Editorial

Dear Colleague, dear Friends,

With summer finally having arrived after an odd hesitation period in May and June, most of us in the Northern hemisphere are enjoying the hot weather, sun, and well deserved summer holidays.

With this issue of the e-Newsletter, we would like to keep you up-to-date with the relevant events happening within and around the network and make sure you are well informed and aware of your fellow-colleagues’ activities around the world and within the WHO.

On the recent important developments at the WHO is the adoption of the new Emergency Response Framework (ERF) to clarify WHO’s roles and responsibilities in this regard and to provide a common approach for its work in emergencies to best serve and be accountable to populations affected by emergencies. To that accord, the ERF sets out WHO’s core commitments in emergency response which are those actions that WHO is committed to delivering in emergencies with public health consequences to minimize mortality and life-threatening morbidity by leading a coordinated and effective health sector response. The ERF outlines WHO’s four critical functions during response: leadership, information, technical expertise and core services.

In performing these essential tasks, WHO relies on its technical expert networks and Collaborating Centers. We are happy to inform you about a successful and timely redesignation of the two WHO Collaborating Centers (CC) and REMPAN’s veterans for a period of renewed four-year collaboration: University of Wuerzburg (CC Head – Prof. C. Reiners) and ARCRM/St Petersburg, Russia (CC Head – Dr. A. Aleksanin). The National Institute of Radiological Sciences (NIRS) in Chiba/Japan is at the very end of the designation process to become a WHO Collaborating Center in August.

These and more news in the current issue of the e-Newsletter. In the meantime, I wish you all a happy reading and enjoyable

Dr. Zhanat Carr
WHO-REMPAN Coordinator
Scientific Events

20th Nuclear Medical Defence Conference, Munich, Germany
By Viktor Meineke and Christina Beinke, Bundeswehr Institute of Radiobiology affiliated to the University of Ulm, Munich, Germany

For the first time, the 20th Nuclear Medical Defence Conference was held in Munich on May 13-16, 2013, under the new name “Global Conference on Radiation Topics – Preparedness, Response, Protection, and Research”, ConRad 2013. This international and interdisciplinary conference is organized every two years by the Bundeswehr Institute of Radiobiology affiliated to the University of Ulm.

331 military and civilian scientific delegates and professionals attended from 44 countries making the conference one of the world’s largest exchange forum of experience and expertise in this particular domain of nuclear medical defence.

Radiation accident medical preparedness, management and response, radiation protection as well as new research findings in the fields of radiation medicine and radiobiology were the key topics. The conference was very successful as so many experts from different sectors (e.g. medicine, research / teaching, government / administration and action forces) took the opportunity to address and discuss these important issues including the development of radiation accident management, the advancement of science and the future perspective in the field of nuclear medical defence.

Colonel Prof. Dr. V. Meineke, Chair – Munich, Germany, May 2013

The books of abstracts and impressions from the conference on photographs are now available on the conference homepage. Several conference speeches given at ConRad 2013 will also be available on this website and in addition the conference proceedings will be published in a special issue of the Health Physics Journal. This material provided enables many more people who did not have the opportunity to attend the conference to benefit from the high quality outcome of this unique event.

The organizers trust that all attendees enjoyed and took home many valuable memories and stimulations by this wide-ranging scientific program of ConRad 2013 and look forward to organize and hold the next Nuclear Medical Defence Conference, ConRad 2015, in Munich on May 04-07, 2015.◆
Scientific Events

NIRS Workshop on Medical Response to Nuclear Accidents in Asia 2013, Chiba, Japan
By By Hideo Tatsuzaki, Misao Hachiya, Takako Tominaga, Makoto Akashi, National Institute of Radiological Sciences (NIRS), Chiba, Japan

On March 11-13, 2013, the National Institute of Radiological Sciences (NIRS) organized the Workshop on Medical Response to Nuclear Accidents in Asia 2013 – an interactive training for medical professionals in Chiba, Japan.

