

How knowledge mapping is being used to integrate plans for safe and reliable operations

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For any nuclear program locally or nationally, understanding what knowledge is essential for long-term operations and project delivery enables operators and governments alike to plan for success and manage the risks that could affect a successful outcome.

When prioritizing and planning for scarce knowledge resources it is essential that first we identify what we need to know and when we need to know it. Often different agencies and departments take different approaches to describing their future knowledge needs, ranging from the types of educational qualifications required through to the numbers of experienced personnel in each professional discipline that need to be hired and technology development roadmaps. This approach makes it more difficult to represent all of these highly-related and interdependent requirements in one integrated plan.

Knowledge mapping is a systematic and rigorous analysis tool for identifying the knowledge, competencies, qualifications, skills, information, data, technologies and other knowledge-related resources, when and where the resources will be required and the associated risks.

At Sellafield in the UK we rigorously employ a systematic knowledge mapping tool to develop a long-term knowledge management plan. This tool can be used to generate a range of structured and interrelated knowledge-based resource management plans ranging from national nuclear manpower planning to record retention schedules.

There are now opportunities to ensure consistency in the activities and plans of different departments and agencies, by collaborating on a unified and comprehensive map of knowledge resources. Ultimately this can be extended into a single plan to facilitate a national program of education, training, recruitment, development, research and development and knowledge application through analyzing the underlying knowledge needs. This holistic approach will ensure that we always have the right people with the right knowledge, skills and information in the right place at the right time.

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