



**TERMS OF REFERENCE**  
**REGULATORY COOPERATION FORUM**  
**APRIL 2013**

**Background**

At the 2009 Conference on “Effective Nuclear Regulatory Systems” in Cape Town, South Africa, regulatory bodies of Member States agreed to establish a regulator-to-regulator forum to promote collaboration and cooperation to improve coordination of support for regulatory infrastructure development and capacity building among Member States with well-established nuclear power programmes and those considering the introduction or expansion of such programmes. In June 2010, the Regulatory Cooperation Forum (RCF) was established. The IAEA was asked to provide the secretariat to the RCF.

**Objectives**

- To assist in the development of effectively independent and robust nuclear safety regulatory bodies;
- To achieve and sustain a high level of nuclear safety, based on self-assessment by a Member State of its regulatory body’s needs, as identified from the IAEA Safety Standards and guidance;
- To optimize collaboration and cooperation among RCF members to meet the needs identified.

**Guiding Principles**

The RCF will be guided by the following principles:

- a) The RCF is a regulator-to-regulator forum driven by Member States;
- b) RCF activities are limited to regulatory infrastructure development and capacity building for nuclear safety in nuclear power plants. Security and safeguards, unless directly associated with safety, are not areas included within the scope of RCF activities at this time but may be considered in the future;
- c) RCF activities are focused on nuclear power plant regulatory support for Member States committed through national actions to develop a nuclear power programme for the first time and those considering the expansion of existing nuclear power programmes;
- d) While the RCF can provide support and advice, Member States must assume full responsibility for their respective regulatory roles and responsibilities, including ownership and management of their own regulatory body development;

- e) The RCF will respect existing and future arrangements (bi-lateral or otherwise), including the disposition or application of resources, among its Member States;
- f) The RCF will make all efforts to optimize regulatory support programmes and avoid unnecessary duplication;
- g) Each forum participant will make its own financial arrangements for participating in RCF activities; and
- h) Each Member State will strive to share regulatory experiences and lessons learned.
- i) Although RCF members with mature nuclear power programmes would normally be providers of support, embarking countries or those expanding their programmes who are normally recipients of support may also be considered providers.

### **Membership of the RCF**

Membership in the RCF is open to all Member States of the IAEA. Participants in RCF activities will normally be senior representatives, from regulatory bodies in Member States and from other members, including the IAEA, the European Commission (EC) and the Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Observers from other international or regional organizations may be invited to attend meetings or participate in RCF activities on a case-by-case basis or continuing basis by decision of the Steering Committee.

### **Steering Committee**

A Steering Committee shall be established to ensure transparency, openness, and efficient and effective planning and implementation of RCF activities. The Steering Committee will make all RCF policy decisions by consensus and:

- a) will comprise senior representatives from regulatory authorities in different Member States and may include members such as the EC or NEA;
- b) will appoint a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson for a term of three years from a recipient and a provider Member State. The Chairperson will lead activities and act as spokesperson for the RCF;
- c) will normally comprise seven to ten members with composition to be about 1/3 recipients and 2/3 providers represented by various regions. New member requests are to be presented to the Steering Committee for approval.
- d) will meet approximately once every six months through face-to-face meetings to review and revise policy, establish general concepts for the RCF and agree to proposals for RCF support to its members. Additional meetings may be convened by the Chairperson or the Vice-Chairperson, as necessary;
- e) will review these Terms of Reference and the RCF Programme Plan periodically; and
- f) will review the continuing need for the RCF. If no further need is identified, the Steering Committee may recommend to the RCF general membership termination of the RCF altogether.

### **Regulatory Cooperation Forum**

- a) An RCF general meeting will be normally held once per year during the IAEA General Conference or other significant meetings for regulatory authorities. Senior representatives from RCF members are expected to attend and actively participate.
- b) A secure RCF website will be established and maintained to share information and promote work of the RCF. A public version of the RCF web site will be made available through the IAEA's Global Nuclear Safety and Security Network in the Regnet environment.
- c) Working groups will be established for specific tasks. Membership of these groups will be nominated or delegated by RCF members. These working groups will be disbanded once their tasks are completed.
- d) The RCF will continuously evaluate its activities and provide feedback for continuous improvement.
- e) RCF members will make all reasonable efforts to actively participate in RCF activities and be responsive and supportive to the needs of the forum.

### **IAEA Support**

Attaching strategic importance to supporting nuclear safety and security infrastructures and capacity building in Member States the IAEA will, subject to the availability of resources, promote and facilitate the RCF Programme Plan. The IAEA will provide general and professional support staff through the IAEA regular budget for administrative and IT support activities, within established Agency practices.

The IAEA will provide an RCF Secretariat which, will inter alia:

- a) facilitate RCF meetings, promote coordination and collaboration among the provider and recipient members and coordinate other necessary RCF activities;
- b) maintain these Terms of Reference and the RCF Programme Plan;
- c) establish and maintain RCF websites to optimize communications to both internal and external stakeholders;
- d) advise the Steering Committee on programme conduct, including any needed programme changes;
- e) identify and analyse lessons learned and share them with the RCF Steering Committee for potential programme changes;
- f) consistent with the IAEA Nuclear Safety Action Plan, reach out to Members States to encourage their membership and participation in the RCF and its activities; and
- g) manage extra-budgetary funds contributed to the RCF for its activities.

END