
Question 1: What is the Small Modular Reactor Regulators' Forum (SMR RF)?

The SMR RF is a regulator-to-regulator entity that promotes the international collaboration and brings together experienced regulatory bodies to identify and address key SMR-related challenges regarding regulatory and licensing issues.

The SMR RF acts as a peer-to-peer platform, where experts work together on the development of consensus-based documents on technical and regulatory issues of interest to Forum Members that can inform changes, if necessary, to requirements and regulatory practices.

Question 2: Why and how was the SMR RF created?

The increasing global interest in small modular reactors (SMRs) and, consequently, the importance of international collaboration on issues associated with regulation and licensing of SMRs, has given rise to the need to establish an international forum for regulatory bodies to discuss SMR-related issues. This idea was first raised in mid-2012 after bilateral discussions between the USA and Canada.

In 2013, at the International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles (INPRO) Dialogue Forum on Licensing and Safety Issues for Small and Medium-sized Reactors, held in Vienna, explicit interest to evaluate and discuss the benefits of forming a regulators' forum that would specifically address regulatory issues in safety and licensing of SMRs was expressed by several IAEA Member States. In response, two consultancy meetings, facilitated by the IAEA, were held in Vienna in 2014, and resulted in the agreement to create the SMR RF, initially as a 2-year pilot. The technical activities of the SMR RF working groups were launched in 2015.

Question 3: Is there a written agreement/contract among the SMR RF Members?

Yes.

The Terms of Reference (ToR) are agreed by the SMR RF Steering Committee. Any changes to the ToR are agreed by consensus.

The quorum for the SMR RF Steering Committee meetings is half of its Members plus one, including the Chairperson or the Vice-Chairperson. Decisions of the SMR RF Steering Committee are adopted by consensus of the Members present at the meeting, whereby consensus is considered reached in the absence of substantiated objections.

Question 4: What are the SMR RF objectives?

The SMR RF objective is to share SMR regulatory knowledge and experience among the Members and other stakeholders to:

- Develop common positions based on identification and discussion of key safety issues that may challenge regulatory reviews associated with SMRs and, if possible, approaches for their resolution;
- Encourage enhanced nuclear safety and security;
- Facilitate international cooperation among regulators performing SMR-related assessments;
- Facilitate efficient, robust and thorough regulatory decisions;
- Advise the IAEA on the need for revision or development of new IAEA publications on safety and security of SMR.

Question 5: What are the SMR RF outcomes?

The SMR RF outcomes include:

- Common position statements on regulatory (policy and technical) issues;
- Suggestions for revisions, or drafting of, IAEA publications, especially the IAEA Safety Standards regarding SMRs;
- Generation and sharing of information that regulators may use to enhance their regulatory framework and regulatory activities;
- Description of regulatory challenges and discussion on paths forward; and
- Suggestions for high level issues to be raised to international codes and standards organizations.

Question 6: Is the SMR RF part of the IAEA?

No. The SMR RF is an independent regulator-to-regulator entity, with its own organizational structure, membership and leadership.

The IAEA's participation in the SMR RF was considered at the time of the Forum's creation due to the IAEA's ability to provide a long-term vision to maximize Member States' participation and to provide an efficient means to apply lessons learned from discussion into the IAEA global safety framework.

The IAEA serves as the Scientific Secretariat and, by this virtue, is a Member of the SMR RF Steering Committee. The Scientific Secretariat has, among others, the responsibility to promote the Forum, its activities and outputs, and to support the SMR RF Steering Committee and Working Groups in achieving the Forum's objectives.

Question 7: How many and who are the SMR RF Members?

As of March 2024, the 12 SMR RF Members are:

- Canada
- China
- Czech Republic
- Finland
- France
- Japan
- Netherlands
- Republic of Korea
- Russian Federation
- South Africa
- United Kingdom
- United States

Question 8: How to become an SMR RF Member?

The Forum is a regulator-to-regulator entity (the regulator may choose to be represented by a Technical support Organization (TSO)). Membership of the Forum is open to all IAEA Member States able to contribute in a meaningful manner to the work of its Working Groups (WGs).

The work being conducted is generally of a complex nuclear safety nature with a focus on SMRs that requires experience in:

- Multidisciplinary technical assessment across multiple areas of safety;
- Application of defence-in-depth in design and safety analysis; and
- Use of risk informed methodologies in regulatory decision making.

In particular, if a Member State is a SMR technology holder or developer, has operating experience or already has commitments for new build or firm plans to have commitments for licensing in the near future, it may apply for membership of the Forum, which will then be subject to an approval process (by the Forum's Steering Committee).