The workshop was co-organized by WHO and the IAEA. Participants from 11 Asian countries attended the workshop. The meeting stressed “two-ways” lectures to enable discussions during the lectures. Dr. Zhanat Carr, WHO, gave a lecture on “Activities in radiation emergency medicine by WHO” via a live internet connection, and answered questions. The participants improved knowledge and skills concerning radiation emergency medicine. ◆

International Conference and 10th Anniversary of RRCRM&HE, Gomel, Belarus
By Alexander Rozhko, Republican Research Center for Radiation Medicine and Human Ecology, Gomel, Belarus

January 31, 2013 the International Conference “Current Issues in Radiation Medicine: From Science to Practice”, which marked the 10th anniversary of the Republican Research Centre of Radiation Medicine and Human Ecology (RRCRM&HE), was held in Gomel, Belarus. The conference was attended by over 200 representatives of the medical, educational and scientific institutions of the Republic of Belarus, Ukraine, Russia, Kazakhstan, and Iran. The conference offered the opportunity to the participants to discuss a wide range of issues related to radiation protection. The scope of the conference topics covered a broad range of research areas: radiation medicine, radiation epidemiology, radiation biology, and radioecology, radiation dosimetry and radiation safety. ◆

Photo credit: http://www.tvr.by/eng/society.asp?id=82274

Scientific Events

IX Latin American IRPA Regional Congress on Radiation Protection and Safety, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
By Teresa Leite, Eletronuclear Medical Assistance Foundation (FEAM), Angra dos Reis, Brazil

From April 14-19, 2013, the Brazilian Radiation Protection Society (SBPR), with the support of the Latin American and the Caribbean Federation of Radioprotection (FRALC) and the International Radiation Protection Association (IRPA) held the “IX Latin American IRPA Regional Congress on Radiation Protection and Safety” in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

The congress was also attended by a team of physicians from the Eletronuclear Medical Assistance Foundation (FEAM) specialized in treating patients overexposed to radiation. Dr. Teresa Leite, FEAM’S Superintendent Director, presented a training program developed by FEAM, CMRI (Ionizing Radiation Medical Center) and CIRA (Radioepidemiology Information Center) targeting health social workers to improve knowledge about effects of ionizing radiation.

So far 60 people have been trained; the aim is to train about 400 social workers. The rational of training social workers is to provide information about ionizing radiation among populations living in the vicinity of the nuclear power plants. ◆

Dr. Teresa Leite – IX Latin American IRPA Regional Congress – Rio de Janeiro, April 2013
Exercise and Training

XXII Annual Retraining in December 2012, Angra dos Reis, Brazil
By Teresa Leite, Eletronuclear Medical Assistance Foundation (FEAM), Angra dos Reis, Brazil

The Eletronuclear Medical Assistance Foundation (FEAM) held the XXII Annual Retraining at the Ionizing Radiation Medical Center (CMRI) in Angra dos Reis, Brazil, November 30 - December 02, 2012. The main topics of the course coordinated by Dr. Teresa Leite, Superintendent-Director of the FEAM, were biodosimetry and response capacity. During the meeting representatives of the Navy, Army, Air Force, Ministries of Defence and Health, Dosimetry and Radioprotection and Institute, Oswaldo Cruz Foundation and Dr Luiz Bertelli, Los Alamos National Laboratory, USA, gave lectures and participated in discussion panels.

XXII Annual Retraining – Angra dos Reis, Brazil, December 2012

During the retraining program one of the most recurring issues was the radiation accident in Goiânia in 1987, still considered the largest radiological accident in the world. According to Dr Nelson Valverde, FEAM consultant and IAEA collaborator, who attended the victims in Goiânia, there had been an evolution in the preparation of medical professionals and health due to diligent studies performed since the accident. According to him, workshops sponsored by FEAM such as retraining, are also of fundamental importance to this development.

