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Radiological Crime Scene Management

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Radiological Crime Scene Management is the process used to ensure safe, secure, effective, and efficient conduct of operations at a radiological crime scene. Managing a radiological crime scene is a key part of responding to a nuclear security event. Evidence collection at a radiological crime scene may share a wide range of characteristics with that of conventional crime scenes, such as evidence search patterns, geographical scene modelling and evidence recording, whether or not explosives are involved.

In order to increase awareness of relevant Member States' representatives on the challenges imposed on the management of crime scenes where nuclear and other radioactive material and/or evidence contaminated with these materials are known to be or suspected of being present, the IAEA has developed under its Nuclear Security Series of publications an Implementing Guide on Radiological Crime Scene Management. The objective of this publication is to provide law enforcement officials, national policy makers, decision makers, local authorities and technical support personnel with guidance on the framework and the main functional elements for radiological crime scene management so that it may be adopted or adapted to meet the needs of the various jurisdictions and competent authorities within each Member State.

This implementing guide addresses the actions needed at a radiological crime scene in order to collect and preserve evidence, but does not cover other aspects of a criminal investigation. It focuses on the framework and functional elements for managing a radiological crime scene that are distinct from any other crime scene. Additionally, it provides guidance on the interface of this topic with the detection of nuclear and other radioactive material, the initiation of response procedures to confirm discovery of material, the declaration of a nuclear security event activating the national response system and on the use of nuclear forensic examinations in support of investigations. However, the guide does not address any of these topics in detail. Furthermore, this publication promotes international cooperation by encouraging States to seek or provide assistance, where appropriate, with regard to developing capabilities or during an investigation of a nuclear security event.

On the basis of this Implementing Guide on Radiological Crime Scene Management, a training curriculum was developed. The training programme aims to acquaint participants with the issues that will likely arise in the course of a criminal investigation involving nuclear and other radioactive material and to enable them to handle such situations in an efficient and effective manner.

An overview of the publication as well as of the training curriculum will be presented.

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