



International Radiation Protection Association

IRPA Associate Societies Presidents and Delegates

2015-09-25

Dear Colleagues,

You will no doubt be aware that our System of Protection is currently undergoing review, prompted in particular by the experiences arising from the Fukushima event but also taking account of relevant wider issues. IRPA is working actively with ICRP and the other international organizations on these developments – for example, you will be aware of the ongoing work on the underpinning ethical basis of the system which includes a series of IRPA-sponsored workshops around the world.

One aspect of great interest and relevance is the ability of the system to be easily communicated and understood by all stakeholders. Recent experiences demonstrate that this is a significant issue touching on many of the challenges within the system. IRPA is also engaging with our sister organizations in seeking to address this issue.

We are seeking input from the IRPA Associate Societies in order to determine the views of the practitioners on what steps should be taken in this respect. As a contribution to this debate, please take into account a paper from Roger Coates, the IRPA Vice President, to stimulate thoughts. The paper has been published as an Invited Editorial in the Journal of Radiological Protection, presents the personal views of Roger Coates, and as such does not represent the views of IRPA or any other organization – although it does raise and discuss relevant issues.

You can find the paper under <http://stacks.iop.org/0952-4746/34/E13>.

We would therefore like to encourage you to develop views on how best to improve the presentation of the system of protection so that it better meets the challenges of communication and understanding, whilst of course remaining fit for purpose, ethically-based and appropriately comprehensive.





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There are many potential questions to be considered, and you may find it helpful to consider the following issues as well as any wider thoughts you may develop inter alia on:

- How should we present the uncertainty in risk estimates at low doses?
- Should we give a more prominent context to natural background exposure?
- Whilst accepting the principle of dose limitation, should we have more flexibility in how this is emphasized and presented? If so, how?
- Should we make ALARA even more central in our control hierarchy? If so, how do we ensure proportionality of effort?
- Should we make more effort to present radiation risk in the wider context of public health? Which ways would you propose?

We recognize that it will take some time to reflect on these issues and gather your thoughts. At the same time, the international consideration of these issues is continuing to move forward rather fast. Therefore it would be helpful to receive your thoughts on these issues by 31st of January 2016 so that we can prepare for a discussion in the Associate Society Forum at IRPA14 Cape Town in May 2016.

Looking forward to your contribution to this important debate.

Yours sincerely,

Renate Czarwinski
President

Roger Coates
Vice President

