

**EUROPEAN HIGH LEVEL GROUP ON
NUCLEAR SAFETY AND WASTE MANAGEMENT
RULES OF PROCEDURE**

The European High Level Group on Nuclear Safety and Waste Management (HLG),

having regard to Council Conclusion on Nuclear Safety and Safe Management of Spent Nuclear Fuel and Radioactive Waste of 8 May 2007 and Commission Decision of 17 July 2007 on establishing the European High Level Group on Nuclear Safety and Waste Management;

considering that the aim of the HLG shall be to maintain and further improve the safety of nuclear installations and the safety of the management of spent fuel and radioactive waste;

considering that the HLG shall fully respect the prerogatives of Member States and of the institutions, and the institutional balance established by the Euratom Treaty;

considering the importance of independent national regulatory authorities and their decisions concerning safety;

considering the determination of the Council, as promulgated by the Commission, that the HLG should be composed of the heads of the national regulatory or safety authorities competent in the areas of the safety of nuclear installations and the safety of the management of spent fuel and radioactive waste;

having consulted the European Commission;

has adopted the following Rules of Procedure:

Article 1 – Purpose

1.1 The HLG shall work to develop a common understanding and, if appropriate, suggest common approaches in the fields of:

- (a) the safety of nuclear installations,
- (b) the safety of the management of spent fuel and radioactive waste and
- (c) financing of the decommissioning of nuclear installations and safe management of spent fuel and radioactive waste.

The HLG shall select areas from among the list of possible actions in Section B of the Council Conclusions of 8 May 2007 and identify priorities.

1.2 The HLG shall report about its work to the Council of European Union and the European Parliament.

1.3 The HLG shall facilitate consultation, coordination and cooperation of national regulatory authorities in the European Union.

1.4 The HLG shall encourage a high level of transparency on issues related to the fields mentioned in 1.1 and provide timely information to the public on important upcoming nuclear safety issues of a common interest. For this purpose as well as to facilitate the internal communication, a web site shall be established.

Article 2 – Membership

2.1 Each Member State shall nominate two senior representatives as Members to the HLG having competence in the areas covered by the HLG. The Commission shall designate a high level representative to participate in the HLG as a Member.

2.2 Senior representatives, nominated from EEA Member States and from those States that are candidates for accession to the European Union, shall have the right to participate as Observers.

2.3 Members and Observers of the HLG may be accompanied by appropriate experts.

2.4 The HLG may invite other experts to take part in its meetings or perform necessary studies, on a case-by-case basis, where this would help support the activities of the HLG mentioned under Article 1. The Commission would compensate expenses incurred subject to applicable budgetary rules.

2.5 The HLG may set up expert working groups or sub-groups to study specific subjects under the working programme established by the HLG. The HLG shall define the terms of reference and rules of procedures of the working groups or the subgroups. These subordinate groups shall be disbanded as soon as their tasks have been fulfilled.

2.6 Member and Observer names shall be published on the HLG web site.

2.7 Members and Observers may terminate their membership at any time by informing the Chairperson in writing. Members who are no longer able to participate in the deliberations should be replaced by the respective Member State in due time.

Article 3 – Chairperson

3.1. The HLG shall designate a Chairperson from among its Members pursuant to Article 5.1.

3.2. The Chairperson shall be designated for a period of two years and may be re-appointed once. In the case of a resignation of the Chairperson during the two year period, a new Chairperson shall be designated under the same terms for a period of two years.

3.3. Vice-Chairperson(s) shall be designated by the HLG, following the same procedure, on the same terms and conditions as for the Chairperson. Should the Chairperson be absent or unable to discharge her/his duties, she/he shall be replaced by a Vice-Chairperson. The Chairperson may ask the Vice-Chairperson(s) to assist in any matter as appropriate.

3.4 The Chairperson shall represent the HLG in the Council and the European Parliament.

Article 4 – Meetings

4.1 HLG meetings shall be convened twice a year or more frequently as deemed appropriate. The meeting dates should, if possible, be announced six months in advance.