Membership presupposes a commitment to devote adequate resources, with appropriate experience and knowledge base, to ensure that the Forum's purpose and objectives can be fully achieved.

There is also an annual financial contribution provided by each Forum Member (see Q 12).

Question 9: Can international organizations or an IAEA Member State participate in the SMR RF activities without being a Member?

Yes.

International and regional organizations that have expressed interest may request the SMR RF Steering Committee to be granted the status of Observer. Organizations and any other relevant entities working on topics relevant to the Forum may, on occasion, be invited to participate in SMR RF WGs activities.

Currently, the SMR RF has three permanent Observers:

- Joint Research Centre of the European Commission (EC JRC);
- Nuclear Energy Agency of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD NEA);
- Cooperation in Reactor Design Evaluation and Licensing Working Group of the World Nuclear Association (WNA CORDEL).

Observers may participate in the Forum's Working Groups and are granted a read-only access to the Forum's restricted website. However, their participation in the Steering Committee's activities is limited to the Steering Committee Plenaries only.

The IAEA Member States can participate as observers to a single combined meeting of the Steering Committee and Working Groups prior to submitting a request to join the Forum. A positive decision by the Forum's Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson is considered sufficient for allowing such participation.

Question 10: When and where are SMR RF meetings held?

The SMR RF regular biannual meetings are usually held in hybrid format in Vienna, in spring (around April) and in autumn (around November/December). In the past, some meetings were also held in virtual or in-person only formats. The Forum's Members can volunteer to host its regular meetings. These meetings are organized by the Scientific Secretariat.

The SMR RF Steering Committee also holds ad-hoc meetings. These are usually virtual.

The SMR RF Working Groups are also encouraged to meet in-between regular meetings, using virtual meetings or calls.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

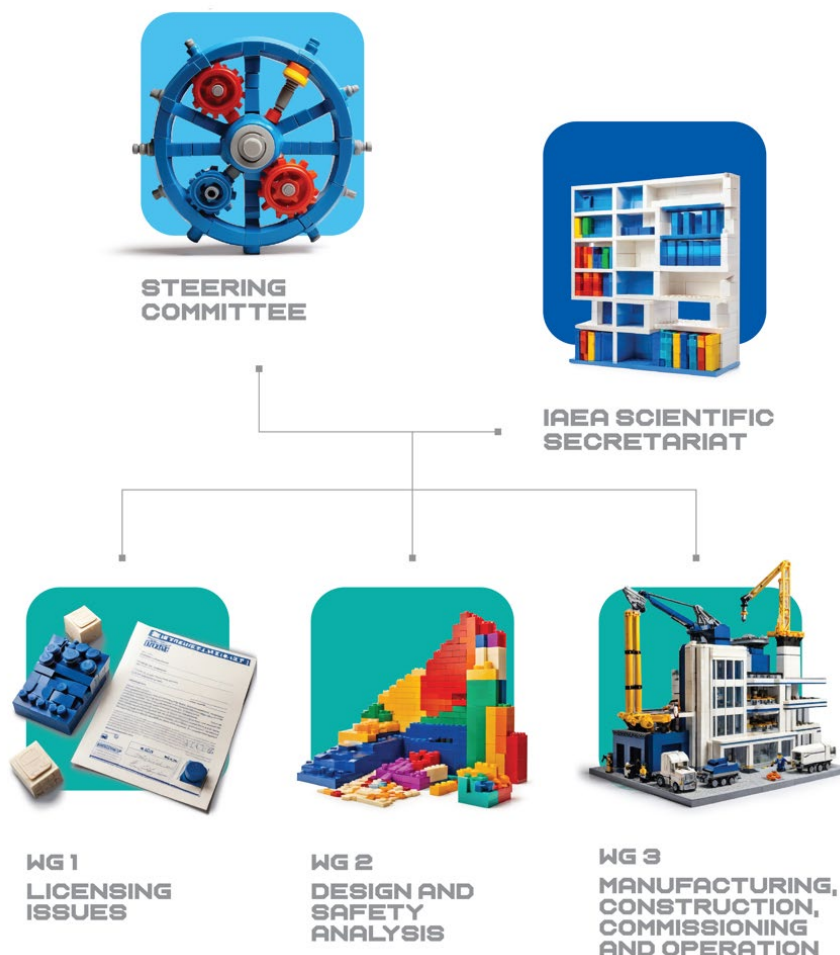
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Question 11: What is the SMR RF Structure? What is the current SMR RF leadership?

