

WM2014 Conference Panel Report

PANEL SESSION 071: IAEA International Decommissioning Network: Maximizing the Benefits of Collaboration and Sharing of Experience

Co-Chairs: **Jamie Joyce**, *US Department of Energy*
Con Lyras, *ANSTO*

Panel Reporter: **Andrew Szilagyi**, *US DOE*

Presenters/Panelists for Part I:

1. **Joerg Kaulard**, *TÜV Rheinland Industrie Service GmbH (Germany)*
2. **Patrick O'Sullivan**, *International Atomic Energy Agency (Austria)*
3. **Patrice Francois**, *Institut de Radioprotection et de Sûreté Nucléaire (France)*
4. **Mark Pennington**, *Sellafield Sites (United Kingdom)*
5. **Vladan Ljubenov**, *International Atomic Energy Agency (Austria)*
6. **Kristan Schruder**, *Atomic Energy of Canada Limited (ACEL) (Canada)*
7. **Sasa Medakovic**, *State Office for Radiological and Nuclear Safety (SORNS) (Croatia)*
8. **Maria Elena Crespo**, *Project Enhancement Corporation (USA)*
9. **Charles Negin**, *Project Enhancement Corporation (USA)*
10. **Manuel Rodriguez**, *ENRESA (Spain)*

The first part of the session was devoted to 4 presentations on the topic of management of risk in decommissioning projects:

Joerg Kaulard described the DRiMa project, a 3-year collaborative project on decommissioning risk management collaborated by the IAEA that is currently halfway through its programme. The initial project findings suggest that, as well as managing risks at project level, it is very important that a structured process be also applied to the management of strategic risks, i.e. those that are beyond the control of the project team. The success of this process may be crucial in determining the eventual success of a project.

Kristan Schruder compared and contrasted approaches for management of decommissioning project risk on projects undertaken at Sellafield site in the UK and at Chalk River site in Canada. Although there was much commonality in the approaches, differences were noted, especially in the specifics of implementing the risk management approaches.

Maria Elena Crespo presented a case study on management of risk during entombment of a disused facility at the Department of Energy's Hanford site. The findings from this specific case were that the main risks to project implementation were related to the timely availability of concrete in accordance with the required specification. Ms Crespo suggested that management of this type of risk was a normal element of project management on this type of project.

Manuel Rodriguez presented a risk management case study based on the decommissioning of the Jose Cabrera former nuclear power plant in Spain. He noted important risks occurring during the preparatory phase of the project, e.g. the level of investment necessary to de-energize non-essential systems and in general preparation of the infrastructure for decommissioning was significantly greater than expected. An important lesson for this was the need for extensive characterization of the plant prior to its takeover for active decommissioning.

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Panel Discussion

The second part of the session was comprised a panel discussion moderated by the session chairs.

Panelists for Part 2:

Joerg Kaulard, *TUV Rheinland Industrie Service GmbH (TIS)(Germany)*;

Katherine Moshonas Cole, *Candesco Limited (Canada)*;

Con Lyras, *Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organization (ANSTO)(Australia)*;

Andrew Szilagyi, *US DOE-EM*;

Emilio Garcia Neri, *ENRESA (Spain)*;

Oleg Mansurov, *AVERO. (Russia)*;

Ernie Aikens, *AECL (Canada)*.

The discussion addressed the following issues:

- Can more be done to encourage partnering between organizations already involved in decommissioning or remediation programmes and organizations from less-advanced programmes where technical resources or associated expertise is lacking?
 - Can such involvement be made attractive for the former organizations in situations where national financial resources are limited?
 - Can more be done to encourage bilateral collaborations between countries?
- Are there sufficient mechanisms to facilitate better sharing of experience and/or personnel between regulatory authorities, e.g. perhaps similar to schemes that have already been used for sharing experience among regulators of operating plants?
- Is there a need for new frameworks to facilitate collaboration and sharing of the results, and costs, of research and development related to decommissioning?
- Can more be done to harmonise approaches to the management of waste from decommissioning, in particular large quantities of waste with very low levels of radioactivity.
- As decommissioning enters a more mature industrial phase, what can be done to generate increased public confidence that this can be achieved safely and in line with planned costs and time-scales?

A vigorous discussion involving not only the panellists but also members of the audience took place with a variety of viewpoints being voiced, based on the experience of each individual. There was a general sense of agreement that while both individual countries and international organizations, especially, but not limited to IAEA and NEA were actively encouraging partnering and collaboration, additional efforts could be beneficial to collaborating organizations and countries. Limited resources were identified as a prime obstacle to more in-depth collaborations.

Similarly, the panellists and members of the audience generally agreed that while sufficient mechanisms likely existed for sharing information between decommissioning organizations

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and regulatory authorities, early engagements were particularly important and that improvements could certainly be made, leading to improved relationships and communication between regulated and regulatory entities.

Regarding the question if new frameworks for facilitating sharing of results and costs of R&D were needed, once again there was a general agreement that although existing mechanisms and frameworks were adequately facilitating sharing of at least information, improvements could always be made.

It was further discussed that schedules and timing were barriers to initiating multi-organizational/country cost sharing of R&D, and that because R&D was often conducted by for-profit consulting/engineering organizations and sharing of detailed information was often viewed as contrary to business advantage goals. Early, frequent, and honest and transparent communication with members of the public and stakeholders was identified as one of the key criteria for increasing public confidence.