REMPAN eNEWSLETTER

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The 158th WHO Executive Board took place from 2 to 7 February 2026 in Geneva

- Video recordings of the event can be followed here: https://www.who.int/about/governance/executive-board/executive-board-158th-session
- The Executive Board's main functions are to implement the decisions and policies of the World Health Assembly (WHA), to agree on the agenda of the upcoming WHA, and generally facilitate its work.
- The draft resolution on **Radiation and Health** proposed by the Governments of Iraq and Egypt was approved by the EB. It will be discussed at the 79th WHA in May.

Dr Chikwe Ihekweazu, Executive Director, WHO Health Emergencies (WHE) Programme at the 158th EB
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From the desk of REMPAN Coordinator:

Dr Zhanat KENBAYEVA
WHO-REMPAN
Secretariat

Dear Reader,

As we reflect on 2025, we do so with full awareness of the extraordinary challenges that shaped this year for the global health community. WHO faced one of its most difficult financial periods, navigating resource constraints at a time when strong public health leadership was urgently needed. These pressures unfolded amid severe geopolitical instability, with multiple armed conflicts continuing to devastate regions and the risk of nuclear escalation rising to levels not seen in decades. In such a turbulent environment, the importance of the WHO Radiation Emergency Medical Preparedness and Assistance Network (REMPAN) has never been more evident. Your expertise, readiness, and unwavering commitment to WHO's mission provided stability and clarity when the world felt increasingly uncertain. The trust and professionalism that define this network remain essential pillars of global preparedness.

As we look toward 2026, we do so with renewed purpose. The challenges ahead will demand cooperation, resilience, and creativity—qualities that REMPAN embodies. I extend my deepest gratitude for your collaboration, your generosity of knowledge, and your steadfast support.

I close with a line from Albert Camus that feels especially fitting: "In the midst of winter, I found there was, within me, an invincible summer." May that spirit remind us that even in difficult times, resilience, solidarity, and the pursuit of peace remain possible.

The 8th International Symposium on the Fukushima Health Management Survey will be held on 12 March 2026. For detailed information on the symposium program and speakers, please visit: https://fhms.jp/en/symposium/2026/

Online participation is available with advance registration. To register, complete the registration form at the link below:
https://forms.gle/FvHmPQnVczbTinhH6

公立大学法人
福島県立医科大学
FUKUSHIMA MEDICAL UNIVERSITY

FUKUSHIMA AT 15:

Message from Professor Shunichi Yamashita

"Fifteen years have passed since the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear accident, yet the memories of those early days remain vivid. When I arrived in Fukushima in March 2011, confusion, fear, and uncertainty filled the air. Even among medical professionals, anxiety about radiation exposure was overwhelming. Drawing on lessons from Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and years of work after the Chornobyl accident, I emphasized one essential truth: understanding radiation requires calm, scientific thinking and clear distinction between immediate health effects and long-term risks.

In those first weeks, my role evolved rapidly—from supporting Fukushima Medical University to advising the prefecture and national government, engaging with residents, and communicating daily through media and community meetings. These efforts eventually led to the creation of the Fukushima Health Management Survey, now a cornerstone of long-term health monitoring and recovery.

The greatest challenge was not radiation itself, but the fear, misinformation, and distrust that spread in its wake. Misinterpreted dose projections, concerns about childhood thyroid cancer, and memories of past nuclear tragedies intensified public anxiety. These experiences taught me that risk communication must be grounded in transparency, empathy, and long-term trust.

What I wish to pass on to the next generation is simple yet profound: cultivate scientific literacy, learn from history, and approach crises with humility and resilience. Respect that people perceive risk differently and continue seeking reliable knowledge even when information is overwhelming. Above all, maintain the "spirit of the willow leaf"—flexible, patient, and quietly strong—while holding onto hope for the future."

(The full lecture to be presented at the 18th REMPAN meeting in Paris, France on 23-25 June 2026.)

News from the WHO Secretariat

◆ Update of WHO's 1987 and 1993 reports on impacts of nuclear weapons on public health, health systems, and environment.

As previously communicated, the 78th World Health Assembly (WHA), held in May 2025, adopted the Resolution on the Effects of Nuclear War on Public Health. In response, the WHA has requested the WHO Secretariat to update the landmark WHO reports from 1987 and 1993, which examined the health, health systems, and e4nvionmental impacts of nuclear weapons.

To initiate this important work, we are currently mobilizing resources and looking for donors.

In parallel, we are establishing an Expert Working Group which will comprise up to 15 specialists, who will collaboratively develop the updated report over a three-year period (2026–2028). Additional topical experts will be brought in on the add-hoc basis. The working modalities will primarily involve virtual engagement, supplemented by a limited number of in-person meetings, subject to the availability of funding.

The call for applications was sent out in November 2025 with the deadline running up to January 2026. The technical experts on the following areas (non-exhaustive list) were sought:

- Radiation biology, radiopathology;
- Radiation epidemiology (systematic reviews methodology);
- Radiation protection;
- Health physics, modeling of consequences of nuclear detonations;
- Modern nuclear warfare expert (NW impact humanitarian, environmental, and geopolitical impacts)
- Nuclear weapons testing – health consequences;
- Radiation emergency medicine; clinical management of contaminated burns and trauma; medical countermeasures and stockpiles;
- Radiation emergency preparedness and response (with the emphasis on public health and medical response);
- Mass casualty management; emergency medical service and triage:
- Health systems resilience; hospitals preparedness; displaced populations and disrupted health services;
- Public health impact of other non-radiological consequences of a nuclear detonation;
- Occupational safety of first responders and health workers;
- Mental health impact of nuclear emergencies;
- Health consequences of nuclear winter and nuclear famine;
- Health economics;
- Other relevant expertise.

The applications from women scientists were especially encouraged.
The call for applications has been now closed and selection process is in progress.

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◆ WHO REMPAN-18 meeting – 23rd -25th June 2026 - Paris, France!

The 18th Coordination and Planning meeting of the WHO network REMPAN is being planned for 23rd -25th June 2026 in Paris, France.

We are very grateful for the WHO Collaborating and long-standing member of REMPAN - L'Autorité de sûreté nucléaire et de radioprotection (ASNR) for its generous support of this triennial event.

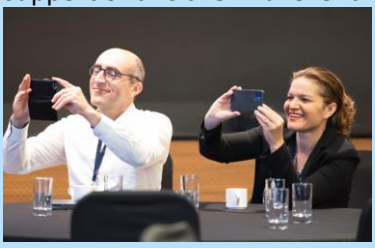

Photo: Dr Marc Benderitter and Dr Radia Tamarat at the 17th REMPAN meeting in Seoul

Thank you to all of you who responded to the call for reports to be presented in Paris! The REMPAN-18 Program Committee is preparing an exciting program based on all the input received from the network members.

