



Contribution ID: 34

Type: **oral**

## Acquisition Path Analysis as a Collaborative Activity

*Wednesday 22 October 2014 09:30 (20 minutes)*

In the International Atomic Energy Agency, acquisition path analysis (APA) is indispensable to safeguards implementation.

It is an integral part of both State evaluation process and the development of State level safeguards approaches, all performed through ongoing collaborative analysis of all available safeguards relevant information by State evaluation groups (SEG) with participation of other contributors, as required.

To perform comprehensive State evaluation, to develop and revise State-level safeguards approaches, and to prepare annual implementation plans, the SEG in its collaborative analysis follows accepted safeguards methodology and guidance. In particular, the guide “Performing Acquisition Path Analysis for the Development of a State-level Safeguards Approach for a State with a CSA” is used.

This guide identifies four major steps of the APA process:

1. Consolidating information about the State’s past, present and planned nuclear fuel cycle-related capabilities and infrastructure;
2. Identifying and visually presenting technically plausible acquisition paths for the State;
3. Assessing acquisition path steps (State’s technical capabilities and possible actions) along the identified acquisition paths; and
4. Assessing the time needed to accomplish each identified technically plausible acquisition path for the State.

The paper reports on SEG members’ and other contributors’ experience with APA when following the above steps, including the identification of plausible acquisition pathways, estimation of time frames for all identified steps and determination of the time needed to accomplish each acquisition path. The difficulties that the SEG encountered during the process of performing the APA are also addressed. Feedback in the form of practical suggestions for improving the clarity of the acquisition path step assessment forms and a proposal for software support are also included.

### Country or International Organization

International Atomic Energy Agency

### EPR Number (required for all IAEA-SG staff)

671

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**Session Classification:** Acquisition Path Analysis Methodology