



Strategic Plan

The Regulatory Cooperation Forum

(RCF)

2020-2024

Executive summary

The creation of the RCF in 2010 came from a recognized need to improve the coordination between regulatory bodies in countries that had developed nuclear power programmes and those that were embarking on such a journey. Since that time, many embarking and expanding countries have benefited from RCF activities.

At a meeting of its Steering Committee in 2018, a discussion was held on the RCF's role, its activities and the main challenges that those Member States developing a regulatory infrastructure face when overseeing the introduction of nuclear power. Given these discussions, it was considered timely and beneficial to develop a strategic plan for RCF to provide direction and focus for its future activities in order to ensure its continued effectiveness and sustainability in a changing nuclear environment.

This strategic plan was developed drawing upon previous strategic discussions and documentation describing the main challenges identified by embarking countries. In addition, a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threat (SWOT) analysis, as well as analysis of internal and external risks, were completed to better formulate the strategic objectives.

The strategic plan provides background to the RCF activities, its vision, mission and values, and identifies strategic objectives, covering a four-year period from 2020. It is complemented by an Operating Plan containing allocated, time bound actions in order to achieve the Strategic Objectives and enable the RCF to monitor and evaluate progress, a Programme Plan that presents how the RCF performs its support activities and Terms of Reference¹. The RCF will continue to consider the issues of funding and resources to assure the effectiveness and sustainability of RCF in achieving its mission.

<i>Vision</i>	<i>Dedicated to enabling effective, robust cooperation amongst nuclear regulators</i>
<i>Mission</i>	<i>To assist RCF members in the development of effectively independent and robust nuclear regulators by</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Supporting regulatory infrastructure development</i>• <i>Optimizing resources by eliminating duplication through improved coordination</i>• <i>promoting and facilitating collaboration and cooperation</i>• <i>applying IAEA standards and guidance consistently</i>• <i>providing effective support to embarking countries at different stages of development</i>
<i>Values</i>	<i>Openness, Responsiveness, Excellence, Commitment, Respect</i>

¹ Terms of Reference and Programme Plan will be updated consistent with this RCF strategic plan.

Background

The Regulatory Cooperation Forum (RCF) is a member-driven forum of nuclear safety regulators established in June 2010.

