

Cradle-to-Grave Control in New Caribbean IAEA Member States

IAEA's First Mission to Control Radioactive Sources from Cradle-to-Grave Takes Place in Barbados

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IAEA experts John Zarling (Department of Energy, USA) and Juan Carlos Benitez-Navarro (IAEA) train Stephen Harte, a specialist from the Ministry of Health, Barbados, on radioactive source identification using a demonstration source. (Photo: IAEA)

Barbados has completed its national inventory of sealed radioactive sources (SRSs) and is developing a national strategy to manage disused sealed radioactive sources (DSRS) with assistance provided by the IAEA during its first expert mission on cradle-to-grave control of SRSs, held in March 2017.

The mission was supported by the IAEA's technical cooperation programme and forms part of a four-year regional project titled RLA/9/081, '*Strengthening Cradle-to-Grave Control of Radioactive Sources*'.

Three IAEA experts worked together with staff from the Ministry of Health (Environmental Health Department) and the Ministry of Environment and Drainage (Environmental Protection Department) to examine, photograph, characterize and catalogue all sealed radioactive sources found, whether in use or disused, for inclusion in the national inventory.

Minister of Health, The Hon. John David E Boyce, spoke at the mission opening, which also was attended by Dr Joy St John, Chief Medical Officer and National Liaison Officer for Barbados to the IAEA, and Mr Anthony Headley, Director of the Environment Protection Department. Barbadian authorities and institutions provided outstanding support to the IAEA expert team, which contributed significantly to the success of the mission.

The IAEA mission provided a useful starting point for Barbados to improve its control of all radiation sources with a view to a longer-term management strategy. National counterparts learned about the methodology for examining, characterizing and recording data on SRSs. The data collected during the mission will be included into the *Regulatory Authority Information System* (RAIS), a software application developed by the IAEA to assist Member States in managing their regulatory activities in accordance with IAEA safety standards and guidance.

Following the expert mission, Barbados is better equipped to create and manage a national cradle-to-grave system for its radioactive sources. Lessons learned in this mission will help other Caribbean IAEA Member States make similar progress.



Catherine Griffiths, a UK radiation protection expert, examines a density/moisture gauge CPN with radioactive sources at commercial premises in Barbados. (Photo: IAEA)

BACKGROUND

Radioactive sources are widely used for beneficial purposes in variety of fields ranging from industry to medicine, agriculture, research, and education. Due to decay over time, these sealed radioactive sources eventually can no longer be used. Disused sealed radioactive sources must be managed, to protect people and the environment from potential adverse effects of ionizing radiation. The IAEA is conducting various expert missions in the Caribbean region, to assist all Member States in the implementation of the IAEA safety standard guidelines for DSRs.

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