Command-post exercise – Chelyabinsk, Russia, February 2013

The command-post exercise "Metel 2013" (Snowstorm 2013) was conducted to test the efficiency of the counterterrorist operation (CTO) plan to prevent radiological terrorist attacks on health care facilities. Physicians and researchers of the URCRM were involved in triage and provision of emergency assistance to those affected by radiation.
Exercise and Training

4th International Expert Course in May 2013, Stockholm, Sweden
By Leif Stenke, Hematology Center, Karolinska University Hospital and Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden

On May 15-17, 2013 the “4th International Expert Course on the Medical Management of Radiological and Nuclear Events” chaired by Assoc. Prof. Leif Stenke, Karolinska Institutet, was held in Stockholm, Sweden. The course arranged in collaboration between the Karolinska Institutet Stockholm, WHO-REMPAN, the European Blood and Marrow Transplantation group (EBMT) and the Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare, was attended by 17 experts, mainly hematologists and oncologists responsible for medical preparedness to radiation emergencies. The course program emphasized on the medical lessons learnt from the Fukushima Daiichi NPP accident in 2011. Dr. Linda Walsh presented the 2013 WHO Health Risk Assessment Report; important primary data from Japan were provided by Prof. Makoto Akashi, NIRS, Japan. Other lecturers were professors Albert Wiley, REAC/TS, USA and Ray Powles, EBMT/NAC, UK discussing the US experience on large scale radionuclear exercises and the EBMT preparedness program, including the role of stem cell transplantation. The course program also included group activities based on radionuclear scenarios with major medical implications. ◆

Exercise and Training

Integrated special tactical exercises in Urals region
By Elena Kuznetstova, Urals Research Center for Radiation Medicine (URCRM), Chelyabinsk, Russia

On April 24, 2013, experts of the URCRM participated in integrated special tactical exercises aimed at extinguishing a forest fire on the territory of the East Ural Radioactive Trace (EURT). The special tactical exercises were held by the Chief Directorate of the Ministry of Emergency Situation of Russia for the Chelyabinsk Oblast in accordance with the decision of the Chelyabinsk Oblast Security Council for the prevention and elimination of emergency situations and fire safety. Estimations of levels of radioactive contamination of soil and vegetation at the fire source and along the fire spread were made based on database analysis of the URCRM Department of Environmental Studies and maps of contaminated areas. According to these estimates necessary tactical recommendations were made. The lessons learnt addressed a number of problems. Resolving them will increase the effectiveness of assistance provided in case of a real emergency and – in particular – will improve the coordination and consistency of actions of different units involved. ◆
New Publications

The new Joint Radiation Emergency Management Plan published by IAEA in July 2013 describes inter-agency arrangements for preparedness and response to a radiation incident independent of whether it arises from an accident, natural disaster, negligence, security event or any other cause.

The IAEA publication “Actions to Protect the Public in an Emergency to Severe Conditions at a Light Water Reactor” published in May 2013 is part of the IAEA’s Emergency Preparedness and response series. It takes account of the lessons learned from response to past emergencies, including the accident at TEPCO’s Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station in 2011.


In 2013, T. McKenna et al., Incident and Emergency Centre, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) published “Default Operational Intervention Levels (OILs) for Severe Nuclear Power Plant or Spent Fuel Pool Emergencies” in Health Physics 2013 May; 104 (5):459-470.

The article “Reconstruction of Long-lived Radionuclide Intakes for Techa Riverside Residents: 137Cs” was published in Health Physics 2013 May; 104 (5):481-498 by E.I. Tolstykh et al. from the Urals Research Center for Radiation Medicine in Chelyabinsk, Russian Federation.

New Publications

In 2013, WHO published the report “Health risk assessment from the nuclear accident after the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami” based on preliminary dose estimation.

The primary purpose of this health risk assessment of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear accident is to estimate its potential public health impact so that future health needs can be anticipated and public health actions can be taken. This assessment is based on a preliminary estimate of radiation doses, as described in a WHO report published in May 2012.

Research in 2007 showed that WHO recommendations were largely based on expert opinion, rarely used systematic evidence-based methods, and did not follow the organization’s own “Guidelines for Guidelines”.

