

# International Conference on Radioactive Waste Management: Solutions for a Sustainable Future (CN-294)



## International Conference on Radioactive Waste Management: Solutions for a Sustainable Future

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### **WENRA's Safety Reference Levels contribute to continuous improvements and harmonisation of regulatory approaches for radioactive waste management in many European countries**

This paper describes the positive impact of WENRA's Safety Reference Levels (SRLs) in helping to harmonise and improve regulatory approaches for radioactive waste management in many European countries.

The Western European Nuclear Regulators Association (WENRA) is a group comprising the heads of the regulatory bodies of 18 European countries, together with 13 associated members and observers from Europe and the rest of the world. WENRA's aim is to develop a common approach to nuclear safety, and to allow chief nuclear safety regulators in Europe to exchange experience and discuss significant safety issues. WENRA has established three thematic working groups, including the Working Group on Waste & Decommissioning (WGWD) which addresses the regulatory aspects relating to waste, spent fuel and decommissioning matters, and typically comprises the national regulator's head of department for radioactive waste management for each WENRA country.

WENRA has developed six sets of Safety Reference Levels (SRLs), which reflect expected practices agreed by the regulatory authorities to be implemented in the WENRA countries. SRLs are expectations against which each WENRA member country is assessed, and each WENRA member has committed to implement actions to ensure the SRLs are met within its national regulatory framework. SRLs build on, and are complementary to, the IAEA's Safety Standards.

Three of the sets of WENRA SRLs (comprising 224 separate Safety Reference Levels) relate to the processing, storage and disposal of radioactive waste, the focus of this paper. These SRLs are administered by WGWD which gives a rating for each member country's performance against each SRL. Each country undertakes a national self-assessment against each SRL, which is then benchmarked or moderated by the members of WGWD, with a rating of A (fully conforming with SRL), B (not applicable, or SRL addressed satisfactorily in another way) or C (improvements needed). Member countries with C ratings then develop a National Action Plan to improve the rating, usually within a period of 2 to 3 years, and undergo re-benchmarking.

This paper presents the harmonisation approach developed within WGWD, and includes case studies on implementation of WENRA SRLs from diverse countries such as the Czech Republic, Spain, Sweden, France, Ukraine, Slovakia and the UK. The paper concludes with an assessment of the significant progress made by WENRA member countries in harmonising and improving their regulatory approaches for radioactive waste management.

**Do you wish to participate as a Young Professional?**

**Speaker's title**

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## **Do you wish to be considered for a Young Professional grant?**

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