TERMS OF REFERENCE

Global Nuclear Safety and Security Communication Network (GNSSCOM)

A. BACKGROUND

The IAEA promotes the IAEA Fundamentals Safety Principles (IAEA Safety Standards No. SF-1) Principle 2: Role of Government states: “An effective legal and governmental framework for safety, including an independent regulatory body, must be established and sustained. [3.10.] The regulatory body must: Set up appropriate means of informing parties in the vicinity, the public and other interested parties, and the information media about the safety aspects (including health and environmental aspects) of facilities and activities and about regulatory processes; Consult parties in the vicinity, the public and other interested parties, as appropriate, in an open and inclusive process.”

Furthermore, communication issues and events surrounding the Fukushima Daiichi accident gave rise to the IAEA Action Plan and to the Report by the Director General on the Fukushima Daiichi Accident\(^1\). Specifically, Action 12\(^2\) addressed the issue of national regulatory bodies to enhance transparency and effectiveness of communication, and improve dissemination of information.\(^3,4\) Additionally, various parts of the Fukushima report itself emphasized the importance of transparency, openness, public trust, and effective strategies to disseminate nuclear safety and security information.

The IAEA General Conference in its resolution (op. para 5, GC(59)/RES/9) encouraged the IAEA Member States to join relevant regional safety fora and networks (e.g., GNSSCOM), and to participate and work in cooperation with other members so that the benefits of membership can be fully realized.

In addition, the latest safety resolution of the IAEA General Conference (op. para. 8, GC(66)/RES/8\(^5\)), encouraged Member States to join relevant regional safety fora and networks, and to participate and work in cooperation with other members so that the benefits of membership can be fully realized and requests the Secretariat to continue to assist Member States in the establishment, maintenance and functioning of such fora and networks.

In the same resolution (op. para. 108, GC(66)/RES/6), the IAEA General Conference requested the Secretariat to support and coordinate regional and inter-regional efforts for the sharing of knowledge, expertise and experience on safety-relevant issues, and encouraged Member States to participate in knowledge-sharing platforms such as the Global Nuclear Safety and Security Network (GNSSN) for efficient information sharing and effective cooperation.

Nuclear security

The IAEA nuclear security programme includes a wide-range spectrum of activities that serve the vision of a secure world and the sustainable development through the peaceful use of nuclear technology and science.

\(^1\) See: Fukushima Daiichi Report

\(^2\) See: IAEA Action Plan

\(^3\) See: IEM Effective Regulators

\(^4\) See: IEM Effective Communications

One of the objectives of the IAEA’s nuclear security programme is to play the central role of facilitating and enhancing international cooperation and increasing visibility and awareness through communication on nuclear security.

Specifically, the IAEA supports international cooperation in nuclear security through assisting Member States in exchanging and sharing nuclear security information on a voluntary basis, with due regard to the protection of confidential information relevant to nuclear security. In accordance with the Nuclear Security Plan 2022-2025 (GC(65)/24) and the latest Nuclear Security Resolution (GC(66)/RES/7), the IAEA promotes the use of information sharing mechanisms managed by the Agency with the consent of Members States, such as information provided in accordance with Parties’ obligations under the CPPNM and its Amendment; information provided through voluntary commitments such as the Incident and Trafficking Database (ITDB) and the NSSC Network; and information provided as part of the IPPAS good practices database.

Also, the IAEA offers to Member States, solely upon their request, its assistance in capacity building and in facilitating information exchange and sharing of information, as appropriate.

The IAEA General Conference in the Nuclear Security Resolution (op. para. 18, GC(66)/RES/7), “Takes note that regional organizations of regulatory authorities can strengthen regional cooperation through the exchange of information, experience and technical expertise, and encourages the Secretariat to provide assistance to such fora, on request”.

In the same resolution (op. para 19, GC(66)/RES/7 ) “Requests the Secretariat to continue improving communication with the public and Member States about its nuclear security activities, such as advisory services, development of non-legally binding guidance, assistance and training, and how these activities assist Member States to improve nuclear security globally, and welcomes the efforts by Member States to contribute to raising the awareness of the Agency’s nuclear security activities, with due respect to confidentiality”.

In addition, the Nuclear Security Series (NSS) promotes the effective communications within an organization, information security, as well as coordination with off-site organizations as essential elements of the nuclear security culture (NSS No. 7, Nuclear Security Culture). The Nuclear Security Guidance also includes specific provisions related to the security of nuclear information (NSS No. 23-G, Security of Nuclear Information).

**B. INTRODUCTION**

Established in 2016, GNSSCOM focuses on building capacity for communication practitioners and relevant experts of national regulatory authorities and their technical support organizations worldwide. Its aim is to improve the dissemination of information, enhance transparency and communication effectiveness of safety and security related technical and technological information to the public, media, internal and external parties, as well as governmental and legislative stakeholders, in non-emergency situations.

This network enables members to gain access to the latest communication trends, insights, innovations, good practices, resources, toolkits, guides and knowledge.

Scope of GNSSCOM:
• The aim of GNSSCOM is to provide a global resource to assist communication professionals and technical experts in communicating effectively during non-emergency situations.

