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TEAM OF SPECIALISTS ON RADIOACTIVE CONTAMINATED METALLURGICAL SCRAP

Note by the secretariat

The Team of Specialists on Radioactive Contaminated Metallurgical Scrap was created for a renewable period of one year in 1999. The first meeting took place in Geneva in October 1999.

The objective of the Team of Specialists is to serve as a forum where technically qualified partners of the metallurgical industry, government representatives and qualified organizations consult each other and propose solutions which are acceptable at the international level in order to harmonize the legislation, the systems of measurement, the levels of investigation concerning radioactivity of metallurgical scrap and, if possible, elaborate codes of practice/conduct in this area.

The Team of Specialists gathered approximately twenty-five experts from Governments, the steel and recuperation industries, the national regulatory bodies in charge of radioactivity, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the European Commission. Twelve official and informal meetings took place in Geneva, Brussels and Vienna to elaborate a ninety-page report entitled "*Management of Radiation Protection Aspects in the Recycling of Metal Scrap*".

This publication is aimed at persons who may not have much awareness of radiation science, but may on a very infrequent basis come into contact with a stray radiation source or radioactively contaminated material during the normal course of business. It is most important for these persons to be able to recognize and understand the potential problem, to be able to take basic safety precautions, and know how to get professional assistance. It is strongly recommended that a source of professional assistance be located before a need arises, so that staff can quickly get assistance when radioactive material is encountered.

It is also aimed at the national authorities in charge of the radiation protection and of the safety and security of radioactive substances: the publication contains a number of recommendations in order to improve the situation regarding possible contamination of scrap, part of them being addressed to these authorities.

This publication provides the following: an overview of the scrap metal industry, how radioactive substances can become incorporated into scrap and finished metal, how to detect them, and which reaction has to be foreseen in case of detection. A number of references are mentioned for the reader who may wish to study the issue further. It provides information on a number of national and international standards, requirements, and procedures that are valuable in determining the degree of problem that has been encountered, and presents recommendations for prevention, detection, and reaction to radioactive material in scrap metal. In addition, it provides introductory information to help the reader to understand various methods and means that are available for monitoring and detecting radiation in metals.

With regard to its practical aspect, the report was presented and started being used by the industry on several opportunities and on several sites. The report in its official version is now available as a publication co-sponsored by the European Commission, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the UNECE.

The Team of Specialists was created for a renewable period of one year. The second session of WP.8 (March 2001) extended its duration by one year. As the Team of Specialists on Radioactive Contaminated Metallurgical Scrap reached its objective (publication of the Report), it is, therefore, recommended not to further extend its duration.