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Directorate D - Nuclear Energy, Safety and ITER
D.3 – Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety

Main Conclusions of the Commission's Article 35 verification

LITHUANIA

Routine and emergency radioactivity monitoring arrangements Monitoring of radioactivity in drinking water and foodstuffs

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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 standards¹.

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.

The radiation protection and nuclear safety unit (ENER D.3) of the EC's Directorate-General for Energy (DG ENER) 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.

For the purpose of such a review, a verification team from DG ENER visited Lithuania on 29 November – 1 December 2016. This mission dealt with

- Control of the implementation of the recommendations of the Commission made in 2011;
- Environmental radiological monitoring programme and activities as implemented in the visited regions of Lithuania, including sampling and monitoring systems, analytical methods, quality assurance and control aspects, reporting, etc.;
- Measuring laboratories, in particular infrastructure, analytical methods, quality assurance and control aspects, as well as reporting.

The present document gives an overview of the main conclusions by the verification team concerning relevant aspects of the environmental surveillance and corresponding recommendations. More detailed information concerning the verification is available in the technical report (TR) of the verification.

MAIN CONCLUSIONS

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

- (1) The verification activities that were performed demonstrated that the facilities necessary to carry out continuous monitoring of radioactivity in the air, water and soil in Lithuania are adequate. The Commission services could verify the operation and efficiency of a representative part of these facilities.
- (2) The recommendations issued by the Commission in 2011 have been very well followed and implemented. Lithuania has in 2012 and 2015 provided follow-up reports of the 2011 recommendations.

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) which will be superseded by Council Directive 2013/59/Euratom of 5 December 2013 laying down basic safety standards for protection against the dangers arising from exposure to ionising radiation, and repealing Directives 89/618/Euratom, 90/641/Euratom, 96/29/Euratom, 97/43/Euratom and 2003/122/Euratom (OJ L 13 of 17.1.2014, p. 1).

- (3) A few new technical recommendations are formulated, in particular the following:
- a. Concerning the emergency monitoring arrangements at the Environment Protection Agency (EPA) (Section 7.2.1 of the TR) the verification team recommends that the EPA organises a continuous emergency on-call service capable of responding to a possible radiological emergency within an hour of the first alert. The team further recommends increasing the number of trained staff for the monitoring network maintenance.
 - b. Concerning the EPA radioanalytical laboratory (Section 7.5.1 of the TR), the verification team recommends a review of resources and staff allocations to address the increased monitoring needs in a radiological emergency situation.
 - c. Concerning the National Food and Veterinary Risk Assessment Institute (NFVRAI) radioanalytical laboratory (Section 7.5.2 of the TR), the verification team recommends a review of resources and staff allocations to address the increased monitoring needs in a radiological emergency situation.

These recommendations aim at maintaining a sufficient monitoring quality level also in the event of an emergency. Notwithstanding these recommendations the verified parts of the national monitoring system for environmental radioactivity in Lithuania are in conformity with the provisions laid down under the Article 35 of the Euratom Treaty.

- (4) The detailed verification findings and ensuing recommendations are compiled in the 'Technical Report' that is addressed to the Lithuanian competent authorities through the Lithuania Permanent Representation to the European Union.
- (5) The Commission services request a progress report on the implementation of the recommendations from the Lithuanian authorities and about any significant changes in the set-up of the monitoring systems before the end of 2017. Based on this report the Commission will consider the need for a follow-up verification.
- (6) Finally, the verification team acknowledges the excellent co-operation it received from all persons involved in the activities it performed.

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