In response, the WHO established a “Guidelines Review Committee” (GRC) to implement and oversee internationally recognized standards. The publication by D. Sinclair et al. “World Health Organization Guideline Development: An Evaluation” examined the impact of these changes on WHO guideline documents (PLoS One. 2013 May 31;8(5):e63715).
News – From WHO Offices

66th World Health Assembly (WHA) 2013, Geneva, Switzerland
By Zhanat Carr, WHO, Geneva, Switzerland

Officials from 194 Member States recently gathered to review WHO activities and set new priorities for the future on May 21-26, 2013. The 66th World Health Assembly (WHA) in Geneva focussed on noncommunicable diseases, universal health coverage, women and children’s health, health in the post-2015 agenda, and discussed WHO budget, administration and reform.

In their review of progress on the 2011 resolution “Drinking-Water, Sanitation and Health” (WHA64.24) delegates commended the excellent work of WHO, recognizing the leading role it continues to play with respect to norms and monitoring of drinking water safety and sanitation. Member States also expressed appreciation for the action taken by WHO to protect and promote the health of workers. Workers’ health must be protected from factors such as globalization and free–market forces. This can be done through national action plans and legislation for occupational health and by addressing priority occupational noncommunicable diseases such as cancer and chronic respiratory diseases.

The newly identified influenza H7N9 and MERS-CoV (novel coronavirus) outbreaks lent even greater relevance to discussions on the IHR. Delegates voiced widespread support for the IHR and the WHA Secretariat stressed the need for countries to provide the necessary resources to ensure IHR work can continue in countries and at WHO. ◆

News – From WHO Offices

IAEA-PAHO/WHO Sub-Regional Workshop, Panama
By Pablo Jimenez, PAHO, Washington, USA

The IAEA-PAHO/WHO Sub-Regional Workshop on “International Emergency Notification and the Role of the Health Sector in Radiation Emergencies” was organized April 24-26, 2013, in Panama for Central American and the Dominican Republic countries. Three participants per country were invited from the Competent Authority under the IAEA Conventions, the National IHR Focal Point Office and the coordination agency or organization responsible for national health emergency planning for nuclear or radiological emergencies. All the countries attended except Guatemala.

The objectives were to:

Update on the notification protocols under the International Conventions and the International Health Regulations

Discuss the needs and means, at national level, of coordination and harmonization of those two notification channels to the international response arrangements.

Understand and/or clarify the role of the health sector in national preparedness and response efforts to a radiation emergency and the need to coordinate with other national agencies and institutions involved in emergency preparedness.

Explore the functional and infrastructural needs of the health sector in such emergencies and identify the gaps on a regional level.

The objectives were met and next steps were agreed and drafted with the participants. ◆
News – From the Network Centers

REMAT reorganized in 2013, Chiba, Japan
By By Hideo Tatsuzaki, Misao Hachiya, Takako Tominaga, Makoto Akashi, National Institute of Radiological Sciences (NIRS), Chiba, Japan

In 2010, the National Institute of Radiological Sciences (NIRS), Chiba, Japan, has established the medical assistance team Radiation Emergency Medical Assistant Team (REMAT) consisting of physicians, nurses, radiation protection experts, and health physicists ready to respond to a radiation emergency. Then, the primary aim of REMAT was medical assistance to radiation emergency in foreign countries, and upon request by the foreign governments of the nations affected or international organizations such as WHO and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), NIRS was to activate REMAT.

In March 2013, NIRS has reorganized the REMAT as a department with staff members appointed to this department as their main duty and also revised roles of REMAT. This team has now a new function of response to domestic as well as to foreign radiation emergency. Dr. Makoto Akashi, executive director of NIRS, is also director of REMAT.

REMAT team

Video by IRNS on Fukushima Accident online

The analysis of the Fukushima Daiichi accident of March 2011 by the Institut de Radioprotection et de Surete Nucleaire (IRNS), France, has been made available as a film to help viewers better understand the events that took place at Fukushima focusing entirely on the events that resulted in a core meltdown in three of the reactors at Fukushima.

News – From the Network Centers

New training facility built at NIRS, Chiba, Japan
By Hideo Tatsuzaki, Misao Hachiya, Takako Tominaga, Makoto Akashi, National Institute of Radiological Sciences (NIRS), Chiba, Japan

A new training facility was built at the National Institute of Radiological Sciences (NIRS) in Chiba, Japan, in April 2013.

