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Nuclear Knowledge Management, the IAEA Approach

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Knowledge in an organization is residing in people, processes and technology.

Adequate awareness of their knowledge assets and of the risk of losing them is vital for safe and secure operations of nuclear installations.

Senior managers understand this important linkage, and in the last years there is an increasing tendency in nuclear organizations to implement knowledge management strategies to ensure that the adequate and necessary knowledge is available at the right time, in the right place.

Specific and advanced levels of knowledge are clearly required to achieve and maintain technical expertise, and experience must be developed and be available throughout the nuclear technology lifecycle.

If a nuclear organization does not possess or have access to the required technical knowledge, a full understanding of the potential consequences of decisions and actions may not be possible, and safety, security and safeguards might be compromised.

Effective decision making during design, licensing, procurement, construction, commissioning, operation, maintenance, refurbishment, and decommissioning of nuclear facilities needs to be risk-informed and knowledge-driven.

Nuclear technology is complex and brings with it inherent and unique risks that must be managed to acceptably low levels. Nuclear managers have a responsibility not only to establish adequate technical knowledge and experience in their nuclear organizations but also to maintain it. The consequences of failing to manage the organizations key knowledge assets can result in serious degradations or accidents.

The IAEA Nuclear Knowledge Management (NKM) sub-programme was established more than 10 years ago to support Nuclear Organizations, at Member States request, in the implementation and dissemination of the NKM methodology, through the development of guidance and tools, and by providing knowledge management services and assistance.

The paper will briefly present IAEA understanding of and approach to knowledge management, applied in and to nuclear organizations.

Country or International Organization

IAEA

Primary author: SBAFFONI, Monica (NKM Section - NE Department - IAEA)

Co-author: DE GROSBOIS, John (IAEA)

Presenter: SBAFFONI, Monica (NKM Section - NE Department - IAEA)

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