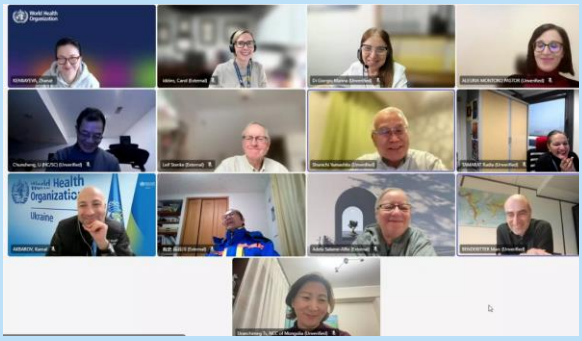

Photo: REMPAN-18 Programme Committee online meeting

News from the WHO Secretariat

◆ WHO Transformation in 2025

The year 2025 has been exceptionally challenging for global health and for the World Health Organization. Major reductions in development assistance have disrupted essential health services in many countries, prompting WHO to intensify its support, so that countries in need can still maintain health care while moving toward sustainable, domestically financed health systems. At the same time, WHO itself has faced severe financial strain. The United States' announcement of its intention to withdraw from WHO, combined with cuts in official development assistance from other countries shifting resources toward security, created a projected funding gap of about US$ 500 million over two years. Although WHO had already been addressing financial pressures, the 2025 cuts made the situation critical. To remain within budget while protecting core functions, WHO undertook a prioritization process, reduced its global workforce, implemented cost-saving measures, such as a voluntary early retirement. Despite these difficulties, a strong, independent WHO remains essential for providing evidence-based public health policies, guidance and assistance to the world.

As a result of the WHO's restructuring in 2025, WHO Radiation and Health Unit has been fused with the Unit on Chemical Safety and Health. The new Unit is now called ***Chemicals, Radiation and Health*** (CRH). The Unit head – Dr Emilie van Deventer.

The Department of Environment, Climate Change and Health has also been joined with the Department of Health and Migration and is now called ***Department of Climate Change, Environment and One Health and Migration*** (ECO) . The Director a.i. is Dr Ruediger Krech.

The ECO Department belongs to the new ***Division of Health Promotion, Disease Prevention and Care*** (PPC), lead by the Assistant Director-General (ADG/PPC) Dr Jeremy Farrar.

The new WHO organigram is available here.

Photo: © WHO / Pierre Albouy

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◆ Publication of the REMPAN-17 Meeting Proceedings as REMPAN collection at the Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness Journal (Cambridge University Press)

The REMPAN-17 meeting proceedings have been published as a special issue, a.k.a. REMPAN collection) of the DMPPH Journal (Editor: Stephen S. Morse PhD, Prof. of Epidemiology & Director, Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University, New York, USA).

We would like to extend our gratitude to all authors and co-authors who contributed to this Collection and for your continuing support of WHO REMPAN – especially at this challenging times.

Special words of gratitude to our Guest Editors: Dr Matthias Port, Dr Ruth Wilkins and Dr Adela Salame-Alfie. They worked tirelessly, identifying and chasing reviewers and also the authors for the revisions and resubmissions.

All articles are available in Open Access:
REMPAN collection ◆

News from the WHO Secretariat

◆ Webinar on World Patient Safety Day – 17 September 2025

The **17 September** is the World Patient Safety Day (WPSD), one of WHO's global health days.
This year the WPSD intended to bring attention to ***Safe care for every newborn and every child*** and campaigns to:

- **Raise** global awareness of safety risks in paediatric and newborn care in all health care settings, emphasizing the specific needs of children, families and caregivers,
- **Mobilize** governments, health care organizations, professional bodies and civil society to implement sustainable strategies for safer care for newborns and children, as part of broader patient safety and quality initiatives,
- **Empower** parents, caregivers and children in patient safety by promoting education, awareness and active participation in care,
- **Advocate** for strengthening research on patient safety in paediatric and newborn care.

On this occasion, the series of WPSD Radiation Webinars this year focused on "***Ensuring safe care for every newborn and child: A radiation protection perspective".*** This webinar aimed to raise global awareness of safety risks in paediatric and newborn care in all health care settings, emphasizing the specific needs of children, families and caregivers when using radiation for diagnosis and treatment. Further, a panel discussed possible collaboration to strengthen radiation protection for paediatric and newborn care across different regions. The Webinar was kindly hosted by the International Society for Radiology with a speakers panel representing several professional societies and NGOs (a.k.a. Non-State-Actors in official relations with WHO), including ICRP, IOMP, ISRRT, etc.
The webinar recording is available here. ◆

If you would like to learn more about WHO Radiation and Health Programme please visit these webpages:
Our **activities** in the areas of:

- Radiation emergencies
- Strengthening global preparedness
- Technological hazards and health risks in Ukraine
- Overcoming consequences of Fukushima
- Chernobyl recovery

Our **networks**:

- REMPAN
- BioDoseNet

◆ WHO conducted a national seminar on Bulgaria – *by D. Osin, WHO Country Office for Bulgaria*

On November 3-4, the WHO office in Bulgaria held a seminar on **Communication of Risk and Community Engagement, Management of Infodemic (CRAO-UI)**. Such trainings are a routine practice in the European Union and aim to maintain the good coordination and readiness of the institutions in case of different types of incidents. The event gathered representatives of key national institutions - the Ministry of Health, NCRRZ, BAYAR, DG "Fire Safety and Population Protection" to the Ministry of Interior and the State Enterprise "Radioactive Waste".
Over two days, participants exchanged experiences and best practices, looked at existing legislation and multisectoral emergency action plans, as well as mechanisms for international cooperation. The second day also included a hands-on exercise on testing KRAO-UI protocols and approaches to effective interaction with the public.
We thank the European Commission and the EU Health Emergencies DG for their support, as well as all partners and participants for their active participation and constructive contribution. Together, we are working towards stronger national resilience and preparedness in accordance with international standards.

Photo: WHO CO for Bulgaria

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News from the network members

◆ Korea–Japan Joint Seminar on Radiation Emergency Medicine Held at KIRAMS - *By Haewon Kong, KIRAMS, Seoul, Republic of Korea*

The Korea Institute of Radiological and Medical Sciences (KIRAMS) held the Korea–Japan Joint Seminar on Radiation Emergency Medicine on November 10, 2025, at KIRAMS.

The seminar was jointly organized with the Hiroshima International Council for Health Care of the Radiation-exposed (HICARE) and the Nagasaki Association for Hibakushas' Medical Care (NASHIM), marking the first collaborative seminar between KIRAMS and the two Japanese institutions. The event provided a platform for sharing lessons learned from past radiation disasters and discussing future directions for the development of radiation emergency medical care.

During the seminar, participants exchanged perspectives on the short- and long-term health effects of radiation exposure, as well as current challenges and future needs in radiation disaster medicine. Discussions also explored opportunities to expand joint research activities and strengthen cooperation in education and training.

Dr. Kenji Kamiya (HICARE) delivered a presentation entitled "Insights into the Health Effects of Radiation through Learning from Atomic Bomb Survivors," sharing recent research findings on radiation-related health effects based on long-term studies of atomic bomb survivors.

