

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 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...” The event at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Station in 2011, and the subsequent Ministerial Conference at the IAEA in 2015, further highlighted the need of a TSO Forum.

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 worldwide. The TSO can either be an organization or embedded i.e. an organizational unit within the Regulatory Body. The Forum promotes coordination and collaboration among the TSOF Member States 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, including countries in the process of expanding or embarking on a nuclear programme;
- b) Promoting coordination and collaboration among the Member States to foster scientific and technical capacity building including education and training, and research & development;
- c) Sharing safety and security experience and communicate lessons learned including feedback on the use and the development of IAEA Safety Standards and Security publications, including 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, subject to endorsement of the TSOF Steering Committee.

Each participating Member State 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 establishing and maintaining the TSOF-website.

TSOF Steering Committee

A Steering Committee is set up to provide advice on policies and strategies for the forum. In particular it proposes plans, monitors their implementation and evaluate the results of TSOF activities and feeds them back to the forum for continuous improvement.

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

The Membership in the Steering Committee is defined and reviewed by the TSOF every two years.

Working Methods

- a) TSOF activities are guided by a collaborative approach stressing openness and transparency, in order to avoid duplication of activities from other supporting frameworks.
- b) The Steering Committee meets at least once per year
- c) A Programme Plan will be implemented by the forum and continuously updated by the IAEA Secretariat in consultation with the TSOF Steering Committee to further meet the objectives of the TSOF.
- d) The results of TSOF activities are evaluated and fed back to the forum for continuous improvement.
- e) Working groups to deal with specific tasks may be established by the forum.
- f) A website as part of the Global Nuclear Safety and Security Network (GNSSN) is maintained to share information and promote work within the TSOF and its Steering Committee.
- g) TSOF members and their representatives are not allowed to disclose any protected information without agreement of the owner.