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Collection, Analysis, and Dissemination of Open Source News and Analysis for Safeguards Implementation and Evaluation

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Analysis of all safeguards-relevant information is an essential component of IAEA safeguards and the ongoing State evaluation underlying IAEA verification activities.

In addition to State declared safeguards information and information generated from safeguards activities both in the field and at headquarters, the IAEA collects and analyses information from a wide array of open sources relevant to States' nuclear related activities. A number of these open sources include information that could be loosely categorized as "news": international, regional, and local media; company and government press releases; public records of parliamentary proceedings; and NGO/academic commentaries and analyses. It is the task of the State Factors Analysis Section of the Department of Safeguards to collect, analyse and disseminate news of relevance to support ongoing State evaluation.

This information supports State evaluation by providing the Department with a global overview of safeguards-relevant nuclear developments. Additionally, this type of information can support in-depth analyses of nuclear fuel cycle related activities, alerting State Evaluation Groups to potential inconsistencies in State declarations, and preparing inspectors for activities in the field.

The State Factors Analysis Section uses a variety of tools, including subscription services, news aggregators, a roster of specialized sources, and a custom software application developed by an external partner to manage incoming data streams and assist with making sure that critical information is not overlooked.

When analysing data, it is necessary to determine the credibility of a given source and piece of information. Data must be considered for accuracy, bias, and relevance to the overall assessment. Analysts use a variety of methodological techniques to make these types of judgments, which are included when the information is presented to State Evaluation Groups.

Dissemination of news to appropriate stakeholders within the Agency is a key component of the process. Timely dissemination of news can enable the Department to better allocate resources, identify trends, and quickly react to emerging issues.

This paper provides an overview of current practices across the analytical cycle, the role this information plays in ongoing State evaluation, and efforts to overcome key challenges associated with analysing this specific set of information.

Country or International Organization

IAEA, Department of Safeguards

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Authors: KHALED, Jannah (IAEA, SGIM-ISF); REED, Justin (IAEA, SGIM-ISF)

Co-authors: HEPWORTH, Caroline (IAEA); SERRAT, Javier (IAEA); FERGUSON, Matthew (IAEA); PRIORI, Morena (IAEA); HAMMOND, William (IAEA)

Presenter: KHALED, Jannah (IAEA, SGIM-ISF)

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