4.2 Meetings of the HLG shall be convened by the Secretariat on the request of the Chairperson. The Chairperson may ask the Secretariat to convene an extraordinary meeting of the HLG when appropriate or at the request of at least one third of its Members.

4.3 The Chairperson shall establish an agenda for the meeting. The proposed agenda shall be published on the HLG web site three weeks in advance of the meeting. The agenda shall be adopted by the HLG at the start of the meeting.

4.4 The proposed agenda of the meeting and all supporting documentation shall be made available to the Members and Observers, as appropriate, at least two weeks in advance of the meeting.

4.5 The Chairperson may declare a meeting open and permit the debate to proceed when HLG Members representing the majority of EU Member States are present.

4.6 The Secretariat shall prepare draft minutes of each HLG meeting and send them to the Chairperson for approval not later than ten days after the meeting. The Secretariat shall make the draft minutes available to all HLG Members without delay after they are approved by the Chairperson. Written comments may be made by HLG Members preferably earlier than two weeks before the next meeting. The draft minutes shall be adopted at the beginning of the next meeting.

4.7 At each meeting the Secretariat shall draw up an attendance list specifying, where appropriate, the authorities, organisations or bodies to which the participants belong.

Article 5 – Deliberations

5.1 Decisions shall be taken by consensus. The Chairperson and the HLG Members shall make every reasonable effort to facilitate consensus.

5.2 In its deliberations the HLG shall respect the national and EU legislation regarding secrecy and confidentiality.

5.3 Where the Secretariat or the Chairperson informs the HLG that a certain item of the Agenda or a question raised is of a confidential nature, Members as well as other attendees shall be under obligation not to disclose information which has come to their knowledge through the work of the HLG or its working groups. The HLG Chairperson may request in such cases that only Members be present at meetings.

5.4 In urgent matters the Chairperson may seek agreement to a position or reasoned opinion by electronic procedure. In such cases, the Chairperson shall ensure that each Member is aware that an agreement or reasoned opinion is sought by electronic procedure and shall set out clearly the time-scale for comments and the consequences of failure to respond within that time-scale. Agreement to a position or reasoned opinion using electronic procedure also requires consensus.

5.5 In the event the HLG remains divided on an issue, the Chairperson may issue a summary paper stating the different positions on the issue; the paper shall be annexed to the minutes of the meeting and subject to the minutes procedure laid down under Art. 4.6. In the case of dissenting opinions Members shall have the right to formulate their position which shall also be annexed to the minutes.

Article 6 – Consultation and transparency

6.1 The HLG will use appropriate processes to consult interested parties which may include, inter alia: public hearings and roundtables, industry, European fora and written and Internet consultations.

6.2 The HLG may publish on its web site documents which assist interested parties to understand the work of the HLG. Comments shall be invited. Comments received by such a party in response to consultation documents shall be published on the HLG web site, unless a respondent explicitly requests that its submission is not made public on confidentiality grounds.

6.3 The HLG may decide to meet interested parties to discuss matters of common interests. As appropriate, the Chairperson or the Vice-Chairperson may represent the HLG at such a meeting or Members may be nominated to do so.

Article 7 – HLG Secretariat

The Commission shall provide the Secretariat of the HLG and any expert working group or subgroup under Article 2.5. The function of the Secretariat shall be inter alia to organise the HLG meetings, to circulate the meeting agenda, to draft and circulate the minutes of the meetings and to set up and maintain the HLG web site¹ upon the request and advice of the Chairperson of the HLG.

Article 8 – Accountability

8.1 The HLG shall submit the first Report to the Council and the European Parliament not later than by 17 July 2009. Next progress reports are due at least every three years.

8.2 The Chairperson of the HLG will report to the European Parliament and to the Council when requested.

Article 9 – Publication and Modification of the Rules of Procedure

9.1 These Rules of Procedure shall be made public on the HLG web site.

9.2 The HLG may deliberate on amendments of these Rules of Procedure or adopt additional rules to facilitate its operations only if Members representing two thirds of EU Member States are present or represented.

¹ CIRCA platform