Report of the First Meeting of the Competent Authorities identified under the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency

IAEA, Vienna, 18-22 June, 2001

Background

1. In 1987, two Conventions came into effect, namely the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident ('Early Notification Convention') and the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency ('Assistance Convention'). At present there are 83 States Party to the Early Notification Convention and 79 States Party to the Assistance Convention. In addition, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) are parties to both Conventions.

2. At the Meeting of the IAEA Board of Governors on 16 September 1987, the Secretariat informed the Board about its intention to develop an Emergency Notification and Assistance Technical Operations Manual (ENATOM) as a guideline for the Agency, relevant international organizations, States Parties and Member States for the purposes of emergency notification and assistance. The ENATOM manual was issued and since then has been regularly updated.

3. In 1999 the Secretariat embarked on a major revision of ENATOM to reflect the work of recent years: clarifying emergency classification schemes for nuclear facilities; identifying key information to be transmitted for technical assessment purposes; the development of emergency preparedness and response standards; and improvements in communications technology. The development of the new ENATOM also attempted to address lessons identified from response to real events and from exercises, and to reflect good practice in emergency preparedness and response. In a Note Verbale (J3.81.1/EPRU/ENATOM(01/00) Circ.) issued 14 September 2000 the Secretariat distributed to Member States a pre-publication version, requesting they draw attention to all relevant authorities to the new arrangements. The new edition was published in December 2000 with the objective of providing guidelines for IAEA Member States, Parties to the Early Notification and Assistance Conventions, relevant International Organizations and other States in order that they may develop suitable mechanisms to interface with the IAEA on issues of emergency preparedness, response and assistance within the framework of these Conventions. As before, ENATOM states the Secretariat's expectations rather than prescribing arrangements.

4. In September 2000, the General Conference (in resolution GC(44)/COM.5/L.16 inter alia encouraged IAEA Member States "to implement instruments for improving their response, in particular their contribution to international response, to nuclear and radiological emergencies" and "to participate actively in the process of strengthening international, national and regional capabilities for responding to nuclear and radiological emergencies and to make those capabilities more consistent and coherent". The resolution also recommended the Director General of the IAEA "to continue to evaluate and, if necessary, improve the capability of the IAEA's Emergency Response Centre", and to "report, as appropriate, to it at its forty-sixth [2002] regular session on the implementation of this resolution."

5. The Secretariat issued a Note Verbale (J1-TC-1198 Circ.) to all States inviting them to send representatives to the "First Meeting of the Representatives of the National Competent Authorities for the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency" ('First Meeting of the Competent Authorities') for which the stated purpose of the meeting was: 1) to inform the representatives of National Competent Authorities of the latest emergency response arrangements to ensure clarity and encourage their implementation; 2) to evaluate the effectiveness of the new emergency response arrangements as described in the Emergency Notification and Assistance Technical Operations Manual (EPR-ENATOM 2000); and 3) to consult with the representatives to improve the arrangements for emergency preparedness and response through identifying problems and recommending strategy for resolving them.

6. The First Meeting of the Competent Authorities took place in Vienna from 18 to 22 June 2001, and in total there were 107 participants at this Technical Committee Meeting.

7. The meeting was attended by representatives of Competent Authorities from 58 States Party to one or other of the Early Notification or Assistance Conventions: Argentina; Australia; Austria; Belgium; Brazil; Bulgaria; Canada; People's Republic of China; Costa Rica; Croatia; Czech Republic; Denmark; Egypt; Estonia; Finland; France; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Iceland; India; Indonesia; Iraq; the Islamic Republic of Iran; Ireland; Israel; Italy; Jordan; Republic of Korea; Lebanon; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Malaysia; Mexico; Monaco; Mongolia; Netherlands; Norway; Pakistan; Panama; Philippines; Poland; Portugal; Russian Federation; Saudi Arabia; the Slovak Republic; Slovenia; Spain; Sri Lanka; Sweden; Switzerland; Thailand; Tunisia; Ukraine; the United Arab Emirates; United Kingdom; United States of America; and Vietnam. In addition representatives from 8 Member States not party to either Convention also attended: Chile; Georgia; Ghana; the Holy See; Kuwait; Malta; Qatar; and the Republic of Yemen.