Dr. Nobuyuki Hirohashi presented "Eighty Years After Hiroshima and Nagasaki: Lessons and Challenges for Radiation Disaster Medicine in Japan," outlining key challenges facing Japan's radiation disaster medicine system and potential directions for improvement. In addition, Dr. Noboru Takamura (NASHIM) introduced practical lessons and response strategies in his presentation "Lessons from Chernobyl and Fukushima," drawing on experiences from actual radiation accident responses.

All speakers participating in the seminar are members of WHO REMPAN. Their participation helped strengthen professional ties within the network and further promoted collaboration among REMPAN members in the field of radiation emergency medicine. ◆

◆ International Symposium "Collection and Dissemination of Data and Knowledge Related to Nuclear Disaster Resilience and Science"

By N. Takamura, Nagasaki University, Japan

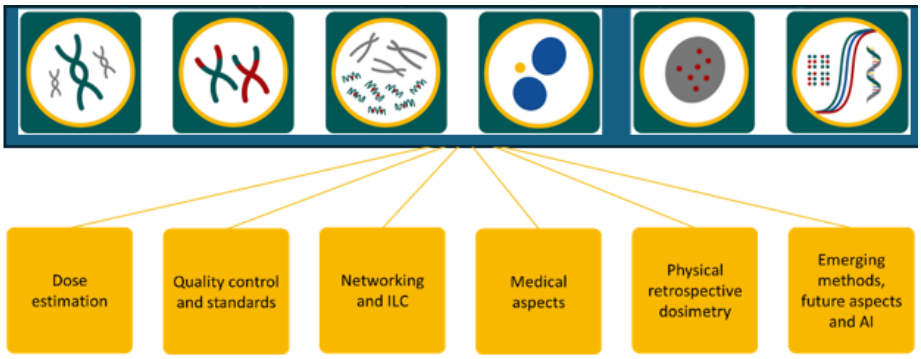
The symposium jointly organized by F-REI and Nagasaki University was held on 01-02 November 2025 in hybrid format and hosted by Prof. Takamura, the Leader of the Nuclear Disaster Medical Science Unit, Fukushima Institute for Research, Education and Innovation (F-REI), Director of Research and Support Center for the Future of Fukushima & Professor at the Atomic Bomb Disease Institute of Nagasaki University.

The F-REI established in 2023 with the aim of restitution of Fukushima and other prefectures in the Tohoku region. Further information about the event is available on it the website.

News from the Network Members

◆ European Training Course on Biological Dosimetry

By M. Bucher and U.Oestreicher, Federal Office for Radiation Protection, Germany



On 30 June to 11 July 2025, WHO Collaborating Center – Federal Office for Radiation Protection (BfS) in Munich/Germany, hosted BIODORA training course on application of biological dosimetry in radiation protection & radiation research, funded by PIANOFORTE research partnership.

The participants reviewed different methods of biological dosimetry used in individual dose reconstruction. During lectures and laboratory sessions the advantages, limitations and special features of the individual methods were explained and demonstrated. The participants learned how to apply the methods and to critically review the results. Additional keynote lectures addressed associated and interdisciplinary topics closely linked to biological dosimetry to demonstrate the possibilities for integrating biological dosimetry into radiation protection and radiation research, especially the research fields included in the scope of PIANOFORTE (above Figure).

Thirteen PhD students, post-docs and scientists from nine European countries, Ukraine and the Republic of Korea participated in person (photo), while online format was offerred to 15 more students from Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Spain, and Ukraine. As a result of the international networking, the training was held in cooperation with international experts, members of the RENEB network and partners in WHO–BioDoseNet: Bundeswehr Institute for Radiobiology (Germany), Ghent University (Belgium), Health Canada (Canada), ASNR (France), National Center for Scientific Research „Demokritos“ (Greece), Stockholm University (Sweden), UK Health Security Agency (United Kingdom), Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (Spain) and University of Warsaw. The format and contents of the course resulted had positive feedback from the participants. The training course and its objective are closely related to the WHO BioDoseNet activities as a global network of biodosimetry laboratories that promotes cooperation, harmonisation of laboratory techniques and dose assessment methods, information exchange and capacity building for responding to radio-nuclear events.

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◆ WHO-REMPAN KIRAMS-FMU Next Generation Development Exchange Meeting

By Prof. S. Yamashita, Fukushima, Japan

Following the second KIRAMS-FMU (Korea Institute of Radiological and Medical Sciences and Fukushima Medical University) joint symposium on topics for future collaboration, hosted by KIRAMS at their Seoul headquarters on December 12, 2025, a WHO-REMPAN regional session convened on December 13 at the KIRAMS National Radiation Emergency Medical Center. Eleven young participants brought medical and research perspectives to an active and frank exchange of opinions about how to encourage and enable future generations in the understaffed but seriously important field of radiation and nuclear emergency medicine. Director General Dr. Minsu CHO challenged everyone to envision a global exchange program of education and training for upcoming candidates under the WHO-REMPAN framework. KIRAMS and FMU agreed to jointly develop such idea for future development in this field.

Photo: participants of the FMU-KIRAMS meeting

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News from the Network Members

◆ Enhancing the resilience of medical preparedness to radiation and nuclear emergencies in Ukraine

By N. KOROL, A. CHUMAK and D. BAZYKA – WHO Collaborating Center (CC), NRCRM-AMN – Kyiv, Ukraine - and Dr Kamal AKBAROV, WHO Country Office Ukraine

- The educational module "Managing exposure assessment and medical response to a radiation emergency in Ukraine" was hosted by the National Research Centre for Radiation Medicine, Hematology and Oncology (NRCRM) – a WHO CC, to continue building capacity of health workers from designated hospitals of Khmelnitsky oblast, July 16-18, 2025 (photo 1) and Kyiv city, November 27-28, 2025.


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- The workshop "Trainings of trainers on managing medical response to a radiation emergency" held on October 22, 2025 in the Bogomolets National Medical University was part of the Radiation Medicine curriculum for the medical students. Scintillation beta-gamma-spectrometers and a whole-body spectrometer, supplied by the WHO, are being used for actual measurements, research and training purposes.

- Training on the use personal protective equipment (PPE) and working with radiation monitoring devices was held on October 8, 2025

- Full-scale training on organizing medical care in radiation emergencies with the participance of National Police, Red Cross and Emergency Department teams was held on October 16-17, 2025.

On 26 November 2025 the representatives of *WHO CC* took part in the WHO workshop "Coordination and response of emergency services to CBRN threats, including the potential use of weapons of mass destruction" held in in Ivano Franko city, Ukraine. ◆

◆ EPR-2025 International Conference in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia – 01 to 04 Dec 2025.

By M. Dobbertin, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, Incident and Emergency Centre (IAEA).

The International Conference on Preparedness and Response to Nuclear and Radiological Emergencies (EPR2025) was organized by the IAEA in cooperation with Saudi Arabia's Nuclear and Radiological Regulatory Commission (NRRC). Held under the theme *"Building the Future in an Evolving World,"* the event brought together over 900 in-person participants from 105 Member States and six international organizations, with additional virtual participation. The conference received over 470 submitted abstracts, resulting in a diverse four-day programme comprising 21 technical sessions, four roundtables, five side events, four keynote addresses, 88 posters, and an exhibition focused on strengthening global readiness and response to nuclear and radiological emergencies.