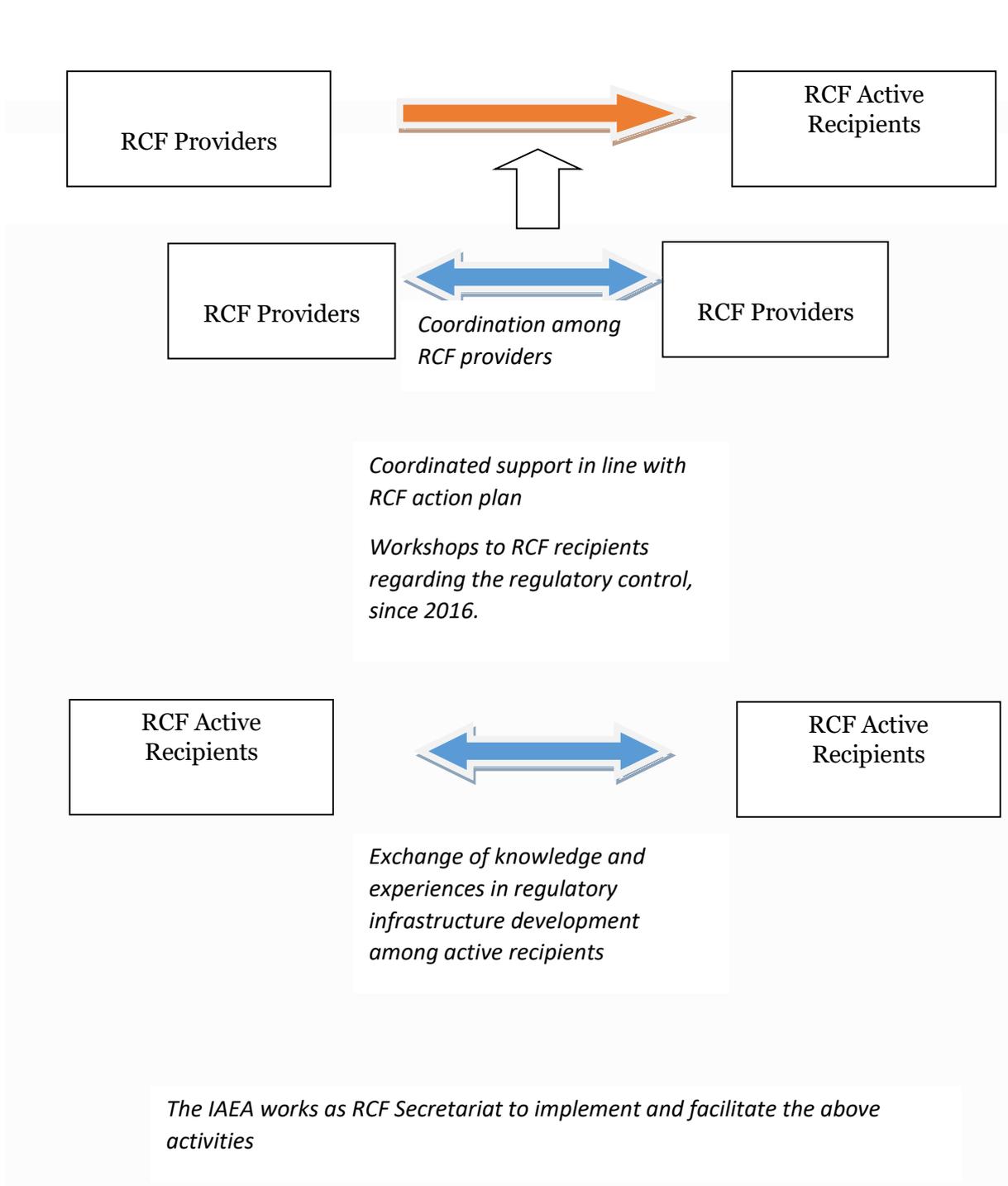
The Forum promotes the sharing of regulatory knowledge and experience through international cooperation with the goal of achieving a high standard of nuclear safety that is consistent with the IAEA safety standards.

The RCF comprises countries with advanced nuclear power programmes and countries that are planning to expand or introduce the use of nuclear power. RCF members are regulatory bodies for nuclear safety and therefore the primary focus will be nuclear safety taking into consideration nuclear safety and security interface issues.

The importance of the RCF and its activities is reflected in Member States' request for assistance from the RCF and provider country involvement. The IAEA's continuing support to RCF activities is stated in its 2019 Nuclear Safety Review. The IAEA works as RCF Secretariat to implement and facilitate the RCF activities.

Additional information on RCF's operation, membership, terms of reference, programme plan, and other reference documents can be found in the RCF web site.

Figure 1: RCF Support and Information Sharing Mechanism



Purpose

The purpose of this document is to set out the strategic objectives for the RCF for the years 2020-2024. It is intended to be used by RCF member states, the RCF secretariat, and external stakeholders.

RCF Vision Statement

- Dedicated to enabling effective, robust cooperation amongst nuclear regulators

RCF Mission Statement

- To assist RCF members in the development of effectively independent and robust nuclear regulators by
 - Supporting regulatory infrastructure development
 - Optimizing resources by eliminating duplication through improved coordination
 - promoting and facilitating collaboration and cooperation
 - applying IAEA standards and guidance consistently
 - providing effective support to embarking countries at different stages of development

RCF Values Statement

- Openness – promoting trust among members, and sharing information and knowledge in an open and transparent manner
- Responsiveness – flexibility in adding value to member countries through targeted interventions
- Excellence – striving for continuous improvement and for ensuring the application of lessons learned
- Commitment – demonstrating a results-based service through active participation
- Respect – showing appreciation and understanding of diverse points of view

Situational Analysis

The RCF has had considerable success in supporting the active recipient countries in capacity building and regulatory infrastructure development. From this experience, the RCF members have identified six (6) common challenges amongst its active recipient countries as follows;

1. Adequate funding for regulator
2. Independence of regulator

3. Human resources development
4. Drafting of regulations and guides
5. Managing of Technical Support Organization
6. Public involvement by regulator

Subsequent discussion on these six (6) points led to the decision to develop a strategic plan at a 2018 RCF meeting. The strategic objectives were formulated from the analysis of the RCF's current situation, which included the analysis of a SWOT (Appendix), and external and internal risks.

