

AGREEMENT

Framework for cooperation between the secretariat of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR) and the Management Board of the Information System on Occupational Exposure (ISOE) to coordinate practical arrangements for periodic collection and exchange of data on occupational radiation exposures

Preamble

Whereas:

1. Within the United Nations system, the mandate of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR) is to assess and report the levels, effects and risks of exposure to ionizing radiation from all sources;
2. The United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 913 (X) of 5 December 1955 established UNSCEAR and requested inter alia (i) UNSCEAR to receive and assemble reports on observed levels of ionizing radiation furnished by States members of the United Nations or members of the specialized agencies, and (ii) the specialized agencies to concert with UNSCEAR concerning any work they may be doing or contemplating within the sphere of UNSCEAR's terms of reference to assure proper co-ordination;
3. Over several decades, UNSCEAR has assessed levels and trends of exposure, inter alia of occupational exposures, by: (i) analysing structured data collected directly from United Nations Member States through the UNSCEAR Global Survey on Occupational Radiation Exposure, (ii) analysing structured data collected and provided by other organizations and mechanisms; (iii) compiling and analysing ad hoc data from Member States submitted as national reports to the UNSCEAR secretariat; (iv) mining and compiling ad hoc data in the open literature; and (v) reviewing analyses conducted and published by others;
4. The UNSCEAR evaluations of occupational exposure have been reported to the United Nations General Assembly, subsequently published by the United Nations and made freely available on the UNSCEAR website, and widely used as reference material by the scientific community, government advisory bodies, national and international organizations to provide insight and scientific underpinning of radiation risk assessment and management programmes for workers;

Whereas, moreover:

5. The OECD Nuclear Energy Agency (OECD/NEA), under Article 8(b) of its Statute, is entrusted with encouraging the establishment between its Member countries of joint services for the protection of public health and the prevention of accidents in the nuclear industry;
6. The OECD/NEA Committee on Radiation Protection and Public Health supported the development of an Information System on Occupational Exposure (ISOE) at nuclear facilities within its Member countries, and particularly within nuclear electricity utilities and the national regulatory authorities, or institutions representing them, and that the OECD Steering Committee for Nuclear Energy endorsed its establishment on 2 October 1991;

7. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is authorized, under Article III.A.6 of its Statute to establish standards of safety for protection of health, including such standards for labour conditions, and to provide for the application of these standards. The IAEA has agreed to co-sponsor the ISOE programme and to perform the functions of Technical Centre for designated States members of the IAEA that are not Member countries of the OECD/NEA;

8. The overall operations of ISOE are under the control of the ISOE Management Board with representation from all ISOE Participants (utilities and regulatory bodies). The ISOE Management Board agreed in October 1997 that the IAEA and the OECD/NEA form a Joint Secretariat for ISOE;

9. The ISOE occupational exposure database covers the period from 1992 to the present, and currently includes annual data on occupational exposure levels and trends from operating and shutdown reactors, reported by participating utilities and regulatory authorities;

10. The ISOE occupational exposure information from reactors in operation, shut down or in some stage of decommissioning, includes: annual collective dose and dose distributions for normal operation, maintenance/refuelling outage and unplanned outage periods, and collective doses for certain jobs, tasks and occupational categories, with the annual collection of operational dose data from a well established network of participating utilities at the site, unit, job and task level; and

11. The ISOE operational occupational exposure information that underpins analyses on issues such as dose trends and doses related to certain jobs/tasks is collected from participating utilities by questionnaire (using a standalone database on CD or online versions), and that access to the full ISOE database is restricted to ISOE participants, according to the ISOE Terms and Conditions;

And considering that:

12. The United Nations General Assembly most recently in its resolution 65/96 (2010) encouraged the “International Atomic Energy Agency and other relevant organizations to establish and coordinate with the [UNSCEAR] secretariat the arrangements for periodic collection and exchange of data on radiation exposures of workers...”;

13. The ISOE programme has previously provided a subset of data from its occupational exposure database for inclusion in the UNSCEAR reports on occupational exposure;

14. UNSCEAR, OECD/NEA and IAEA recognize the desirability of maximum cooperation in the statistical field and of minimizing the burdens placed on national Governments and on organizations from which information may be collected, and propose to cooperate to avoid undesirable duplication with respect to the collection, compilation and publication of exposure data for workers at nuclear power plants.