In his opening remarks, Dr Khalid Aleissa, Chief Executive Officer Nuclear and Radiological Regulatory Commission of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and President of the Conference emphasized that preparedness must evolve with emerging challenges, modern technologies, and strong coordination among national entities. In a video message, the IAEA Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi highlighted the importance of building sustainable national capacities, enhancing information exchange, and strengthening international cooperation.

Photo: https://www.spa.gov.sa/N2456645

News from the Network Members

◆ UKHSA Emergency Response Exercise: Biological & Physical Dosimetry

By Lauren Ashworth-Donn, Junior biodosimetrist, Cytogenetics group, UK Health Security Agency

UKHSA recently conducted a national radiation emergency response exercise to test the UK's readiness for an ionising-radiation incident, focusing on rapid and reliable dose assessment. Five blinded sample sets were irradiated at different doses (0.3–2.4 Gy), including lithium-heparin and EDTA blood, smartphones, alanine pellets, and TLD badges. A broad range of biological dosimetry methods was evaluated, from the dicentric chromosome assay—the international gold standard—to rapid triage tools such as γ-H2AX and FDXR gene-expression analysis, both showing strong potential for high-throughput emergency use. The exercise also trialled Tachyon, a portable nanopore-sequencing device capable of near real-time dose estimation. In parallel, physical dosimetry techniques, including alanine, TLDs, and mobile-phone OSL, were assessed. Across all methods, results aligned well with standard triage categories (2 Gy). The exercise demonstrated the value of combining multiple assays to deliver fast, accurate, and resilient radiological-emergency triage. ◆

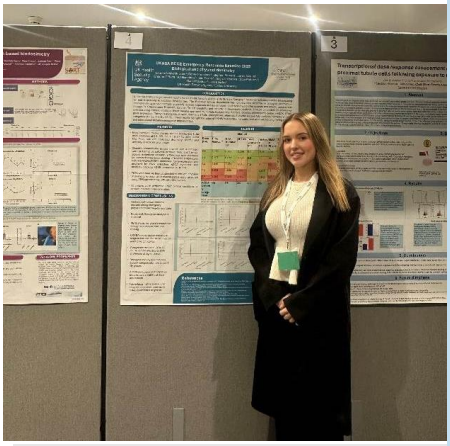

Photo: The results of the exercise were presented as a poster at the European Radiation Protection Week in London, UK - September 2025

◆ The 24th IPPNW World Congress was held in Nagasaki, Japan on 2-4 October 2025 to mark the 80th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki with an unparalleled opportunity to reflect on the devastating consequences of nuclear weapons and to recommitment to global efforts toward disarmament. The Nagasaki Declaration reaffirmed these commitments to diplomacy and peace in the face of disturbing global trends. *(Photo – S. Demaio, WHO)*. "As physicians, we understand that we must prevent what we cannot cure, and nuclear war is a catastrophe from which there will be no recovery. We join our voices with those of the Hibakusha here in Nagasaki in calling for action for a more peaceful world and the prevention of nuclear war as an absolute imperative requiring the elimination of nuclear weapons." ◆

◆ ASNR hosted the Korea Institute of Radiological and Medical Sciences for a seminar on radiation protection

Source: ASNR

From 9 to 11 December 2025, the first joint research seminar between ASNR and KIRAMS (Korea Institute of Radiological & Medical Sciences) was held in Fontenay-aux-Roses (92).

The seminar offered a valuable opportunity for technical exchanges between the two organizations on key topics, including radiation emergency medicine and public health, physical and biological dosimetry, epidemiology, radiological accidents, and therapeutic technologies for radiation injuries.

Several areas of mutual interest were identified, opening up promising prospects for future cooperation between ASNR and KIRAMS, with potential forms of collaboration such as data sharing, expert technical meetings, and staff secondments.

The technical sessions were complemented by visits to ASNR facilities, including the physical and biological dosimetry laboratories, the PATERSON facility (mass spectrometry analytical platform), and the ASNR emergency center.

A follow-up videoconference is planned in 2026 to continue discussions, along with a follow-up seminar provisionally envisaged to be held in Korea in 2027.

News from the Network Members

◆ The 8th General Assembly and Annual Network Meeting of RENEB e.V. (European Network of Biological Dosimetry and Retrospective Physical Dosimetry)

By Dr. Ursula Oestreicher on behalf of the RENEB consortium

The 8th General Assembly of RENEB took place as a satellite meeting during the European Radiation Protection Week (ERPW) in London on 29th of September 2025. RENEB provides rapid, comprehensive, and standardized methodologies for individualized dose estimation following an uncertain exposure to ionizing radiation. The network is active in emergency preparedness, radiation protection, and research. The objectives of RENEB are closely aligned with those of the WHO BioDoseNet, a global network of biodosimetry laboratories. During the General Assembly and Annual Network Meeting, members received updates on network activities. It was reported that RENEB's membership has continued to grow over the past year, welcoming two new voting member organizations from the Czech Republic (SURO) and the Slovak Republic (SAVBA) since the last meeting. In total, RENEB now comprises 18 voting members from 13 European countries. Additionally, the number of associate members—scientists without voting rights—has reached 44 individuals from 15 countries across Europe and Asia.

The winners of the RENEB annual travel grant (Anna Francès-Abellán from UAB, Spain & Philip Davies from UKHSA, UK), intended to support early career researchers in presenting their work at the ERPW, were announced during the meeting.

The scientific session of the Annual Network Meeting was organized into three main topics, each featuring a range of presentations:

AI in Biological Dosimetry – Scientists from ASNR (France), BfS (Germany), UAB (Spain) and Metasystems Hard- and Software GmbH (Germany) presented and discussed current AI projects focusing on chromosomal aberration detection, FISH translocation detection and quality scoring of metaphases.

Emergency Preparedness - In this session, BIR (Germany), gave a report on the DIAGRN project under the European Defense Fund (Resilience 2023). A new organizational setup within the biodosimetry laboratory of ASNR was presented, aimed at increasing operational capacity using triage mode biodosimetry. In addition, updates on the *Biodosetools* software, an open-source project designed as a comprehensive tool for biological dosimetry laboratories, were demonstrated by BfS.

Retrospective Physical Dosimetry - In the last session, colleagues from BfS (Germany) and ISS (Italy) presented ongoing activities within EURADOS WG10 and described the aims and the tasks of WG10 as well as results of EPR interlaboratory comparisons in the last years.

The General Assembly with the Annual network meeting provided a strong opportunity to disseminate research advancements and foster collaboration in the field of biological and retrospective physical dosimetry. ◆

◆ Participation of Hospital La Fe Radiation Protection Service in the CBRN ACINTER Scientific-Technical Advisory Workshop - *by A. Montoro Pastor, Valencia, Spain*

In November 2025, Juan Gomis Ferraz and Alegría Montoro Pastor from Hospital La Fe's Radiation Protection Service participated in the 4th ACINTER Scientific-Technical Advisory Workshop on Land CBRN Defense. Organized by the Military School of CBRN Defense and the CBRN Defense Regiment "Valencia," ACINTER strengthens scientific and technical "Reach-Back" support for chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear emergencies. The workshop fosters collaboration between military units and civilian experts to improve preparedness, situational awareness, and evidence-based decision-making in complex CBRN environments.

