

Ireland

Nuclear regulatory authority

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through its Office of Radiological Protection regulates radiation in Ireland.

Nuclear activities

There are no nuclear power plants, research reactors or waste facilities. There is regulation of all practices involving sources of ionising radiation, including transport of radioactive materials, as well as occupational exposure to natural sources.

Radioactive waste and spent fuel management

There is currently no centralised radioactive waste facility in Ireland. However, the EPA maintains a database of all those licensed to use, store or transport radioactive materials, which includes an up-to-date inventory of all radioactive material. This includes disused sources, held in storage throughout the country. In December 2010 the Irish Government adopted a national policy on radioactive waste management for Ireland. One of the key initiatives under this policy is that the inventory of disused radioactive sources should be reduced through a co-ordinated and phased Inventory Reduction Programme. Work on this programme commenced in 2012 and by the end of 2013, 99% of disused sources with a half life greater than 10 years had been disposed of. The policy also provides for the establishment of a centralised storage facility for the interim storage and management of residual sources and this initiative will be progressed once the final inventory of sources is categorised following the completion of the reduction programme. The Government has also agreed an operational protocol for seized and orphan sources which sets out responsibilities for the EPA, Government departments and key stakeholders to ensure that these sources are dealt with in a safe and secure manner.

Main legal instruments

The Radiological Protection Act, 1991, and the Radiological Protection (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2014 (Act Number 20 of 2014) which establishes the national regulatory organisation and sets out the appointment and powers of inspectors and the framework for the licensing system. The Radiological Protection (Amendment) Act, 2000 makes it an offence to make a false statement on a licence application and to breach a condition of licence. The

Radiological Protection Act, 1991 (Ionising Radiation) Order, 2000 is a statutory instrument which applies to workplaces where there may be a risk of exposure to ionising radiation. It is the main piece of legislation specifically dealing with the obligations of employers and the protection of workers and members of the public. It gives effect in Ireland to two European Directives: Council Directive 96/29/Euratom (Basic Safety Standards Directive), and Council Directive 90/641/Euratom (Outside Workers Directive).

S.I. 390 of 2011, gives effect to Council Directive 2009/71/Euratom of 25 June 2008 establishing a Community framework for the nuclear safety of nuclear installations, assigns powers to the EPA to, if needed, "establish and maintain a national regulatory and organisational framework for nuclear safety of nuclear installations". In addition, S.I. 320 of 2013 gives effect to Council Directive 2011/70/Euratom of 19 July 2011 establishing a Community framework for the responsible and safe management of spent fuel and radioactive waste.

Last updated on 26 August 2014

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