The SMR RF Organizational Structure is currently comprised of:

- Steering Committee;
- The task-specific technical Working Groups (WGs);
- The Scientific Secretariat, as part of the Steering Committee, provided by the IAEA.

Based on the complexity of the topics to be developed, the SMR RF Steering Committee decides on the best arrangement for the technical SMR RF Working Groups (WGs). Currently, the SMR RF is organized as follows:



A short bio of the SMR RF Chairs and Working Group (WG) Chairs can be found at the **Who's who** menu.

Since 2022, Ms Paula Calle Vives has been the SMR RF Scientific Secretary. Ms Calle Vives is a Senior Nuclear Safety Officer and the New Technologies Technical Lead at the Regulatory Activities Section of the IAEA Division of Nuclear Installation Safety (RAS/NSNI).

Question 12: What is the required financial contribution made by the SMR RF Members?

In financial terms, the Forum is supported through annual contributions of approximately 30,000 – 40,000 euros/year from each Forum Member. The annual contributions should be received by the Secretariat by 31 December of each year and the Steering Committee will follow up on those contributions in line with the Policy on Non-Contributing Members. Forum Members finance their own participation in the Forum's regular biannual meetings.

In case the financial extra-budgetary contribution constitutes a burden for a specific contributing Forum Member due to legal restrictions, the SMR RF Steering Committee may accept, on a case-by-case basis, proposals from respective Forum Members, with the agreement of the Scientific Secretariat, of contributions in-kind. These contributions in-kind should be in the format of assignment of a cost-free expert to the IAEA for one year per year of contribution, from the respective Forum Member, to work in the NSNI/RAS on tasks assigned by the RAS Section Head.

Every three years, an evaluation should take place to assess the Forum's performance and to determine its further financial support.

Question 13: How are the SMR RF financial contributions used?

The IAEA will use these extrabudgetary funds to provide the following support services:

- IAEA staff member costs, both salary and travel needed to participate in the Forum (both general and professional staff) and promote the Forum's activities;
- Support for specific activities as necessary, such as consultants from academia to support SMR RF WG research;
- Support for communications, including the website support required to maintain and update the Forum's public and restricted websites; and
- Support the organization of educational workshops to promote the work of the Forum and support capacity-building.

Question 14: What are the SMR RF outputs? Where to find them? Are there any costs involved?

The SMR RF produces interim and final phase reports, which are consensus-based documents on technical and regulatory SMR-related issues. These are publicly available and can be found on the SMR RF official IAEA webpage.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

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Any inquiries may be authorized by the Secretariat using the following template:

The SMRRF SC is pleased to grant you the permission to reproduce excerpts from “_____ Report” to the extent and for the purposes detailed in your e-mail (or letter). We request that you kindly give credit to the SMR RF for the reproduction of its material in your publication.

Question 15: Are the SMR RF reports considered IAEA safety publications?

No. The IAEA Safety Standards and other publications serve as reference for the SMR RF discussion and its common positions, but the key findings developed by the SMR RF Working Groups are produced by consensus by the Forum’s experts and based on their own experiences. The SMR RF reports also have their own style and formatting and are reviewed by the SMR RF permanent Observers and approved by the SMR RF Steering Committee in a process independent from the IAEA.

Question 16: How does the SMR RF Secretariat disseminate main outcomes of the Forum?

The key challenges identified, and main common positions developed by the SMR RF Working Groups are disseminated through:

- the publication of the interim and final phase reports on the SMR RF official IAEA webpage;
- the SMR RF webinars, open to experts and participants from the IAEA Member States as well as a wider general public wishing to have a better understanding of SMR-related topics;
- the SMR RF education workshops (see Q 17);
- the SMR RF Newsletter;
- the participation and contribution of SMR RF representatives/SMR RF Secretariat in events and activities organized by other organizations. The decision regarding such involvement is made by the SMR RF Steering Committee by consensus.

Question 17: Does SMR RF organize any educational events?

Yes. The SMR RF organizes regular regional educational workshops (EWS) to promote its work by sharing its common positions on SMR-related regulatory issues and support capacity-building. EWS are aimed at regulatory bodies in countries embarking on a nuclear programme or expanding their nuclear programme and considering deploying SMRs in the short and medium term.

The list of conducted and the upcoming EWS can be found at the **Regional Educational Workshops** webpage.

Question 18: How can one participate in the SMR RF educational workshops?

