



International Atomic Energy Agency

History of the Code of Conduct on the Safety of Research Reactors

L. W. Deitrich

2007

History of the Code

- **In 1998, INSAG expressed concerns for safety of research reactors:**
 - Ageing of facilities and staff;
 - RRs neither operating nor decommissioned (extended shutdown);
 - Lack of appropriate regulatory supervision.
- **In 2000, INSAG recommended that the Secretariat begin developing an international protocol or similar legal instrument to address these concerns.**

History of the Code

- **GC(44)/RES/14 (2000): “...continue work on exploring options to strengthen international nuclear safety arrangements for civil RRs...”**
- **May 2001 Working Group recommendations: “...the Agency consider establishing an international action plan for research reactors...” including a Code of Conduct “...that would clearly establish the desirable attributes for management of research reactor safety.”**

History of the Code

- **September 2001: the Board requested that the Secretariat develop and implement, in conjunction with Member States, an International Research Reactor Safety Enhancement Plan. This plan included preparation of a Code of Conduct on the Safety of Research Reactors.**
- **GC(45)/RES/10.A (2001) endorsed the Board request.**

History of the Code

- **A draft Code was developed at two Open-ended Meetings of Legal and Technical Experts in May and December 2002.**
- **At the request of the March 2003 Board, the draft Code was circulated to all Member States for comment.**
- **To resolve the comments received, the Secretariat and an expert Working Group revised the draft in October 2003.**
- **The revised draft was circulated to all Member States for a second review in November 2003.**
- **The Code was adopted by the Board in March 2004.**

General Conference Resolutions

- **In resolution GC(48)/RES/10.A.8, the 2004 General Conference:**
 - **Welcomed adoption of the Code by the Board and endorsed the guidance for safe operation of research reactors set out in the Code;**
 - **Encouraged Member States to apply the guidance in the Code to management of research reactors;**
 - **Requested the Secretariat to continue to assist Member States in implementation of the Code and associated safety guidance within available resources.**

Resolution of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety (April 2005):

- **“Having taken into consideration the positive impact of the incentive nature and the benefits of the Review Process of the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety request the Director General of the IAEA to convene meetings to which all Member States would be invited. The objective of the meetings should be to discuss how to best assure the effective application of the ‘Code of Conduct on the Safety of Research Reactors’.”**
- **Meeting held in December 2005.**

General Conference Resolutions

- In resolution GC(49)/RES/9, the 2005 General Conference:
 - Continued to endorse the principles and objectives of the Code of Conduct;
 - Welcomed the resolution of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety concerning the need to conduct international meetings on the application of the Code...

General Conference Resolutions

- In resolution GC(50)/RES/10, the 2006 General Conference:
 - Continued to endorse the principles and objectives of the Code of Conduct;
 - Encouraged MSs constructing, operating or decommissioning RRs or with RRs in extended shutdown to apply the guidance in the Code;

General Conference Resolutions

- Supported the recommendation of the December 2005 Open-ended Meeting that periodic meetings be organized to discuss application of the Code;
- Looked forward to the outcome of the 2007 *International Conference on Research Reactors: Safe Management and Effective Utilization*, including discussion of implementation of the Code of Conduct.