

OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE 2011 SAFE AND SECURE TRANSPORT CONFERENCE

Nancy Capadona

International Atomic Energy Agency

Kasturi Varley

International Atomic Energy Agency

E. William Brach

Chair, Transport Safety Standards
Committee

Christopher Bajwa

International Atomic Energy Agency

ABSTRACT

An International Conference on the Safe and Secure Transport of Radioactive Material was held in October 2011, and a follow-up Technical Meeting was held in 2012, the president's findings of the Conference were discussed during the follow-up meeting and a set of recommendations related to the Conference findings were developed. These recommendations were fully endorsed by the General Conference in 2012 Resolution GC(56)/L.4.

This paper will briefly summarize the major findings of the transport conference held in 2011, including the findings and recommendations of the follow-up technical meeting. The paper will focus on the implementation of the recommendations by the IAEA Transport Safety Unit and the transport community.

BACKGROUND

On the fiftieth anniversary of the issue by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in 1961 of its first Regulations for the Safe Transport of Radioactive Materials, the International Conference on the Safe and Secure Transport of Radioactive Material: The Next Fifty Years of Transport — Creating a Safe, Secure and Sustainable Framework (Transport Conference), was held in Vienna in October 2011. The President's findings from the Transport Conference were considered in a March 2012 Technical Meeting which produced a report of recommended activities to address the President's findings. The outline of work prepared for the Technical Meeting summarized the President's findings under eight topical areas including: harmonization, denials of shipment, basis of provisions, Safety Requirements and security recommendations, national implementation and industry compliance, emergency response, communications, and regional considerations. A ninth topic in the Transport Conference President's findings on liability was not addressed by the Technical Meeting because that topic had been assigned to the International Expert Group on Nuclear Liability (INLEX) for consideration.

INTRODUCTION

Following the 2011 Conference on the Safe and Secure Transport of Radioactive Material, the March 2012 Technical Meeting (TM)-held as a follow-up to the conference, concluded that seven overarching

actions would contribute to the safe, secure, and sustainable future transport of radioactive material. These included:

- Improve UN Inter-Agency Coordination
- Facilitate transport through training and communication
- Improve Member State/regional coordination and implementation of transport safety and security programs
- Improve interface/coordination of transport safety/security at all levels
- Achieve harmonized regulations/guidance for transport safety/security
- Provide assistance to Member States and regional networks to develop need-based capabilities
- Engage Member States, non-governmental organizations and industry to identify areas to be addressed to sustain safe and secure transport

Over 80 recommended actions were grouped under the eight topical areas identified in the Transport Conference President's Findings, these topical areas included:

- Harmonization (8 actions)
- Denial of Shipments (11 actions)
- The Basis of the Provisions (11 actions)
- Safety Requirements and Security Recommendations (9 actions)
- National Implementation and Industry Compliance (10 actions)
- Emergency Response (11 actions)
- Communication (7 actions)
- Regional Considerations (12 actions)

Some actions are replicated under most of the topical areas, for example: continue with transport safety work plan or continue with International Steering Committee action plan (for Denial of Shipment)

Some actions are process and organizationally focused, for example: Learning from experience should be incorporated in training, enhance Inter-Agency work, e.g. attend meetings at other UN bodies, and closer cooperation with UN bodies covering all transport issues

Some actions are focused on regulations and guidance, for example: harmonize transport regulations, consider risk analysis to guide priorities, and provide guidance for customs to facilitate shipments.

Each of the topical areas are discussed in more detail below.

HARMONIZATION

There must be harmonization of the transport framework at all levels, including at the IAEA fundamentals level. The transport regulatory system (both safety and security) needs to be harmonized globally to avoid conflicts and varying requirements. Harmonization between safety and security requirements should be maximized. Finally, harmonization between IAEA and other UN organizations is important. Consistency

between IAEA, IMO and ICAO regulations and thereafter IATA and national regulations is important to helping avoid denial of shipments and to fostering increased compliance

DENIAL OF SHIPMENT

Denial of shipment (DOS) continues to be a problem which must be addressed. DOS can adversely affect security, and efforts to reduce denials have both safety and security benefits. DOS hinders radioactive source returns and can deny Member States access to the beneficial uses of radioactive material.