• GNSSCOM activities are focused on;
  a) Sharing knowledge, expertise, lessons learned and good practices in communication;
  b) Promoting capacity building in communications through networking activities;
  c) Developing, implementing and evaluating strategies and processes for effective communication and consultation with stakeholders;
  d) Providing access to communication professionals, tools, materials, resources, knowledge databases, and publications to further enhance competence in communications.
  e) Encouraging dialogue to foster close working relationships and work on communication related issues.

• The GNSSCOM website is the primary interface for members to connect, share and collaborate.

D. MEMBERSHIP

All nominations for Steering Committee membership should be submitted to the GNSSCOM secretariat via the respective Member State’s permanent mission to the IAEA. The background of each member will be considered to strive for a balance between representatives with academic, industry, and government experience. Additionally, consideration will be given to ensuring gender and geographic diversity amongst the experts appointed to the Steering Committee.

E. STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee comprises a maximum of 18 communication experts and or practising professionals representing various Member States, associated networks as well as international organisations involved in nuclear safety and security communications. Steering Committee members have in depth know-how and practical experience in the various multi-disciplinary aspects of communications.

• Steering Committee members are nominated by the respective Member State and serve for a period of three years subject to extension or renewal as required.

• If a Steering Committee member cannot participate in a meeting/event, they may designate an alternate participant for a particular meeting/event with prior consent of the Steering Committee Chair.

• The Steering Committee will have a Chair and Vice-Chair. The Chair and Vice-Chair are nominated by members of the Steering Committee and appointed by the DDG-NS to serve for a three-year term. The Chair and Vice-Chair can serve a maximum of two consecutive terms on the Steering Committee.

• The role of the Chair and Vice-Chair are to;
  ➢ Chair meetings and fulfil obligations of the Steering Committee.
  ➢ Encourage members to provide input throughout the meeting and ensure that decisions or recommendations are adequately resolved and agreed upon by the members.
➢ Prior to the meeting, provide input and approve the agenda in consultation with the designated IAEA secretariat.
➢ Review meeting reports and ensure action items are aligned to achieving GNSSCOM objectives.
➢ Work with the IAEA Project Officer where necessary to advance the objectives of the GNSSCOM.
➢ Represent the GNSSCOM at network meetings, events, conference and workshops when needed.

- Attendance to GNSSCOM meetings are mandatory for Steering Committee members. Additional participants may be invited to speak or observe at the discretion of the Chair, Vice-Chair and the designated IAEA GNSSCOM Secretariat.
- The Steering Committee shall meet at least once a year or as needed.

F. FUNCTIONS of the Steering Committee

The Steering Committee provides guidance, direction and advice on GNSSCOM activities to the Deputy Director General, Head of the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security (DDG-NS) and other IAEA officials. The Steering Committee provides direction and practical guidance for ensuring the effectiveness of the GNSSCOM network, as well as helping to advertise and promote the activities, objectives, and mission of the GNSSCOM to stakeholders.

The specific functions of the Steering Committee include:

- Develop and approve, the GNSSCOM strategic plan as needed;
- Review, revise and update the GNSSCOM Strategic Plan as needed;
- In consultation with the DDG-NS, develop and approve the annual work plan;
- Review and update the workplan;
- If required, the Steering Committee may establish working groups to deal with emerging issues and specific tasks;
- Advise the DDG-NS on the human and financial resources needed for the implementation of the GNSSCOM Strategic Plan, as well as considerations on how to ensure the long-term sustainability of activities in support of GNSSCOM objectives;
- Periodically review and provide recommendations and guidance to the IAEA on how best to utilize technology and the GNSSCOM IT infrastructure to meet the objectives of the GNSSCOM;
- The Steering Committee reports annually on GNSSCOM activities and progress, and may submit recommendations to the DDG-NS. The report shall be made available on the GNSSCOM website;
- Notwithstanding paragraph I, due to the constantly evolving external environment, in consultation with the IAEA, the Steering Committee may amend/update the TOR, as appropriate, to ensure relevance.
- Provide communications advice and support to other networks as and when applicable;
G. SECRETARIAT

The secretariat and administration resources will be provided by the IAEA. The establishment and operation of the GNSSCOM Secretariat is entrusted to the IAEA, which will identify premises and infrastructure necessary for its work. The Secretariat will be responsible for:

a) Maintaining the list of GNSSCOM members and their contact information;

b) Maintaining the list of Steering Committee members and informing the Committee and their Member States two months prior to a lapse in Committee membership;

c) Coordinating GNSSCOM meetings as required and keeping and maintaining records of the meetings;

d) Developing and maintaining the GNSSCOM website;

e) Providing members with website access;

f) Facilitating interaction with other networks and advisory groups on relevant topics as appropriate;

g) Informing the Steering Committee on communication challenges in Member States and proposing activities to address them as they arise;

h) Providing a calendar of the GNSSCOM activities and other relevant events.

i) Arranging Steering Committee meetings through notifications issued by the IAEA Secretariat.

H. FINANCING

The expenses of GNSSCOM members attending meetings of GNSSCOM and other related meetings, whenever possible, are expected to be covered by the members themselves or may be supported by national or international organizations.

The activities to be carried out by the GNSSCOM Secretariat under these Terms of Reference are subject to the availability of appropriate funds, personnel and other resources.

I. REVIEW

These terms of reference will be reviewed every 4 years or as needed.