

# SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF WENRA SAFETY REFERENCE LEVELS: THE WENRA DECOMMISSIONING REPORT

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**Abstract:** The Western European Nuclear Regulators Association (WENRA) was established in 1999. Its Working Group on Waste and Decommissioning (WGWD) has developed Safety Reference Levels (SRL) reports for Decommissioning[1], Storage[2] and Disposal[3] according to the original mandate. WENRA members have experienced a benchmarking process and established National Action Plans (NAP) for the modification of their national legal systems and practices according to benchmarking results. For the decommissioning and disposal reports the NAP have been implemented and results were approved in a follow up benchmarking exercise by WGWD. The whole process is explained for the decommissioning SRLs in this presentation. WGWD is currently working on developing a last SRLs report for waste processing which will complete the comprehensive description of the back-end of the nuclear fuel cycle.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Working Group on Waste and Decommissioning (WGWD) comprises representatives from all 18 members. WGWD choose a holistic view to establish comprehensive SRL-sets for the thematic areas. In each report common safety areas such as safety management or safety verification are supplemented by report-specific safety areas, in case of the decommissioning report Decommissioning Strategy and Planning and Conduct of Decommissioning. Before finally publishing the SRLs WGWD had published the drafted texts, called for stakeholder comments and invited the responding stakeholders to a workshop for discussing their comments and –in some cases- optimizing the SRL-wording.

## 2. METHODS

Each member country had to provide in a self-assessment table evidence from its regulatory system for fulfilment of all 81 SRLs. This information was subject to a panel benchmarking procedure within WGWD which worked in 4 subgroups for this purpose. Figure 1 shows the condensed result of this exercise; A-rating is equivalent to implementation of an SRL in the regulatory system, B-rating indicate rare cases of justified deviations and C-ratings indicate deficiencies.

Figure 1. First benchmarking results by safety issues

## 3. RESULTS

During the following two years WENRA-countries took efforts to improve their regulatory systems to –ideally- cover all identified deficiencies and reported on such activities to the working group. In a follow up “re-benchmarking” these reports of corrective actions have been affirmed by the WGWD. Results are documented in the country fact sheets of part III in the final report version 2.2. Country fact sheets contain a textual description of the corrective actions and a table including the new status and the citation of relevant regulatory texts.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

The most important benefit of the work in WENRA is learning from each other in

- Understanding all facets of a given situation or problem
- Identifying and comparing different ways of regulatory response
- Mutual support and confirmation in identifying appropriate improvements

Nothing can explain in a better way the effectiveness of WENRA work, but the fact that within only 3 years between the first benchmarking and the follow up the great majority of member countries could practically eliminate their C-ratings for the decommissioning SRLs or at least have prepared texts for corrective actions and are close to doing so.

Another more general experience is understanding the variety of regulatory instruments even in Europe which include –in individual countries- acts, laws, ordinances, regulatory guides, regulatory orders, royal decrees or standardized license conditions.

Finally it is to be highlighted that compared to the storage report which describes a static, steadily operated facility the decommissioning report describes a continuous process. It is one of the greatest challenges to properly address this difference but not forget about the common features in editing the SRL-sets for those two reports.

## 5. OUTLOOK

WGWD is planning to establish a last set of SRLs –on waste processing- before end of 2016 and to carry out a similar benchmarking procedure as described also for the disposal and the processing report. From the experience of the first two reports it will be shortly before end of the decade that we might be in a position to report

“mission completed”. In the meantime we will be happy to communicate our results to other organizations such as the IAEA, NEA or –our most direct counterpart- the ENISS.

#### REFERENCES

[1] WENRA, Report: Decommissioning Safety Reference Levels, V. 2.2, Apr. 2015, available on: [www.wenra.org](http://www.wenra.org).

[2] WENRA, Report: Waste and Spent Fuel Storage Safety Reference Levels, V. 2.2, Apr. 2014, available on : [www.wenra.org](http://www.wenra.org).

[3] WENRA, Report: Radioactive Waste Disposal Facilities Safety Reference Levels, Dec. 2014, available on: [www.wenra.org](http://www.wenra.org)

## Country or International Organization

Switzerland

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