

BVS-ABR workshop

How do radiation protection associations engage with society?

The first International Radiation Protection Association (IRPA) regional workshop on '**Communication and public engagement of IRPA Societies**' to collect good practices, explore ideas and identify needs for inclusion in the '*IRPA guiding principles for communicating and engagement with the public.*'

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Abstract

Radiation Protection societies or associations have been founded with a primary goal to act as professional associations, allowing members to meet and exchange experiences. This allows the members of the associations to continuously improve their know-how and expertise in the field of protecting the humans and the environment of the negative impact of radiation.

Radiation Protection associations are also a stakeholder in radiation protection issues and as such they need to communicate and engage with general public, authorities, industry and other stakeholders. IRPA has recognized the need to collect good practices, explore ideas and publish '*IRPA guiding principles for communicating and engagement with the public.*'

The Belgian Radiation Protection Association (BVS-ABR) will hold a workshop on this topic. This workshop is the first on this topic, and the experiences could be taken as a model for workshops at different radiation protection events worldwide. The results will be collected and presented in the first draft guidance document at IRPA EC 2019 and the *IRPA guiding principles for communicating and engagement with the public* will be presented to IRPA15 2020 in Korea for approval and subsequent launch.

At this workshop members of European and Japanese Radiation protection societies and representatives of IRPA will discuss with BVS-ABR members pertinent issues, among others:

- What is the role related to public information, communication and transparency of different associations towards the general public?
- How to ensure recognition of associations as the stakeholder in radiation protection issues?
- What are challenges that associations are faced with and what are good practices in communication and stakeholder engagement?
- How to share RP knowledge and how to put it in the best possible perspective for the general public?
- Should the role of associations be limited to communication in a case of emergency event, to educate or/and to provide advice in public debates related to radiation risks and benefits that are currently very active in many countries?

- Concrete examples of communications of radiation protection associations with public will be presented and discussed (e.g. radiological emergencies, medical treatments, NORM, nuclear risks...), opportunities and misconceptions will be defined.

The structure of the workshop will be as follows: i.) Key note speech of IRPA representative, ii.) panel presentations of different national practices, iii.) panel discussion with guests of different associations from the EU region, iv.) work in small groups by all conference participants and v.) panel reporting on the results. Communication material of associations will be exhibited in the conference area.

Abstracts for oral and poster presentations are welcome. We encourage regional Radiation Protection Associations to **exhibit their communication material** in the RICOMET 2018 exhibition area (language of the material should not be limited to English only).