

Enhancing and sustaining regulatory frameworks for nuclear security: a work in progress

If there is one noticeable trend in nuclear security these days, it is the global effort to develop, strengthen and sustain nuclear security regulatory infrastructure. Notwithstanding the level of nuclear advancement, regulatory frameworks of any given country are primary examples illustrating the principle of continuous improvement –we can always do more, better, safer and securer. Even when a comprehensive framework is already in place, the evolving threats and the development of new technologies keep regulators busy since the frameworks need to be regularly assessed and reviewed.

A robust national legislative and regulatory framework lies at the foundation of a State's nuclear security regime. The establishment of adequate nuclear security systems and measures against threats from malicious acts involving nuclear and other radioactive material needs a sound legal basis in order for the systems and measures to be effective, efficient, consistent and sustainable. In a fragmentary international landscape where no single international legal instrument provides a comprehensive listing of nuclear security obligations to draw from, States are in severe need of adequate expertise, resources, assistance and guidance to establish their national requirements. Nuclear security is slowly catching up with nuclear safety in that assistance in sustained regulatory development can no longer be overlooked.

The recent years have seen an expansion of activity focusing on the development of regulations for nuclear security. At the national level, States have been deploying considerable efforts to include nuclear security considerations in their nuclear legislation and regulations, while at the international level initiatives to assist with their development have started to bloom.

The paper will provide an overview of regulatory development for nuclear security throughout the world, regionally and nationally. It will analyse the current trends in regulatory development, while also giving specific examples. It will in particular provide insight into the challenges faced when developing and sustaining national nuclear security regulatory infrastructures as well as propose ideas for addressing these challenges – both at the national and at the international level –and for providing comprehensive support in this area. An overview of the initiatives undertaken to address needs in this regard will also be given. It is the thesis of this paper that enhancing and sustaining regulatory frameworks for the security of nuclear and other radioactive material is a continuous work in progress. There can be no question of setting nuclear security requirements in stone once and for all and there is no one-size-fits-all. For these reasons, identifying ways to strengthen regulatory frameworks for nuclear security concerns all States, be they small fish or big fish in the nuclear pond.

Gender

State

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