The 2025 edition included capability demonstrations, technical sessions, and scenario-based exercises on lessons learned, radiological detection, scientific support to incidents, and integrating expert advice into command structures. Strong emphasis was placed on incorporating civilian expertise in radiological protection, biodosimetry, and health risk assessment. A major RDD exercise on 20 November brought together military, emergency, healthcare, and law-enforcement personnel, offering practical insights into early response. Overall, ACINTER underscored the importance of civil–military cooperation in national CBRN preparedness and resilience.

Photo source: https://x.com/Defensagob/status/1999023472857743680 ◆

News from the Network Members

◆ Updates from the WHO Collaborating Center – The Clinic of Nuclear Medicine at the University Hospital Würzburg (UHW), Germany - *By Dr Tanja Weber and Prof. Andreas Buck (UHW)*

- **Meeting of German Clinical Network Radiation Emergency "KLINESTRA" – 09-10 October 2025, Würzburg**

The second KLINESTRA network meeting has been organized by the German Federal Office for Radiation Protection together with the Clinic of Nuclear Medicine at the University Hospital Würzburg. Multiple experts, including representatives from federal offices and ministries, came together to discuss approaches and strategies in radiological emergency preparedness, as well as arrangements for implementing these strategies once a such scenario has occurred. These topics are lately gaining more and more relevance and interest from health providers in Germany. The further connection of relevant actors in the field is seen as a great success in securing cross-sector coordination, which is vital in response to radiological and nuclear emergencies.

Photo: KLINESTRA meeting participants

- **Visit of the State Fire Academy Würzburg in the Clinic of Nuclear Medicine at University Hospital Würzburg (WHO CC)**

On 17 September, 2025 a visit of the State Fire Academy was hosted by the Regional Radiation Protection Center and WHO CC in the Clinic of Nuclear Medicine. The aim of the visit was to strengthen the coordination of first responders and hospitals in a potential radiation emergency and to form a mutual deeper understanding of the work of each partner. Medical physics expert Associate Professor Dr. Hänscheid and Director Prof. Dr. Buck gave lectures on radiation, radiation emergencies and reported also on a radiation emergency exercise held in March 2025. The firefighters visited the facilities of the Regional Radiation Protection Center and were informed about the patient admission processes in case of radiation emergency. Further, they had the possibility to see the ward and the wastewater storage system. ◆

◆ NEA held INEX-6 Recovery Workshop – Nov 2025, Paris – *by L. Martiri, NEA/OECD*

In early November 2025, emergency preparedness experts gathered at the Autorité de Sûreté Nucléaire et de Radioprotection (ASNR) in Fontenay-aux-Roses, France, for two back-to-back OECD-NEA events: **the INEX-6 Recovery Workshop and the 50th meeting of the Working Party on Nuclear Emergency Matters (WPNEM)**. The workshop focused on transforming insights from the INEX-6 international exercise series into practical strategies for long-term recovery following nuclear or radiological emergencies. Participants examined lessons learned from past accidents, emphasizing the need for stronger national recovery frameworks, improved coordination mechanisms, and better integration of scientific, technical, and social considerations into recovery planning. The WPNEM meeting reviewed progress across NEA emergency preparedness activities and discussed priorities for the next phase of international cooperation. Together, the events highlighted the importance of sustained collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and capacity-building to strengthen preparedness, response, and recovery capabilities across NEA member countries.

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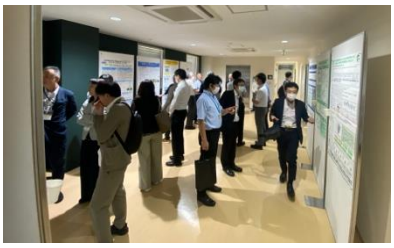
News from the Network Members

◆ 13th Annual Meeting of the Japanese Association for Radiation Accident and Disaster Medicine

By Nobuyuki HIROHASHI M.D., Ph.D., Professor, Department of Radiation Disaster Medicine, Division of Radiation Medical Science, Research Institute for Radiation Biology and Medicine, Hiroshima University, Japan

The 13th Annual Meeting of the Japanese Association for Radiation Accident and Disaster Medicine was held at Hiroshima University on September 26‐27, 2025, marking 80 years since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Under the theme, "Eighty Years After Hiroshima and Nagasaki: Are We Truly Prepared for Radiation Disasters?" the meeting reviewed current challenges in radiation emergency preparedness. Keynote and invited lectures addressed international developments in radiological and nuclear emergency medicine, long-term radiation effects, and emerging medical countermeasures. International perspectives were provided by experts from KIRAMS (Korea), who shared historical and clinical insights into local radiation injuries. A symposium highlighted ongoing challenges in Japan's radiation disaster medical system, including onsite readiness, coordination, and workforce sustainability. In conjunction with the meeting, a public outreach program attracted more participants than expected. Members of the public received practical education through short lectures and hands-on training, including the use of GM survey meters, personal protective equipment, and contamination monitoring. Overall, the meeting emphasized the continued importance of strengthening radiation disaster preparedness through interdisciplinary collaboration, education, and international cooperation, reaffirming the shared responsibility to translate the lessons of Hiroshima and Nagasaki into resilient response systems for the future.



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◆ ERPW-2025 – London, UK - *By S. Barnard and L. Ainsbury, UKHSA*

UKHSA hosted European Radiation Protection Week in London, 29 September – 2 October 2025. Over 250 registered for the meeting from 40 countries. The main meeting was opened by UKHSA RCCE's Director, outgoing deputy director Simon Bouffler and Liz Ainsbury. A wide-ranging scientific programme was enjoyed, including low dose radiation risk, SMR/AMR related radiation protection issues, medical protection, RP in space travel. There was a useful round-table presentation of projects supported by Pianoforte. The main meeting was preceded by a range of project and platform meetings. Feedback was excellent, both in relation to the programme and venue.

The MELODI award was presented to UKHSA's Grainne O'Brien for her excellent contributions to low dose risk mechanistic research.

We are very grateful to all those who contributed to the success of ERPW. We will be sharing our experience of hosting the event with colleagues in Germany who will host ERPW 2026 in Berlin.

