on priority issues in preparation of the new mandate next year and to update it at the next meeting.

9. EMERGING ISSUES IN MEMBER STATES WITH POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS ON A EUROPEAN LEVEL

An expert from Sweden, member of the Article 31 Group of Experts, presented “*How to interpret the reference level of 500 mSv for emergency occupational exposure*”.

The Group of Experts welcomed the contribution to this section on the agenda of the Group.

The presentation triggered discussions and stimulated an exchange of experience among the experts. The shared experiences of implementation in different countries presented examples of interpretation in practice.

10. ISSUES OF INTEREST FROM INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

The *International Commission on Radiological Protection* and the *International Radiological Protection Association* were not represented in the meeting but provided to the secretariat in advance reports on their respective current activities, which were distributed to the meeting participants for information.

10.1 International Atomic Energy Agency

The representative from International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) presented an update of IAEA’s activities and upcoming meetings.

The Article 31 Group of Experts took note of the newest activities.

10.2 Nuclear Energy Agency

The representative from Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA) presented an update of NEA’s activities and upcoming meetings.

The Article 31 Group of Experts took note of the newest activities.

10.3 Heads of European Radiation protection Competent Authorities

The representative from Heads of European Radiation protection Competent Authorities (HERCA) presented an update of HERCA's activities.

The Article 31 Group of Experts took note of the newest activities.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was raised.

12. DATES OF THE NEXT MEETINGS

November 2019

The ***November 2019 meeting*** of the Group of Experts will be held on **13 – 14 November 2019** in Luxembourg, in Room E, **European Convention Center Luxembourg, 1, rue du Fort Thüngen, L-1499 Luxembourg (Kirchberg)**

June 2020 (with new composition of the Group of Experts)

The ***June 2020 meeting*** of the Group of Experts is scheduled for **16 – 17 June 2020**, in meeting room EUFO 0001, **European Commission – Euroforum Building, 10, rue Robert Stumper – L-2557 Luxembourg – Gasperich.**

CLOSURE OF MEETING

The Head of Unit D3, *Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety*, thanked the Group of Experts for a constructive meeting and called for further reflection on defining priorities in the work areas in view of the group's new mandate next year.