15. Since May 2009, and following the agreement of the ISOE Management Board, the UNSCEAR and ISOE secretariats have been exploring possible data types that could be made publically available to UNSCEAR, with the intent to look for synergies between the two programmes and to make data available as far as appropriate, but not to change existing internal processes, and investigating possible approaches to realize the collection, forwarding and use in an efficient manner of data collected through ISOE to UNSCEAR;

16. Following a formal letter from the UNSCEAR secretariat to the ISOE Management Board in November 2009, the types of information that could be provided to UNSCEAR on a routine basis were indentified, and both secretariats agreed to develop an efficient process the provision of agreed data types;

Therefore,

17. The UNSCEAR and ISOE secretariats have reached an understanding on the practical modalities for the implementation of this framework of cooperation through an exchange of letters in November 2011.

Purpose

18. The purpose of the framework for cooperation is to facilitate systematic and regular provision by ISOE to UNSCEAR of data and information on occupational radiation exposures at nuclear facilities with a view to increasing awareness and deepening understanding among authorities, operators, the scientific community and civil society of the levels and trends of human exposure as a sound basis for informed decision-making on radiation-related issues.

19. The ISOE objective for data collection is consistent with the UNSCEAR objectives as UNSCEAR's evaluations on occupational exposures aim to provide information relevant for policy and decisions regarding the use and management of radiation in the working environment and the ISOE collection, exchange and analysis of information for employees of nuclear installations are to facilitate the implementation of effective dose-management programmes for workers and to apply the ALARA principle.

Roles in the process of data collection and reporting

20. The ISOE and the UNSCEAR secretariats agree to cooperate on the determination of occupational radiation exposures in nuclear power reactors in the future.

21. The ISOE secretariat, under direction from the ISOE Management Board, is responsible for the collection and provision of data on national-level average exposures of nuclear installation employees, and the associated full documentation of the data structure and format.

These specific data include:

- a. Average collective dose over the period (total, average/reactor, average/energy generated);
- b. Average number of reactors over the period;
- c. Average energy generated over the period; and
- d. Totals for each reactor type, based on reported data.

22. The ISOE secretariat will regularly review the types of data provided, and the manner of its provision, and provide feedback to the UNSCEAR secretariat on possible modifications or improvements based on the experience gained under this framework.

23. The UNSCEAR secretariat prepares reports from time to time that refer to the data supplied through ISOE, including progress reports, and maps, graphs and analyses that present the levels and trends of occupational exposure. The UNSCEAR secretariat will share any such reports with the ISOE secretariat for comment in advance and will incorporate clarifications and input if received.

24. UNSCEAR will compile the data obtained through ISOE with data obtained from other sources and publish such data electronically on the internet and/or by other electronic media as an integral part of its regular evaluations of human exposure levels and trends.

25. Each party agrees under this framework for cooperation to appoint a focal point responsible for:

- a. Coordination of the common activities;
- b. Resolving any issues related to data collection;
- c. Providing clarification on data definitions or anomalies with the data;
- d. Contribution to the interpretation and analysis of the data; and
- e. Reviewing the types of data collected.

Financial aspects and joint resource mobilization

26. This framework for cooperation defines in general terms the basis for cooperation but does not constitute a financial obligation to serve as a basis for expenditures. Each party is expected to bear the costs of its own activities to the extent that participation is required and resources are available.

27. Joint activities are subject to the availability of funding for that purpose.

28. Data provided under this framework for cooperation are deemed to be for free public access. Neither party will charge for access to the published data.

Data protection and ownership of intellectual property rights

29. The UNSCEAR secretariat shall not provide the data received from ISOE secretariat to third parties without express written permission from the ISOE Management Board.

30. Each party agrees on data protection principles prohibiting the provision of records that would allow personal data to be identified.

31. The UNSCEAR secretariat will ensure acknowledgement of the ISOE programme as the source of the data in any UNSCEAR reports where ISOE data will be used.

32. The ISOE is the owner of data collected through the ISOE network of utilities.

33. The United Nations will be the owner of data that have been directly confirmed to the UNSCEAR secretariat as valid by United Nations Member States.

34. The United Nations will be the owner of analyses based on the ISOE data, including research reports, tables, indexes, maps, charts and other exhibits. Such analyses are the property of the United Nations and may be publicly shared or posted on a website without restriction.

35. The parties will consult and coordinate any announcements to the media related to the common work, including information products (e.g. news releases, reports, briefing papers, and web pages).

Revision and termination

36. This framework for cooperation shall be subject to revision by agreement between the parties and shall be reviewed not later than three years after it has come into effect.

37. Modification to this framework for cooperation shall be made by issuing a written amendment signed by the parties prior to any changes being implemented.

38. This framework for cooperation may be terminated by any party on 31 December of any year by notice given to the other party not later than 30 September of that year.

Entry into force

39. This framework for cooperation shall come into effect on its approval (by signature) of authorized representatives of the parties.

Signed by



Malcolm J. Cock (Secretary of UNSCEAR)

Signed by



Mr. Gonzague Abela (ISOE Chair)

Date

8 December 2011

Date

5 December 2011