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New Section: AI & Radiation Emergencies

◆ AI and Nuclear Weapons

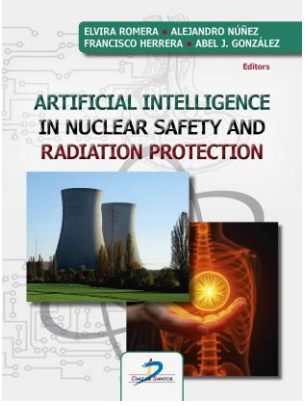
The IPPNW (a non-state actor in official relation with the WHO), ICAN and Pugwash co-organized a webinar on **26 January 2026**, "Autonomous Armageddon: Nuclear Weapons and AI", to explore the alarming dangers posed by the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into nuclear weapons systems. Hosted by **three Nobel Peace Prize-winning organizations** dedicated to eliminating nuclear weapons, this event featured expert speakers, including:

- Representative of Nihon Hidankyo, 2024 Nobel Peace Prize;
- Sir Geoffrey Hinton, 2024 Nobel Prize Winner in Physics, Godfather of AI;
- Connor Lahey, CEO of Conjecture (AI safety research);
- Dr. Ruth Mitchell, Chair of IPPNW, 1985 Nobel Peace Prize;
- Melissa Parke, Executive Director of ICAN, 2017 Nobel Peace Prize; and
- Karen Hallberg, Moderator and Secretary General of Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs, 1995 Nobel Peace Prize.

Together, they discussed the general and specific risks AI presents to nuclear command and control systems, the catastrophic humanitarian and environmental consequences of nuclear war, and ongoing initiatives to mitigate these threats. Further information and the video recording are available at: https://www.ippnw.org/ai ◆

◆ AI and Our Future: watch the talk of Sir Geoffrey Hinton, 2024 Nobel Prize Winner in Physics, Godfather of AI.

◆ **New book by Romera, Nuñez, Herrera, González. Artificial intelligence in nuclear safety and radiation protection**



AI is recognized as a transformative tool in the field of radiation and nuclear safety. It could enhance the safety, security, efficiency, and reliability of nuclear facilities and radiation-related operations. The book describes different radiation and nuclear safety applications of AI technology in radiation and nuclear endeavours and facilities, and raises issues of AI and ethical aspects of nuclear safety, radiation protection, the challenges it represents. It also discussed AI use in medical radiation applications (diagnosis and therapy). Finally, the book alco discussed the need for significant regulatory updates and workforce training to keep pace with technological advancements. As AI applications can expand in unforeseen ways, regulatory bodies will face the need to ensure ongoing compliance and safety assurance. Continued collaboration among AI developers, nuclear safety experts, and regulatory authorities is critical. ◆

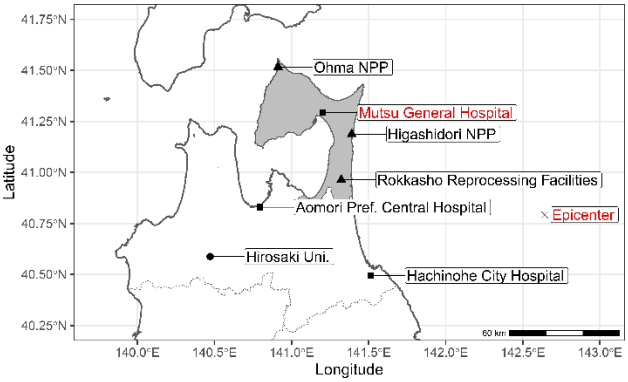
News from the Network Members

◆ Regional Training Course on Radiation Protection and Safety and Accident Prevention in Radiotherapy *- by A. Bushmanov, S. Stepanova, WHO Collaborating Centre for the Treatment of Patients with Acute Radiation Injuries (SRC–FMBC) – Moscow, Russian Federation*

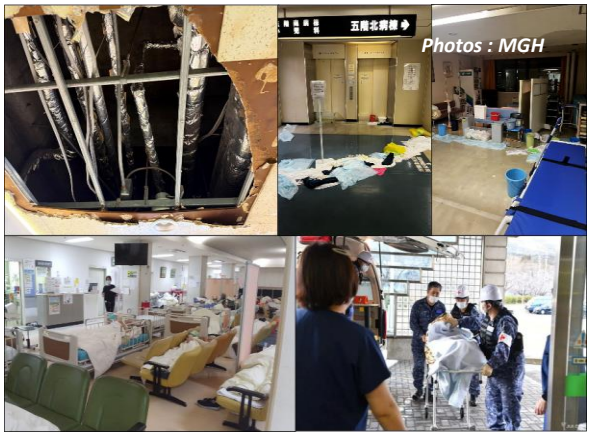
From 17 to 21 November 2025, the SRC–FMBC WHO Collaborating Centre hosted an online regional training course on radiation protection, safety, and accident prevention in radiotherapy, organized within the IAEA's Rays of Hope cancer treatment program. The course, delivered in Russian, is based on specialized methodologies developed at SRC–FMBC and is aimed at radiotherapists, medical physicists, oncologists, and radiation-safety professionals working under IAEA and WHO standards. Since 2017, more than 250 specialists worldwide have completed this advanced training. In 2025, over 20 participants from Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Russia took part. The program included theoretical lectures on radiation protection for industry personnel and the public, prevention of radiotherapy accidents, and practical group sessions on facility design and protection calculations. At the closing ceremony, SRC–FMBC leadership emphasized the importance of continuous professional development to ensure safety in radiotherapy and nuclear-industry settings. ◆

News from the Network Members

◆ Damage to Medical Institutions in Aomori Prefecture Following the Earthquake Off the East Coast of Aomori Prefecture - *By T. Miura, Institute of Radiation Emergency Medicine, Hirosaki University, Japan*



The Shimokita Peninsula (gray area on the map) hosts the Higashidori Nuclear Power Plant (NPP), which is currently preparing for restart; the Ohma NPP, which is under construction; nuclear fuel cycle facilities; and an interim spent fuel storage facility. In the event of an accident, evacuations could reach approximately 80,000 people. In Aomori Prefecture, Aomori Prefectural Central Hospital and Hachinohe City Hospital were designated as nuclear disaster core hospitals, and 21 additional institutions, including Mutsu General Hospital (MGH), were designated as nuclear disaster medical cooperation institutions. MGH serves as a temporary receiving facility for contaminated patients from the Higashidori NPP. On December 8, 2025, a magnitude 7.5 earthquake occurred off the eastern coast of Aomori Prefecture, injuring six people and causing water outages affecting approximately 1,530 households. No abnormalities were reported at nuclear-related facilities.



At the MGH, the sprinkler system damage caused flooding on the 5th to 7th floors, requiring the transfer of 32 patients to nearby hospitals and clinics. Hirosaki University, designated by the Nuclear Regulation Authority of Japan as an Advanced Radiation Emergency Medical Support Center and a Nuclear Disaster Medical and General Support Center, sent a liaison to the Aomori Prefectural Government Office; the decision to dispatch a Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT) to support MGH was made independently as a DMAT response. The recent earthquake highlighted the challenges facing regional healthcare systems for radiation emergency medicine, which are already strained by population decline and increasing concentration of residents in urban areas. ◆

◆ Update on the Spanish National Biodosimetry Protocol Project (CSN-funded) - *by A. Montoro Pastor, Biodosimetry Lab, University Hospital LaFe, Valencia, Spain*

The project ***"Development of a Spanish National Biodosimetry Protocol"*** is funded by the Spanish Nuclear Safety Council (CSN) for 2022–2025, with an extension request submitted due to its national importance. All planned intercomparison exercises—virtual and large-scale accident simulations—were successfully completed, demonstrating strong consistency among Spanish biodosimetry laboratories under triage conditions. The project unites 26 experts from hospitals and universities, covering key techniques such as the dicentric and micronucleus assays, and supports the creation of a coordinated rapid-response biodosimetry network aligned with international standards.