New training facility – Chiba, Japan, April 2013

The three stories high building provides two ordinal lecture rooms, a lecture room equipped with personal computers, and six laboratories in which radioactive materials can be used for trainings/drills. The new facility will be opened on May 20, 2013.

International Academic Conference on Radiation Health Risk Management in Fukushima, Japan

On February 25-27, 2013 the Fukushima Medical University (FMU) held the International Academic Conference on Radiation Health Risk Management in Fukushima, Japan. The presentation materials and in additionally the video of 2 discussion sessions are available online.

http://www.fmu.ac.jp/radiationhealth/conference/
News – Upcoming Training Courses

- **06-09 August, 2013, Oak Ridge, USA**
  Radiation Emergency Medicine (REM)

- **12-16 August, 2013, Oak Ridge, USA**
  Advanced Radiation Medicine

- **10-11 September, 2013, Oak Ridge, USA**
  Pre-Hospital Radiation Emergency Preparedness

- **21 - 25 October, 2013, Trnava, Slovak Republic**
  NERIS-TP Training Course

- **18-22 November, 2013, Mol, Belgium**
  Radiation Protection Course
News – Upcoming Scientific Events

- **29 July - 02 August, Boston, USA**
  Radiological Emergency Planning: Terrorism, Security, and Communication
  [https://ecpe.sph.harvard.edu/programs.cfm?CSID=REP0813&pg=cluster&CLID=1&loc=lp](https://ecpe.sph.harvard.edu/programs.cfm?CSID=REP0813&pg=cluster&CLID=1&loc=lp)

- **31 July - 02 August, Baltimore, USA**
  Mitigation and Treatment of Radiation Damage

- **01-05 September, 2013, Dublin, Ireland**
  40th Annual Meeting of the European Radiation Research Society

- **15-19 September, 2013, New Orleans, USA**
  59th Radiation Research Society Annual Meeting

- **07-10 October, 2013, Brussels, Belgium**
  Fifth International MELODI Workshop
  [www.melodi2013.org](http://www.melodi2013.org)

- **22-24 October, Abu Dhabi, UAE**
  ICRP 2013: 2nd International Symposium on the System of Radiological Protection
  [http://www.icrp.org/page.asp?id=141](http://www.icrp.org/page.asp?id=141)

- **02-03 December, 2013, Dubai, UAE**
  ICRM 2013 – International Conference on Radiation Medicine
  [https://www.waset.org/conferences/2013/uae/icrm/](https://www.waset.org/conferences/2013/uae/icrm/)

- **23-27 June, 2014, Geneva, Switzerland**
  IRPA 2014

**Important Update!**
The deadline for submission abstracts for IRPA 2014 is 15 September, 2013

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**The 14th WHO REMPAN Meeting – mark your calendars!**

On May 07-09, 2014, the 14th WHO REMPAN Coordination and Planning Meeting hosted by the WHO Collaborating Center Wuerzburg will take place be at Hotel Novotel Würzburg, Germany.

**Participation by invitation only!**

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**Disclosure**

The REMPAN e-NEWSLETTER is produced 2 times a year and circulated by WHO Secretariat to the network members to provide information about latest news on the network’s activities, developments in radiation emergency preparedness and management.

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**Contacts / Feedback**

Dr. Zhanat Carr
REMPAN Secretariat
Public Health and Environment
Health Security and Environment
World Health Organization
Email: carrz@who.int

**Website**


**Editors**

Dr. Zhanat Carr, WHO
Dr. Rita Schneider, REMPAN CC Würzburg

**Design**

Dr. Rita Schneider, REMPAN CC Würzburg

**Contributors to this issue**

Makoto Akashi, Christina Beinke, Zhanat Carr, Misao Hachiya, Pablo Jimenez, Elena Kuznetstova, Teresa Leite, Viktor Meineke, Alexander Rozhko, Rita Schneider, Leif Stenke, Hideo Tatsuzaki, Takako Tominaga, Mitsuaki Yoshida