

The Ibero-American Nuclear and Radiation Safety Network

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Background

The Ibero American Forum of Nuclear and Radiation Safety and Security Regulatory Organizations (the FORO) was created in 1997 and was originally composed by Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Mexico and Spain. Uruguay and Chile joined more recently. The objective of the FORO is to promote a high level of safety in all practices using nuclear and/or radioactive materials in the Ibero American region.

To achieve this objective, the FORO reviews and analyzes nuclear and radiation safety issues of interest to the region, identifies regulatory problems in these areas and proposes policy and action plans towards improving safety in the region. For this purpose, the FORO has a technical programme, which gives priority to national and regional needs and to knowledge management. The technical work is carried out under an IAEA's Extrabudgetary programme.

Knowledge sharing is essential for a sustainable infrastructure on nuclear and radiation safety and security, this being the reason why the IAEA has promoted international initiatives on networking. Networking helps to share information on safety of existing practices and introducing new ones without duplication of efforts and costs. For this purpose the FORO has developed a knowledge sharing network, and assigned highest priority to it.

Bearing in mind that the Iberoamerican region has made, from the beginning, a substantial contribution to the evolution of the radiation protection system, its rationale and application to regulatory decisions, this is a good opportunity to keep this involvement alive and to disseminate this experience.

Objectives of the network

The objective of the network, - which is developed, operated and maintained by the countries of the region - is to effectively share information of regulatory interest on existing or new nuclear and radiation safety and security practices. The network has to be sustainable and should contribute to the development of national systems of regulation, authorization and control of national activities related to ionizing radiation.

Network structure

The network structure consists of a Central Node and a series of National Nodes, one in each participating Country. Documents are located in the National Nodes while the

software application resides in the Central Node. This modular design allows for future nodes as new countries join the FORO. Documents from public Web sites remain where they are, so that only the link (URL address) is required to be located in the document classification in the Network.

Documents that can be retrieved more efficiently from the Central Server than from a National one are placed in the Central server. For this purpose the Central Server has a physical space devoted to each country. Consequently, a National Node consists of a specific space of the Central Server and of the National Server. This arrangement minimizes the resources required and optimizes the use of the existing ones.

The Network has three major areas: 1) an institutional area, 2) a document management area, and 3) a working environment for the experts of specific Projects. Areas 1) and 2) are accessible to the public. Area 2) is managed by designated officials from the FORO's countries and contains regulations from these countries, training courses and technical documents. Area 3) is accessible to members of project working groups, for them to share working material, hold discussions, and reports from real and virtual meetings.

FIGURE. THE INFORMATION MANAGEMENT IS LOCATED IN THE CENTRAL NODE WHILE THE INFORMATION ITSELF IS DISTRIBUTED IN THE NATIONAL NODES.