THE BASIS OF THE PROVISIONS

The Agency is concluding an effort to undertake a complete review and documentation of the technical basis for transport safety regulations. As part of this effort an extensive database of resources is being collected in order to provide the transport community with a library of historical references that were used in the formulation of the current regulations.

SAFETY REQUIREMENTS AND SECURITY RECOMMENDATIONS

Accidents can and will happen. The level of safety provided by compliance with the regulations continues to be high, but the regulations themselves should be reviewed and revised as necessary. Security is and will remain essential. There are conflicts between safety and security which need to be addressed and resolved; however, having regard to the necessity of confidentiality to ensure security.

Coherence between the different language versions of the safety and security requirements is important. Safety and security requirements should be as consistent as possible to facilitate simultaneous application.

The Agency will further review the interface between transport safety and security in order to identify conflicts (e.g. hazard communication, information etc.) and consider cross cutting issues related to package design (e.g. influence of new security features on safety and vice versa). This effort will involve the newly formed Nuclear Security Guidance Committee (NSGC) and the Transport Safety Standards committee (TRANSSC).

Finally, failure to consider the cost and complexity of implementation of regulations can lead to their avoidance. Changes to the regulations should be carefully considered and changes should only be made when needed.

NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION AND INDUSTRY COMPLIANCE

To raise regulatory capacity worldwide, IAEA requirements are implemented by Member States, but in very different ways and with different editions of the regulations being used. This will continue to create challenges for implementation. As much as practicable, countries should strive to implement the most current edition of the IAEA transport regulations. Approvals by national competent authorities should follow IAEA requirements to facilitate international transport.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Effective emergency response requires international, multi-lateral, regional and bi-lateral cooperation. Despite efforts to share information, some Coastal States remain concerned about the lack of information provided when shipments come close to or pass through their coastal waters. Efforts are underway to further standardize the types of information provided for radioactive material shipments. States should consider using the IAEA's services in emergency preparedness and emergency response, to further strengthen their own capabilities. In general, for maritime emergencies, the International Maritime

Organization is the lead agency. Finally, the Agency has examined lessons learned from Fukushima that could relate to transport (e.g. communications and search and response capability) and have taken note of these for future application.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is vital, between the Agency and the public, within the Agency, between countries, and within countries. To this end, the Agency has put significant effort into preparing communications on safe transport in multiple languages, including a recently completed transport video that will be translated into all the official UN languages. The Agency is further undertaking a project to revise the transport website to make it more user friendly. These actions, along with others, will increase the awareness of transport worldwide, and lead to a better understanding why safe, timely transports of radioactive material are important.

REGIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Agency is working to enhance regional network membership to assist in achieving international harmonization in the area of transport safety and security. Through several Technical Cooperation (TC) Projects and other regional initiatives in most of the regions in the world, the Agency is working to expand the awareness, understanding, and educate the users of radioactive materials in the safe transport of these materials.

CONCLUSIONS

The International Conference on the Safe and Secure Transport of Radioactive Material held in October 2011 provided a host of recommendations for improving the global transport regime. The follow-up TM in 2012 derived specific, actionable items for each of the 8 topical areas explored in the Conference. The Agency has begun to take action on these recommendations, having explored potential changes to the regulations, based on these recommendations, in an April 2013 TM, and plans to further review the recommendations in TMs scheduled for 2014 and 2015.

REFERENCES

[1] INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY, Regulations for the Safe Transport of Radioactive Material, 2012 Edition, IAEA Safety Standards Series No. SSR-6, IAEA, Vienna (2012).
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