The RCF provider countries have faced challenges in supporting RCF and recipient countries through the lack of funding for RCF support activities and changes in schedules of active recipients' nuclear power programme.

Strategic Objectives for RCF

The following are the strategic objectives of the RCF for the period 2020-2024:

1. Provide high level influence to policy makers to address issues surrounding funding and independence of regulatory bodies.
2. Ensure RCF support activities are effective and sustainable via:
 - Enhancing capacity building activities
 - Facilitating training of regulators on drafting of regulations and guides
 - Providing advice on the development and management of Technical Support Organizations (TSO)
 - Providing guidance on processes and mechanisms for public and stakeholder involvement by the regulator.
3. Enhance RCF outreach to non-members which are actively preparing to embark on a nuclear power programme.
4. Better communication and increased involvement by:
 - Focusing on prioritized proposals from active recipient countries, based on the objective evaluation of their regulatory framework (e.g. mapping matrix)
 - Improving mechanisms for coordination, through enhanced information exchange meetings, improved and updated RCF website
 - Strengthening contribution of providers through provider to provider information sharing
 - Evaluating progress of support projects
 - Sharing experience and collaboration with other support networks

An operational plan for implementing these RCF strategic objectives will be prepared separately.

Funding and Resourcing

In order to fund and achieve the strategic objectives under the strategic plan in an effective and sustainable manner, the RCF will continue to identify appropriate funding and resourcing mechanisms.

Monitoring and Evaluation

To ensure the effectiveness of the implementation of the strategic plan an on-going evaluation mechanism with clear measurable criteria needs to be in place which will monitor the progress of actions and the achievements of the strategic objectives. In addition, a review of the strategy itself towards the end of its monitoring period, and in mid-way if necessary, considering progress and to determine what changes are necessary.

Appendix: The RCF SWOT analysis

The RCF SWOT analysis assists to determine the best opportunities to pursue to achieve its goals, whilst also pointing at weaknesses to manage, strengths to build on and threats to be aware of, and if possible, avoid.

<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence of the mapping matrix to visualize the status and to coordinate activities • Efficient, timely and targeted support to recipient countries based on the results of the IAEA peer review services • Support through RCF is often easier to put in place for active recipients and providers • RCF provides a recipient to recipient benchmarking platform • Information sharing platform for all members • Easier coordination of activities 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor participation of provider countries in RCF projects • Lack of continuous communication among RCF members, specifically through the RCF web site • Lack of funding for provider countries
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital accessibility to the latest information on regulatory framework development through improved web-based resources • Refining the development and use of the matrices • Identification of six common challenges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Adequate funding for regulator ○ Independence of regulator ○ Human resource development ○ Drafting of regulations and guides ○ Managing of TSO ○ Public involvement of regulator • The IAEA Training Programme and/ or training materials have been developed, and the following support can be promoted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Advisory on human resource development in member countries ○ Training regarding drafting of regulations and guides (including adopting vendor country regulations to the national approach and meeting IAEA safety standards) ○ Advisory / training regarding the establishing and managing of a TSO ○ Advisory on the role of the regulator in public communication of NPP project • RCF members establish the support programmes to recipient countries, and those programmes can be promoted • Advanced recipient countries accumulated the good practices, and those practices can be shared with other RCF members 	<p>Threats (*)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diminished effectiveness of RCF due to the increasing number of recipient countries while providing countries remain the same • Availability of financial resources for RCF activities as it depends on the extra budgetary contribution • Low level of recipient own activity and capability compared to providers' activity <p>(*) In terms of threat to the member countries, the followings are considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independence of the regulator in member countries • Adequacy of funding of the regulator in member countries • Global economic slowdown leading to constrained budgets of the recipient countries