

TERMS OF REFERENCE

TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SUPPORT ORGANIZATION FORUM (TSOF)

Background

The International Conference on Challenges Faced by Technical and Scientific Support Organizations (TSOs) in Enhancing Nuclear Safety and Security, which was convened by the IAEA and held in Tokyo, Japan from 25 to 29 October 2010, concluded that “*The IAEA should foster the establishment of a forum dedicated to nuclear safety infrastructure development issues related to scientific and technical support. Such a ‘TSO Forum’ would meet regularly in between the international TSO conferences, establish close working relations with the Regulatory Cooperation Forum (RCF), and operate in conjunction with established regional TSO cooperation structures as well as with the NEA/CSNI on science related issues...*”

Objectives and Scope

The objective of the TSO Forum (TSOF) is to encourage open dialogue and sharing of scientific and technical information and tools, related to nuclear and radiation safety and security among TSOs from participating IAEA Member States and to contribute to the worldwide development and harmonization of practices.

TSOF activities are focused on the development, enhancement and sustainability of technical and scientific capabilities supporting regulatory functions, thereby strengthening the nuclear and radiation safety and security infrastructure.

The scope of the TSOF includes:

- a) Strengthening the role of TSOs and their global coordination and collaboration in the process of expanding or embarking on a nuclear programme;
- b) Promoting coordination and collaboration among the IAEA Member States to foster scientific and technical capacity building including education and training, research and development;
- c) Sharing nuclear safety and security experiences and communicating lessons learned including sharing feedback on the use and the development of IAEA Safety Standards and Nuclear Security Guidance publications, and other appropriate tools.

Membership of the TSOF and IAEA Secretariat Support

The membership of the TSOF is open to TSOs of all Member States of the IAEA supporting regulatory functions, and international & regional organizations and associations involved in regulatory activities. The TSO can either be an organization or embedded within an organization i.e. an organizational unit within the Regulatory Body

Each participating member assumes its own costs. However, subject to the availability of resources, the IAEA Secretariat will facilitate and support the activities of the TSOF and its Steering Committee, including by developing and maintaining the TSOF-website.

TSOF Steering Committee

A Steering Committee provides advice on the policies and strategies for the TSOF. In particular, the Steering Committee proposes plans, monitors their implementation and evaluates the results of TSOF activities and feeds them back to the TSOF for continuous improvement.

The Steering Committee appoints the TSOF's Chairperson and Vice Chairperson for a three-year period.

The membership in the Steering Committee is defined and reviewed by the TSOF every three years.

Working Methods

- a) TSOF activities are guided by a collaborative approach emphasising openness and transparency, in order to avoid duplication of activities from other mechanisms also engaged in TSO support.
- b) The Steering Committee meets at least once per year.
- c) A Programme Plan will be implemented by the TSOF and continuously updated by the IAEA Secretariat in consultation with the TSOF Steering Committee to further the objectives of the TSOF.
- d) The results of TSOF activities are evaluated and fed back to the TSOF for continuous improvement.
- e) The TSOF may establish working groups to deal with specific tasks within its scope of activities.
- f) As part of the Global Nuclear Safety and Security Network (GNSSN) that is coordinated by the IAEA and supported by a website maintained by the IAEA, the TSOF will share information through the website and promote the work of the TSOF and its Steering Committee.
- g) TSOF members and their representatives are not allowed to disclose any confidential or protected information shared within TSOF without the agreement of the owner.