



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Issues Press release on its Review of Malta's Radiation Safety Regulatory Framework**

# **IAEA Mission Concludes Peer Review of Malta's Radiation Safety Regulatory Framework**

3 March 2015

**Valletta, Malta** – Senior international nuclear safety and radiation protection experts today concluded a 10-day International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) mission to review Malta's regulatory framework for radiation safety.

The Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) team made recommendations and suggestions to the government and the Radiation Protection Board to help them strengthen the effectiveness of Malta's regulatory framework and functions in line with IAEA Safety Standards.

Denis Flory, IAEA Deputy Director General and Head of the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security, said in a message conveyed at the mission's closing meeting, held 3 March 2015, that Malta's invitation to host the review demonstrated the country's dedication to improve radiation and nuclear safety, and to learn from international experience.

The eight-member review team, headed by Sigurður M Magnússon, Director of the Icelandic Radiation Safety Authority, comprised experts from Cuba, France, Finland and Hungary as well as the IAEA.

“Malta is moving in the right direction in strengthening regulatory processes and improving the management of radiation safety and the government recognizes that legislative and structural changes are needed. This mission helps the government prioritize work that will improve the safety of the Maltese public, radiation workers and environment,” Mr Magnússon said.

The mission took place at the invitation of Malta's government. It included site visits to observe inspections and interviews and discussions with staff from the government, other organizations and the regulatory body.

Joseph Camilleri, Permanent Secretary to Malta's Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties responsible for the Occupational Health and Safety Authority, said: "The IRRS mission's recommendations and suggestions will help Malta in strengthening the national regulatory infrastructure and framework in line with international safety standards and good practices observed in other regulatory authorities."

Mr. Camilleri said the Maltese government and regulatory body will work on the issues identified as main challenges by the IRRS team in the coming years.

The team found that Malta needs to develop a national policy and strategy for safety that takes into account risks associated with radiation facilities and activities, and establish a dedicated nuclear and radiation safety Act that ensures the protection of individuals, property and the environment. The team also highlighted the need for an independent regulatory body with sufficient competence and resources.

The mission provided recommendations and suggestions for improvement, including the following:

- The government should consider knowledge management measures together with the recruitment and professional development necessary for effective regulatory control of all facilities and activities;
- The regulatory body, working with its national counterparts, should consider regular reviews of its threat assessment and revise the national radiological emergency plan accordingly;
- The regulatory body should consider modifying its emergency classification system to be consistent with IAEA Safety Standards and revising the national radiation emergency preparedness and response plan to be consistent with national regulations and international standards; and
- The regulatory body should adopt a management system to improve aspects of its oversight of medical exposure and patient protection as well as occupational radiation protection and radiation safety in the industrial environment.

The final mission report will be provided to the Maltese Government in about three months.

## **Notes to Editors:**

### **About IRRS Missions**

IRRS missions are designed to strengthen and enhance the effectiveness of the national nuclear regulatory infrastructure, while recognizing the ultimate responsibility of each State to ensure safety in this area. This is done through consideration of regulatory, technical and policy issues, with comparisons against IAEA safety standards, and, where appropriate, good practices elsewhere.

More information about IRRS missions is available on the [IAEA Website](#).

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