



Department for  
Energy Security  
& Net Zero

# Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) Follow up mission 2024

Government response



© Crown copyright 2024

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit [nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3](https://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3) or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

Where we have identified any third-party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at: [NuclearSafetyPolicy@energysecurity.gov.uk](mailto:NuclearSafetyPolicy@energysecurity.gov.uk)

---

# Acknowledgements

Government departments and regulatory bodies that participated in the mission process:

## UK government departments

Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ)

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA)

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)

Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) and the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), an executive agency of DHSC

Department for Health Northern Ireland

Department for Transport (DfT)

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)

Scottish Government Directorate for Environment and Forestry

Scottish Health Department

Welsh Environment Department

Welsh Health Department

## Regulatory bodies

Care Quality Commission (CQC)

Civil Aviation Authority (CAA)

Environment Agency (EA)

Food Standards Agency (FSA) and 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)

Natural Resources Wales (NRW)

Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA)

Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR)

Regulatory and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA)

Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)

---

# Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) Follow up mission 2024 – Government Response

From 23-29 January 2024 the UK hosted an International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) follow up mission.

IRRS is a comprehensive peer review of a State's regulatory infrastructure for safety against IAEA safety standards, carried out by a team of international experts. The follow up [mission report is available here](#).

The acting Chief Executive Officer of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission and IRRS Mission Team Leader, Ramzi Jammal, stated that "...the UK has made continuous improvements since the IRRS 2019 mission to the highest standards of nuclear and radiation safety".

In October 2019 the IRRS mission to the UK made 24 recommendations to bring the UK system into further compliance with IAEA safety standards. The 2024 follow up mission assessed the UK progress in addressing these recommendations and concluded 19 of these recommendations are now closed.

The UK was awarded four good performances:

- The ONR's Openness and Transparency Policy;
- The decision to commission an independent assessment of ONR's culture and to publish the report.
- EA's establishment of a nuclear site resource prioritisation tool; and
- The UK regulatory framework Draft Standards and Guidance Status Spreadsheet which facilitates national coordination in relation to IAEA safety standards updates.

The IRRS team also noted achievements in the following areas:

- The establishment of the Radiological Safety Group (RSG), an overarching coordination group which consists of senior officials from all government departments and regulatory bodies having responsibilities for radiological safety, and the Radiological Safety Working Group (RSWG) that sits beneath it;
- HSE's development and implementation of the requirement for submission of a safety assessment before issuing consent for operating a facility or commencing work with high-risk radiation sources. This requirement has also been adopted by Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland (HSENI);

- 
- EA introducing a new nuclear Radioactive Substances Regulation (RSR) business planning process to ensure a graded approach to inspections;
  - The UK developing a new framework for facilitating national-level contribution and communication of IAEA standards updates;
  - ONR's revision of its technical assessment guide (TAG) 026 on decommissioning and TAG 050 on periodic safety review; and
  - The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) issuing 'Guidance on Decommissioning of Non-Nuclear Facilities for Radioactive Substances Activities', together with Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA).

In keeping with the approach of IRRS peer reviews, the mission team provided some new recommendations and suggestions for both government and regulators to enhance the UK's safety framework, including four new recommendations and two new suggestions. Three of the recommendations relate to the resourcing of bodies with responsibility for regulating radiological safety. The UK will update the IAEA on its progress to address these and the remaining open recommendations from the 2019 mission at the next IRRS mission, which will be scheduled at a mutually agreed time.

The UK fully supports the important work of the IAEA and values the opportunity to participate in IRRS and its other international peer reviews such as Operational Safety Review Team (OSART) missions relating to safety at nuclear power stations. International peer reviews 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 UK also provides many experts to IAEA missions to other countries.

The UK Government welcomes the IAEA's final report and congratulates all the departments, devolved administrations and regulatory bodies involved in the follow up mission for their dedication and hard work supporting it.

---

The IAEA's report is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nuclear-and-radiological-safety-follow-up-review-of-the-uk-framework-2024>

The IAEA's press release on the follow up mission is available here: <https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/pressreleases/iaea-mission-sees-progress-in-nuclear-and-radiation-safety-in-the-united-kingdom-notes-areas-for-improvement>

The IAEA's report from the 2019 mission is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nuclear-and-radiological-safety-review-of-the-uk-framework-2019>

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

This publication is available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nuclear-and-radiological-safety-follow-up-review-of-the-uk-framework-2024>

If you need a version of this document in a more accessible format, please email [alt.formats@energysecurity.gov.uk](mailto:alt.formats@energysecurity.gov.uk). Please tell us what format you need. It will help us if you say what assistive technology you use.