



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) mission 2019

Government response

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Acknowledgements

Government departments and regulatory bodies that participated in the mission process

UK government departments

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Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)
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Department for Transport (DfT)
Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
Northern Ireland Health Department
Scottish Environment Department
Scottish Health Department
Welsh Environment Department
Welsh Health Department

Regulatory bodies

Care Quality Commission (CQC)
Civil Aviation Authority (CAA)
Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI) (England and Wales)
Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI) (Northern Ireland)
Drinking Water Quality Regulator for Scotland (DWQR)
Environment Agency (EA)
Food Standards Agency (FSA)
Food Standards Scotland (FSS)
Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland (HSENI)
Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS)
Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW)
Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA)
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From 14 to 25 October 2019, the UK hosted an International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) mission. IRRS missions help IAEA Member States strengthen and enhance the effectiveness of their regulatory infrastructure for nuclear, radiation, radioactive waste and transport safety. IRRS missions take place at the invitation of the host country and usually happen every 10 years, with a follow up mission within four years.

An IRRS mission consists of a comprehensive peer review of a State's regulatory infrastructure for safety against IAEA safety standards, carried out by a team of international experts. This includes a two-week evaluation visit to the host country to observe and appraise current practices. The expert team compile their findings in a report that provides recommendations and suggestions to enable the host country to enhance their safety framework and notes any good practices that can be adapted for use in other IAEA Member States to strengthen safety.

The UK has hosted four IRRS missions previously, focused on nuclear safety, and was one of the first countries to host a mission following the start of the IRRS programme in 2006. The 2019 IRRS mission was the first time that the IAEA has reviewed all aspects of the UK's radiological safety framework. The UK supports the work of the IAEA and participates in its other international peer reviews such as Operational Safety Review Team (OSART) missions relating to safety at nuclear power stations, and International Physical Protection Advisory Service (IPPAS) missions to review nuclear security. An OSART mission to Torness nuclear power station took place in 2018 with the follow up mission in 2019. The UK hosted an IPPAS mission in 2011 with a follow up mission in 2016. The UK also provides many experts to IAEA missions to other countries.

The 2019 IRRS review involved the considerable input of 16 regulatory bodies and 11 government departments across the UK. It covered the following wide-ranging areas: responsibilities and functions of the government and regulatory bodies; how the UK participates in the global nuclear and radiation safety regime; management systems of the regulatory bodies, regulatory processes including authorisation, review and assessment, inspection, enforcement and the development of regulations and guides; emergency preparedness and response; and the interfaces with nuclear security. The extensive review considered these areas in the context of the wide variety of radiological facilities and activities within the UK, including nuclear power plants and radioactive waste management facilities, as well as public, occupational and medical exposures, and transport safety.

The review team visited a nuclear power plant, an industrial radiography facility, a hospital and a waste management facility to observe different regulatory authorities undertaking inspections. Across the board they observed that the UK regulators and facility operators were well prepared and demonstrated a high level of professionalism and understanding of all issues during the inspection.

During the mission, the review team found that the UK is committed to strengthening its regulatory framework for nuclear, radiation, radioactive waste and transport safety. They identified strengths in the UK's regulatory authorities, including the competence of staff and the extensive regulatory guidance that has been developed for those legally responsible for nuclear and radiation safety. The team identified two good practices; one relating to the Office for Nuclear Regulation's (ONR) matrix management structure that effectively allocates resources and improves its hiring, training and strategic planning practices and a second for the UK's process of integrating specialist security advisors alongside the environmental regulators to ensure that safety and security measures for radioactive sources are mutually reinforcing and do not clash. Good practices are identified in recognition of an outstanding

organisation, arrangement, programme or performance superior to those generally observed elsewhere.

In keeping with the approach of IRRS peer reviews, the mission team provided recommendations and suggestions for both government and regulators to enhance the UK's safety framework. Recommendations are changes to bring a system into compliance with the IAEA safety requirements. Suggestions are changes not essential to compliance, but which may enhance the effectiveness of a safety regime and/or improve the performance of regulatory bodies.

The mission team's report included 24 recommendations to further strengthen the UK's radiological regulatory framework. The majority of the findings relate to enhancing regulatory bodies' internal processes. The findings for government are set out below and the full list of recommendations and suggestions is available in the mission team's report.

- the UK government should publish a single, formalised statement of its national policy and strategy for safety
- the UK government should revise the site definitions under the Nuclear Installations Act and Regulations 1971 to allow the designation of a geological disposal facility (GDF) (England and Wales only)
- the UK government should formalise and improve existing processes and arrangements for sharing of global operating and regulatory experience
- the UK government should review its emergency preparedness and response (EP&R) framework to explain how the requirements of the IAEA's General Safety Requirements (GSR) Part 7 are met in two respects identified by the mission team

As part of the IRRS process, the UK carried out a self-assessment prior to the mission. The UK identified many of the mission team's findings in its self-assessment - such as the need to produce a statement which sets out the UK's policy and framework for radiological safety - so work is already in progress or planned in those areas.

The mission team agreed that the UK has a mature regulatory framework for safety and is committed to continuous improvement. The mission and the findings identified will enable the government and regulators to review current approaches and further enhance UK practices. The UK authorities are considering how best to address the mission team's findings and work is well underway in this area. The UK will update the IAEA on progress at the follow up mission, which will be scheduled at a mutually agreed time, likely within the next four years. This in line with IAEA expectations for follow up missions.

The government welcomes the IAEA's final report and congratulates all the departments, devolved administrations and regulatory bodies involved in the mission for their dedication and hard work supporting it. Participating in peer reviews of this kind are important as they are the only independent review of Member States' regulatory infrastructure for nuclear and radiological safety. International peer reviews like the IRRS and OSART help to improve transparency and support governments to have the best regimes possible for the management of nuclear, radiation, radioactive waste and transport safety. The government values the opportunity to take part in these missions.

The [IAEA's report](#) is available on GOV.UK.

Further information on the IRRS process is available on the IAEA website.

This publication is available from: www.gov.uk/government/publications/nuclear-and-radiological-safety-review-of-the-uk-framework-2019

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