The main remaining task is the delivery of the Spanish National Biodosimetry Protocol, which will harmonize methodologies, workflows, and response criteria for radiological and nuclear emergencies. In parallel, the consortium is disseminating results through publications and presentations at national radiological protection and medical physics meetings, as well as internationally at ConRad, highlighting Spain's commitment to harmonization and preparedness. ◆

Coming… Going….

◆ Change of management at the Bundeswehr Institute of Radiobiology (BIR) – *by S. Eder, Director, BIR – Munich, Germany*

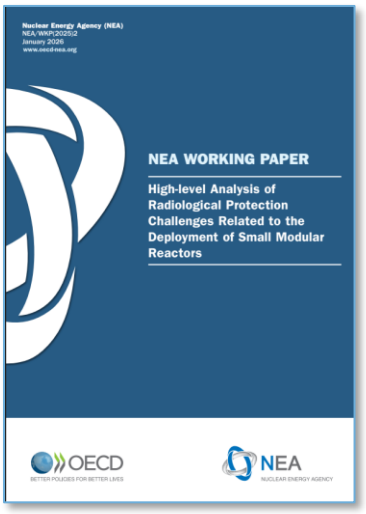
In October 2025, the Commander of the Bundeswehr Medical Academy, Major General (MC) Dr. Hans-Ulrich Holtherm, handed over the BIR from Colonel (MC) Prof. Dr. Matthias Port to Lieutenant Colonel (MC) PD Dr. Stefan Eder in an academic ceremony.

Photo (L to R): M. Port, H-U. Holttherm, and S. Eder

COL Prof. Dr. Port held this post for nine year and his main interest was to foster science and development in the radio-nuclear medical field. Among other activities he contributed to several WHO publications including the recent stockpiling policy advice. His network activities including the lead of six ConRad conferences, his appointments for RENEB, IABERD, NATO and GHSI helped to bring together experts from all areas of radio-nuclear emergency research and preparedness. In his new position he will expand his work on medical countermeasures of biological and chemical threads in the CBRN community. New BIR Director, Lt COL Dr. Eder previously served as deputy director and head of a working group of the BIR. His scientific and military medical expertise in managing radiological and radio-nuclear incidents, gained over 31 years of service in the armed forces, positions him well to lead and further develop the BIR. ◆

New Publications

◆ New NEA/OECD report on Radiological Protection Challenges Related to the Deployment of Small Modular Reactors - The Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA) Committee on Radiological Protection and Public Health -Task Force on Small Modular Reactors conducted a high-level analysis of radiological protection (RP) challenges related to small modular reactor (SMR) deployment. Ten key RP challenges were identified: Small Compact Design, Source Terms, Environmental Impact Assessments, Siting, Staffing Issues, Lack of Operating Experience, **Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR)**, Transport, Public Risk Perception and Risk Communication, and Environmental Monitoring. Many of these challenges were found to be cross-cutting, requiring multi-faceted approaches that consider safety, operational constraints, and public acceptance.



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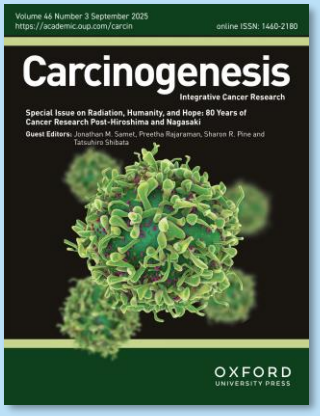
◆ RERF 50th Anniversary: 50 Years of Progress - The Radiation Effects Research Foundation (RERF) has been established 50 years ago. To mark this anniversary the RERF's Public Relations and Publications Office released the above-mentioned publication covering RERF's and their predecessor ABCC's (Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission) research outcomes. In their announcement of the publication, they declare their gratitude towards the supporting parties, especially the survivors of the atomic bombs and their families. ◆

◆ Carcinogenesis "Special Issue on Radiation, Humanity, and Hope: 80 Years of Cancer Research Post-Hiroshima and Nagasaki"

The abstract of the Editorial "Eighty years of cancer research after the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki":

The year 2025 marks the 80th anniversary of one of the worst human-caused tragedies: the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, with acute death tolls of approximately 140,000 in Hiroshima and 74,000 in Nagasaki by the end of 1945. This editorial provides historical and social context for the articles in this special issue of Carcinogenesis.



Jonathan M Samet, Preetha Rajaraman, Sharon R Pine, Tatsuhiro Shibata, Eighty years of cancer research after the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, *Carcinogenesis*, Volume 46, Issue 3, September 2025,

https://doi.org/10.1093/carcin/bgaf071

New Publications

◆ SEPR Publishes International News on ConRad 2025 in Three Languages - *By A. Montoro Pastor, University Hospital LaFe, Valencia, Spain*

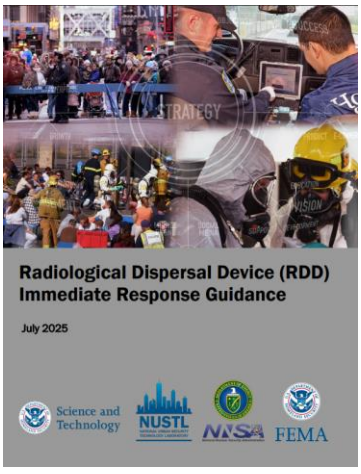
The Spanish Society for Radiological Protection (SEPR) published online two articles about the ConRad 2025 conference:

- *Global Advances in Radiological Protection, Preparedness and Response* (M. Port, L. Kubitscheck, J. Gomis Ferraz, and A. Montoro Pastor) highlighting key outcomes and discussions from this international conference The article is published in Spanish, English and German, reflecting SEPR's commitment to international scientific communication and cooperation.

- *Biodosimetry at the Latest ConRad 2025 – Global Conference on Radiation Topics: Preparedness, Response, Protection and Research"*, focusing on the role of biodosimetry in radiological and nuclear emergency preparedness and response. The article reviews key discussions and contributions presented at ConRad 2025 related to biodosimetric methods, laboratory networks, and their application in medical decision-making following radiation exposure.

Through this initiative, SEPR reinforces its commitment to high-quality scientific dissemination and to the promotion of expertise in key areas of radiological protection, emergency response, and research. ◆

◆ Radiological Dispersal Device (RDD) Immediate Response Guidance and Videos



The first minutes and hours of a response to an RDD detonation are critical as this period sets the stage for how the overall response will be executed. The *RDD Immediate Response Guidance* delineates missions and tactics that should be executed by first responders and local response agencies in the first minutes and hours of a response to an outdoor explosive RDD detonation. The guidance also includes recommendations for equipment requirements, including personal protective equipment (PPE), and public messaging. It uses a notional 100-minute timeline to help planners understand how the missions and tactics can be sequenced to accomplish the most important tasks quickly and accurately. The 2025 RDD Guidance is replacing the 2017 Response Guidance: Planning for the First 100 Minutes. Emergency planners should refer to the 2025 version. ◆

New Publications

Hida A, Ohno K, Yamamura M, Sposto R, Hatsusaka N, *et al*. Cataracts in atomic-bomb survivors more than 70 years after radiation exposure - Radiat Res, p1-11, 2026/1/27.

