

Multi-national Design Evaluation Program Design Specific Working Groups

November 2008

General Terms of Reference

Introduction

The Policy Group (PG) of Multi-national Design Evaluation Program (MDEP) approved formalizing interactions and cooperative arrangements for specific designs, allowing qualified members to organise Design Specific Working Groups.

Participation in such working groups for members of MDEP may be limited by the following guidelines:

1. Members of such groups will be regulatory bodies engaged in significant regulatory actions based on agreements with vendors or utilities. These regulators would not have limitations to access and discuss proprietary information with other members.
2. Observing participants of such groups will be regulatory bodies engaged in regulatory action based on interest expressed by governmental authority and/or by utility for exploring the potential for licensing new nuclear power plants of certain designs. This status is temporary with expectations for agreements by the regulatory bodies with vendors or utilities in a short time period.
3. All the MDEP members must maintain appropriate control over proprietary information during discussion and in control of proprietary documents

Design Specific Working Groups would be established for specific reactors designs in which three (3) or more regulatory authorities meet the criteria in (1) above. Observers may become full members once the membership requirements in (1) are met.

Based on the PG approval of the Steering Technical Committee (STC) recommendations, initially the following two design specific working groups have been established :

- Evolutionary Power Reactor Working Group (EPR-WG) consisting of the regulators from Finland, France, China, Canada, United Kingdom and the United States.
- Advanced Pressurised 1000 Reactor Working Group (AP1000-WG) consisting of the regulators from China, the United Kingdom, and the United States

Working Group members shall commit to active participation in the work and commit to continuing exchange of information. All relevant information will be incorporated into the MDEP library. NEA will provide the Technical Secretariat function.

As per the MDEP PG Terms of Reference (ToR), national regulatory bodies retain sovereign authority for all licensing and regulatory decisions. The Working Groups will provide progress reports to the Steering Technical Committee.

Objective

The main objective of the MDEP Design Specific Working Groups will be as defined in the MDEP Policy Group ToR. In addition regulatory bodies in each of the MDEP Design Specific Working Groups shall share information and cooperate on specific reactor design evaluations with a goal of maximising interactions and cooperation on design reviews among experts to make technical analysis more robust, and to optimise the resources needed to perform national assessments.

Organisation and Implementation

The Working Group will meet once or twice a year. At each meeting the Working Groups will identify (through consensus) a number of key issues to be evaluated based on but not limited to exchange of information in the following areas:

- Current construction/design status;
- Inspection experience (since last meeting); and
- Construction experience (since last meeting).

The working group may at its discretion set-up smaller working groups to perform in-depth evaluations and develop appropriate resolutions to issues identified by the members. These subgroups will normally work through electronic transmittals, but may also call special meetings as necessary. In addition, subgroups evaluating topics similar to those being address by the Issue Specific Working Groups need to coordinate their work to exchange information and to minimise duplication of work.

The maintenance and retrieval of information and documents derived from the working group (including subgroups) meetings and discussions will be kept in the MDEP Library. Access to these documents will be maximised to MDEP members while assuring the protection of proprietary information.

Communications Plan

The process is designed to allow for the continuous exchange of information amongst member countries. For the purpose of maintaining records of all activities and to assure that all records become part of the electronic library the following guidelines should be adhered to by all members:

1. All meetings will be organised through the NEA Secretariat.
2. All telephone/video conferences will be arranged in a manner that will afford the opportunity for participation by all members and the NEA Secretariat. If the NEA Secretariat cannot participate in such communications a participating member will be designated to develop a summary with copies to the Secretariat, each participant and the electronic library.
3. All e-mail exchanges relating to a groups' areas of focus shall be shared with all members of the groups and the Secretariat. The placement of e-mails into the Electronic library will be the decision of the group leads.
4. The maintenance and retrieval of information and documents derived from the working groups (including subgroups) meetings and discussions will be kept in the MDEP Library. Access to these documents will be made available to working group members and their staffs based on the different access levels assigned.