

Asian Nuclear Safety Network (ANSN)

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Background

The Asian Nuclear Safety Network (ANSN) was established by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in 2002 to pool, analyse and share nuclear safety-related information, knowledge and experience among the IAEA Member States participating in the Network.

A few years later, as worldwide interest in launching nuclear power plants grew, the focus of the ANSN's activities shifted from knowledge sharing to capacity building to support the initiation of nuclear power programmes in the ANSN member countries, as part of the Vision 2020 adopted in 2009.

Lessons learned from the Fukushima Daiichi accident in 2011 added another aspect to the ANSN's main activities: encouraging the initiative of each participating ANSN member country to enhance nuclear safety infrastructure. The ANSN's activities began to be based on the national plans of individual member countries, with assistance from the IAEA Secretariat, as part of a new ANSN Vision adopted in 2012.

To enhance the efficiency and effective implementation of the ANSN's activities, the Network decided to encourage its member countries to conduct a self-assessment of their safety infrastructure for a nuclear power programme, and to develop National Action Plans (NAPs) that would form the basis of the ANSN Action Plan (the ANSN Vision, adopted in 2018).

In the 20 years since the ANSN's inception, its member countries have recognized capacity growth in the areas of regulatory infrastructure and safety assessment and the expanded application of radiation in diverse fields. This expansion has been accompanied by the emergence of new technologies, leading to changes in policies and focused programmes in the member countries.

At the 34th Steering Committee Meeting of the ANSN, held from 16–19 April 2024, the Committee agreed to amend and consolidate the existing Terms of Reference (ToR¹) of the ANSN to better reflect and respond to evolving conditions within the member countries. Consequently, these ToR shall supersede all previous versions.

In this context, the ANSN member countries further agreed to expand the technical scope of the ANSN beyond nuclear safety to encompass and specifically address radiation safety and nuclear security. The ANSN member countries also reaffirmed the Network's function as a

¹ These are the ANSN ToR, the ANSN Steering Committee ToR, and the ANSN Plenary ToR, which were agreed in May 2018.

platform for knowledge networking and cooperation among professionals and organizations in its member countries.

Vision

The ANSN serves as a sustainable regional cooperation platform aimed at achieving a high level of nuclear safety, radiation safety and nuclear security in the East and South Asian region.

Objectives

The ANSN aims to support the achievement of a high level of nuclear safety, radiation safety and nuclear security at the regional level in line with the IAEA safety standards and security guidance documents, including by:

- Serving as a platform for collaboration and the development of strategies for addressing challenges in the region;
- Providing forums for sharing experiences and knowledge to identify best practices applicable to the region;
- Coordinating and implementing activities, including capacity building initiatives; and
- Developing and pooling professionals in relevant areas within the region.

Membership

The ANSN shall be open to national regulatory bodies, Technical and Scientific Support Organizations (TSOs), and organizations in the field of nuclear and/or radiation safety and/or security in the countries of the East and South Asian region. Each of these countries must be a Member State of the IAEA and a State Party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Organizations engaged in nuclear and/or radiation safety and/or security from countries outside the East and South Asian region, and international organizations interested in supporting the ANSN, may be granted observer status on the ANSN Steering Committee, subject to the Committee's agreement.

Organizations seeking to join the ANSN must submit a written application through the ANSN Secretariat at the IAEA. The application should include a designated contact point for the ANSN.

Operation Structure

The ANSN shall be governed by the Steering Committee, which may establish working groups to support its work.

The Steering Committee

The Steering Committee shall consist of one representative from each ANSN member country, senior representatives from the national regulatory bodies or TSOs of the ANSN member countries. If necessary, the member countries may nominate observers to assist the Steering

Committee member from their respective national regulatory bodies or TSOs, who shall not participate in the discussions or make decisions.

Nominations for Steering Committee membership or observer status shall be submitted in writing through the ANSN Secretariat at the IAEA. The member countries are responsible for notifying the ANSN Secretariat at the IAEA of any change in personnel.

Steering Committee members shall demonstrate a strong commitment to the objectives of the ANSN, attend the Committee's meetings and contribute to its work. The Committee shall convene at least once a year in a physical, virtual or hybrid format.

The responsibilities of the Steering Committee include, but are not limited to:

- Approval of multiyear and/or annual ANSN work plans;
- Review of progress in implementing the ANSN work plan;
- Coordination, facilitation and mobilization of resources for the implementation of the ANSN work plan;
- Identification of topics requiring information exchange and/or regional coordination efforts, and facilitation of mutual information sharing on regional initiatives;
- Decision making on key orientations and oversight of activities developed under the ANSN;
- Approval of the establishment of working groups;
- Approval of annual reports and technical documents developed by the ANSN;
- Approval of revisions to the ANSN's ToR; and
- Promotion of closer cooperation and coordination with other international organizations and regional networks/forums.

A Chairperson is elected based on consensus among Steering Committee members and shall serve a term of three years. The Chairperson may appoint a Vice Chairperson if necessary. The Chairperson and Vice Chairperson can serve a maximum of two consecutive terms on the Steering Committee. The Chairperson shall preside over Committee meetings and act as the spokesperson of the ANSN, as required.

Working Groups

The Steering Committee may establish working groups, comprising experts from the ANSN members and/or other recognized experts, as necessary, to support the planning and implementation of the ANSN work plan. These groups may develop their respective ToR, setting out the membership criteria, working modalities and work plan, subject to approval by the Steering Committee.

Secretariat

The IAEA Department of Nuclear Safety and Security shall serve as the Secretariat for the ANSN. It shall develop and maintain the ANSN information technology (IT) platform and support the Networks' activities in this role, subject to the availability of resources.

Working Modalities

The ANSN work plan shall list the main objectives and activities to be implemented in the upcoming year as well as in the longer term.

An annual report shall present the complete, ongoing and planned work of the ANSN.

The work of the ANSN shall be organized and implemented in accordance with these ToR. The Steering Committee may establish additional rules of procedure if necessary.

The ANSN IT platform shall support the implementation of its objectives through the sharing of knowledge and information. It will be hosted within the IAEA Global Nuclear Safety and Security Network website, and will include a collaborative workspace with access restricted to the ANSN member countries.