DiCarlo A *et al*. Advanced Medical Countermeasures and Devices for Use During a Radiological or Nuclear Emergency**.** Disaster Med Public Health Prep. **2025 Jul** 21;19:e199. doi: 10.1017/dmp.2025.12.

Taliaferro LP *et al*. Centers for Medical Countermeasures against Radiation Consortium: Past, Present, and Beyond**.** Radiat Res. **2025 Sep** 1;204(3):238-252.

Cline JM *et al.* Delayed Effects of Acute Radiation Exposure in the Nonhuman Primate Radiation Late Effects Cohort**.** Radiat Res. **2025 Oct** 1;204(4):271-273.

I. Sierra, F. Verrezen, D. Arginelli, P. Battisti, D. Blazquez, *et al.* **EURADOS Report 2025-03** Guidance Report on Screening and Rapid Methods for In Vitro Emergency Bioassay**,** October 2025.

J. F. Navarro, B. Pérez, M. A. López, J. Boeckx, V. Rovenska, *et al*. **EURADOS Report 2025-02** Intercomparison of age-dependent thyroid phantoms for thyroid monitoring in nuclear or radiological emergencies, July 2025.

Upcoming events, Training co urses

◆ The Global Forum of WHO CC – on 7-9 April 2026 in Lyon, France

WHO has built a robust network of Collaborating Centers totaling close to 800 as of December 2025 distributed in 80 countries (WHO Collaborating Centres (WHO CCs). These national institutions and academic centers have provided indispensable support to the work of the Secretariat of the World Health Organization.

Given the recent WHO restructuring and prioritization exercise, WHO is organizing a meeting. to bring together WHO collaborating centres and WHO focal points to advance global health thinking, enhance existing collaborations and explore new ones, and define actionable priorities for the future, aligned with the Fourteenth WHO Global Program of Work (GPW14) and the WHO commitment to "Health for All". This meeting will foster a global conversation on technical and scientific collaboration, listening to WHO CC experience and expectations, and discussing opportunities for enhanced impact.

The meeting will focus on key questions, including: How are WHO Collaborating Centers currently contributing to the Fourteenth General Program of Work (GPW14)? How can they enhance their contributions in the future? Where do gaps remain, and which new institutions could join to help address them? Finally, how can collaboration between the WHO Secretariat and WHO Collaborating Centers be further strengthened?

This forum will enable the WHO scientific and technical community to:
- Harness and Optimize WHO Collaborating Centres' Contributions to GPW14
Expected Outcome: A shared roadmap that clearly links WHO CC activities to GPW14 priorities, identifies gaps, and outlines strategies for measurable impact across global health initiatives.
- Expand and Strengthen Collaborative Networks to Address Emerging Global Health Challenges
Expected Outcome: Identification of key trends and risks, agreement on a shared vision, and commitment to engage institutions and partnerships to reinforce delivery of the WHO "Health for All" agenda.
WHO Collaborating Centers are invited (1-2 persons per CC).
Contact: globalforumwhocc@who.int

◆ Online training on CBRN EPR by MELODY:

https://melodytraining.wixsite.com/melody

◆ WHO online course on CBRN considerations in Mass Gatherings:

https://whoacademy.org/coursewares/course-v1:WHOAcademy-Hosted+H0127EN+2025_Q3?source=edX

World Health Organization
WHO Academy

Training courses

◆ REAC/TS Upcoming Course Dates - *By C. Iddins, Director of the Radiation Emergency Assistance Center/Training Site (REAC/TS), USA*

Radiation Emergency Medicine (REM)
This three-day course is intended for physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, nurses, and other healthcare providers, first responders, emergency management and public health professionals. The course emphasizes the practical aspects of initial hospital management of irradiated and/or contaminated patients through lectures and hands-on practical exercises. REM courses are conducted at our facilities in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. The dates in 2026 are:
Feb 24-26, Mar 10-12, Apr 14-16, Jun 2-4, Aug 4-6.

Health Physics in Radiation Emergencies
This three-day course is designed primarily for health physicists, medical physicists, radiation safety officers and others who have radiation dose assessment and/or radiological control responsibilities. The course presents an advanced level of information on radiological/nuclear event reconstruction, dose assessments/estimations, and integration of the physics discipline with medicine.
Unless otherwise noted, Health Physics in Radiation Emergencies courses are conducted at our facilities in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. The dates: March 24-26 and June 16-18.

Advanced Radiation Medicine - a three-day course includes more advanced information for medical practitioners. This program is academically more rigorous than the and is primarily for physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, and nurses desiring an advanced level of skills for diagnosis and management of radiation injuries. It is an instructive course with some hands-on activities. Group problem-solving is used to emphasize the management of complex cases. Recent completion of the Radiation Emergency Medicine (REM) course is strongly recommended. Dates for 2026: Apr 28-30 and Aug 11-13.

Upcoming events

◆ [The IARC's 60th Anniversary Conference](#) – 7-21 May, Lyon, France

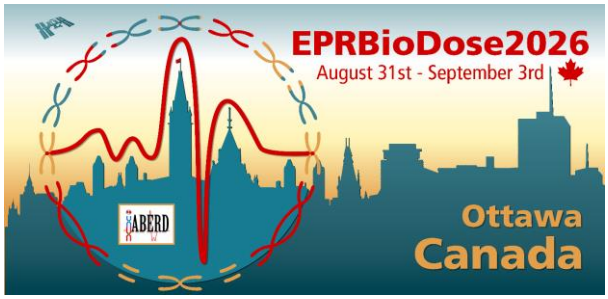
◆ **The 7th European IRPA Congress "Encouraging Collaboration in Radiation Protection":**

01-05 June 2026, Liverpool (UK)

https://irpa2026europe.com/irpa

◆ **The 28th WHO REMPAN Coordination Meeting – 23-25 June 2026, Paris, France –** see p. 3 of this newsletter

◆ [EPRBioDose2026 Conference](#), **August 31st to September 3rd, 2026 in Ottawa, Canada**



The EPRBiodose2026 conference, hosted by IABERD will be held in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, from August 31st to September 3rd. This is one of the series of international conferences held every 2 to 3 years by the International Association of Biological and EPR Radiation Dosimetry (IABERD). Registration is open!

◆ [7th Asian and Oceanic Congress on Radiation Protection (AOCRP-7)](#) – 8-12 Sept 2026, Beijing, China

◆ **2026 European Radiation Protection Week (ERPW)** – October 5-9 2026, Berlin, Germany
https://www.erpw2026.de

Disclosure

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