The SMR RF Secretariat will send formal invitation to nominate candidates to target IAEA Member States (MS). After receiving such an invitation, MS will conduct an internal selection/nomination process, and the proposed candidatures will be communicated to the SMR RF Secretariat through the official channels. The SMR RF Secretariat will perform selection and issue individual invitations to the accepted candidates.

Question 19: Can any IAEA Member State host an SMR RF educational workshop?

Depending on the target region for a given workshop, the SMR RF Secretariat usually approaches one or several IAEA Member States (MS) to invite them to host the event in question.

The MS are also welcome to proactively express interest in hosting the SMR RF workshops to the SMR RF Secretariat, who will inform the Steering Committee accordingly. The Host MS is expected to provide suitable premises and facilities. A Host Government Agreement between the Host Country and the IAEA serves as the basis for event organization.

Question 20: Does SMR RF cooperate with other international organizations/entities?

Yes. The organizations/entities the SMR RF expects to interface with include:

i. Regulatory forums:

- the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)/ Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA);

- the Regulatory Cooperation Forum (RCF);
 - the European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group (ENSREG);
 - the Western European Nuclear Regulators Association (WENRA).
- ii. Industry forums:
- Generation IV International Forum (GIF);
 - World Nuclear Association (WNA) - Cooperation in Reactor Design Evaluation and Licensing (CORDEL);
 - the EU SMR Industrial Alliance;
 - the International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles (INPRO);
 - the European Utility Requirements (EUR).

The SMR RF may, on occasion, invite selected representatives of these organizations/entities or any other relevant ones to participate in its activities.

Furthermore, in accordance with the SMR RF Terms of Reference, the SMR RF may engage in other activities under its co-ordination or with its participation or contribution, as follows:

- Upon a proposal from an international organization or by the SMR RF Steering Committee or individual Forum's Member(s), the Forum can be involved in activities carried out under its co-ordination or with its participation or contribution in the form of independent expert advice. Such activities shall not contradict the Forum's stated objectives and shall contribute to its stated outcomes.
- The decision regarding such involvement shall be made by the SMR RF Steering Committee by consensus, whereby consensus is considered reached in the absence of substantiated objections within a specified period of time.
- The detailed modalities of the SMR RF involvement in such activities shall be decided upon and be subject to the approval by the Steering Committee by consensus.

Question 21: How does the SMR RF contribute to the IAEA Nuclear Harmonization and Standardization Initiative (NHSI)?

Recognition of the SMR RF role and of the expertise and experience of its Members informed an invitation in June 2022 for the Forum to lead the work of one of the NHSI Regulatory Track (RT) working groups.

During the NHSI Phase I, the Forum led the NHSI WG3 tasked with developing processes for leveraging other regulatory bodies' reviews and for enabling regulators to work together during collaborative reviews. The Forum's Licensing Issues WG has served as the main

organizational modality for the NHSI WG3, with its focus, membership and schedule adjusted accordingly. The main output of the WG3, in the form of an IAEA TECDOC, which will follow the standard IAEA publication process, and which will acknowledge the contribution of the Forum, is expected in 2025.

For NHSI Phase II, the SMR RF has agreed to continue its partnership with the NHSI RT to develop a Regulatory Cooperation Toolkit to aid implementation of NHSI processes developed during NHSI Phase I.

The Forum does not bear direct additional costs associated with external NHSI participants. The leading role of the Forum in the NHSI RT does not preclude participation of the Forum's experts in the other NHSI activities, which may be required by the Forum Members' organizations.

Question 22: Are there any confidentiality arrangements in place?

Each SMR RF Member shares their regulatory experiences and lessons learned within the scope of the Forum. In addition, within the scope of specific confidentiality agreements, further information can be shared.

A structured web space within the Global Nuclear Safety and Security Network (GNSSN) (maintained by the IAEA) includes a restricted, password protected area used for the SMR RF internal information exchanges and to enable the work of the SMR RF Working Groups.

Question 23: Where can I get more information about the SMR RF?

-The official IAEA SMR RF web pages:

<https://www.iaea.org/topics/small-modular-reactors/smr-regulators-forum>

<https://gnssn.iaea.org/sites/auth/RegNet/SMR/default.aspx?PageView=Shared> (restricted area)

- SMR RF Terms of Reference (ToR)

- SMR RF webinars

- SMR RF Newsletters

- [SMR RF Leaflet](#)

- [SMR RF Card](#)

- E-mail: SMR-RF-Contact-Point.Team@iaea.org