

# Qualified Experts for Radioactive Waste Management – the UK Approach

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- Introduction
- History
- Implementation
- Conclusions

## Introduction #1

- The UK Regulatory Bodies have been working together for some time to develop a competence framework for advisers on radioactive waste
- Earlier stages in this development were presented to EUTERP in Vilnius 2008



## Introduction #2

- Following extensive engagement with the Radiation Protection profession in the UK, these arrangements are now being finalised
- Implementation will start in 2011
- This paper describes the key points

## History #1

- Implementation of the Basic Safety Standards (96/29/EURATOM) in the UK has been achieved by the use of separate legislation for personnel safety and environmental protection
- most of which originated 60+ years ago.

## History #2

- For personnel protection in the workplace the Qualified Expert role is fulfilled by the Radiation Protection Adviser (RPA)
- This role has been defined and in operation for many years with enforcement by the Health and Safety Executive (our safety regulator)



## History #3

- UK environmental regulators required employers to use a specialist adviser on radioactive waste management for some years
- Each part of the UK had a different approach
- only recently have they defined the role of the "Radioactive Waste Adviser (RWA)"
- by a formal consultation in 2010 by the Regulatory Bodies (the environment agencies for England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland)

## Implementation #1

We define “competence” as:

- Knowledge + experience
- We have published a syllabus that defines the knowledge needed to be an RWA, and
- It also describes the relevant amount of experience required
- [http://www.sepa.org.uk/about\\_us/consultations/closed\\_consultations/qualified\\_expert.aspx](http://www.sepa.org.uk/about_us/consultations/closed_consultations/qualified_expert.aspx)



# Topics

- Syllabus divided into 45 topics;
- Content and required competence and experience specified for each.

# Level of competence required

- General awareness
- Basic Understanding
- Detailed understanding

# Level of experience required

- Level 0 - no experience required.
- Level 1 – some experience required
- Level 2 – significant experience required



## Topic: BPEO

Basic understanding, Experience level 0

- The BPEO principle
- The BPEO methodology
- Application of the BPEO principle to the full lifecycle of a facility, including design, construction, operation and decommissioning, and the management of radioactive waste for each of these lifecycle stages.

## Topic: BPM

### Detailed understanding, Experience 2

How to apply the BPM condition, and audit against BPM requirements, in relation to:

- Facility design
- Facility operation, including abatement of discharges
- Minimisation of risk
- Radioactive waste management
- Facility decommissioning



## Implementation # 2

- We will appoint an independent Assessing Body or bodies
- These will deal with “non-nuclear” RWAs
  - Those who do not work on nuclear sites
  - Generally, the RWA role will be delivered by one or more persons who are each RWAs
- If the assessing body certifies an RWA, we will recognise that person's capacity to act



## Implementation # 3

- Nuclear sites will use their existing frameworks to assess their own RWAs
  - Generally nuclear sites use a group of experts to deliver the RWA role with regulator oversight
  - If they certify an RWA, we will recognise that person's capacity to act
- In both cases, it is the responsibility of the employer to ensure that the RWA is "suitable"

## Implementation # 4

- The Regulatory Bodies will create an “Approval Body” that will approve the independent Assessing Bodies
- It is a regulatory requirement that the certification of an RWA can be removed where this is indicated
  - We hope this will be very rare!
  - BUT this is an important aspect of professionalism



## Implementation #5

- Arrangements are in place to ensure that there is a smooth introduction of these arrangements ("grandfather rights")
- Nuclear sites, hospitals, consultants will all be able to gain RWA status
- From 2016, RWAs must develop a portfolio of new training records and evidence of experience to gain RWA status and to demonstrate their continuing competence to the Assessing Body



## Implementation #6

The arrangements will ensure:

- A unified approach across the whole of the UK
- A professional standard is set
- Consistent assessment to national standards
- Regulatory burden is optimised
- We believe the new arrangements are cost neutral

## Conclusions

- We are establishing a specific level of competence – it is not enough just to have a qualification in RP
- We are formalising the requirement for relevant and sufficient experience – to ensure “expertise”
- We are requiring RWAs to continuously improve themselves, like any other profession so that standards are maintained over time

- Thank you for your attention