8. Representatives from international organizations party to the two Conventions also attended, specifically from the World Meteorological Organization and the World Health Organization. Observers also attended from the Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA/OECD); European Commission (EC) and the United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN-OCHA).

Meeting Organization

9. The Technical Committee Meeting was facilitated by Mr. J. LaFortune, engaged by the IAEA and run in line with the rules of a Technical Committee Meeting of the Agency. It was structured in a way to achieve the objectives of the meeting through: presentations organized by the Secretariat on current arrangements and future plans; facilitated plenary discussions; group discussions and formulation of proposals; visits to the Emergency Response Centre facilities; and a facilitated plenary review of the draft Meeting Report, including prioritizing recommended actions. The participants were also given the opportunity to table papers on the subject through the Secretariat, and to record their views for consideration by the Secretariat in arranging any follow-up actions. The meeting gave a mandate to the Secretariat to re-structure and edit the draft Meeting Report based on input from the final plenary session of the meeting. The final Meeting Report was cleared by the legal division of the IAEA.

Legal Aspects

10. The meeting took note of a presentation by Prof. Katia Boustany on the legal framework for emergency assistance and response under customary and conventional international law.

11. The meeting also noted that the Early Notification and Assistance Conventions establish mechanisms for States to meet their obligations of notification, information exchange and provision of assistance and set forth specific obligations in that regard under international law. It noted that the objective of early notification is to minimize the transboundary radiological consequences of an accident. It also took note that determining what an accident is in the sense used in the Conventions is left to the precautionary judgement of the State in their exercise of due diligence.

12. The meeting further noted that the Early Notification Convention in Article 1.2 specifies the facilities and activities (i.e. whether civilian or military) to which the Convention applies. It further noted that, pursuant to Article 3, States Parties may, with a view to minimizing the radiological consequences, notify in the event of nuclear accidents other than those specified in Article 1. This would include accidents related to nuclear weapons or nuclear testing, for which five States have made unilateral commitments to notify.

Standards for Emergency Preparedness and Response

13. The meeting recognized: 1) The International Basic Safety Standards for Protection against Ionizing Radiation and for the Safety of Sources (BSS), and 2) the draft Safety Requirements for Preparedness and Response for a Nuclear or Radiological Emergency contained, among other things, requirements for all Member States with regard to international information exchange during an emergency. In this regard it was noted that the Secretariat intended that implementing the new ENATOM arrangements would meet not only the specific obligations of the Conventions but also the relevant parts of the standards. The meeting also stated that international standards were important for harmonizing the preparedness and response arrangements in the international arena.

ENATOM Response Arrangements

14. The meeting took note of the arrangements for emergency notification, information exchange and assistance provisions described in the 2000 edition of ENATOM and, recognizing that areas for potential improvement still exist in the document, expressed a general acceptance that the document was a good basis for interfacing with the IAEA in emergency situations, including but not limited to meeting obligations under the two Conventions. The meeting noted that implementing the ENATOM arrangements would be on a voluntary basis. In particular, it noted that a "warning message" as outlined in ENATOM would be provided on a voluntary basis to the IAEA's ERC for possible dissemination.

15. The meeting recognized the fundamentally different objectives of the INES and ENATOM systems and stated the general understanding of the need to keep the two systems separate, but expressed the view that, especially during an emergency situation or an exercise, they needed to be extremely well co-ordinated.

16. The meeting took note of the presentation by Dr. Schiessl of WMO and of the need for each Competent Authority to consider strengthening contacts with National Meteorological Services in

their own countries, who would have access to more sophisticated WMO products and be able to provide specialist meteorological advice.

17. The meeting provided detailed comments on the 2000 ENATOM manual and on the EMERCON forms for consideration by the Secretariat in developing the next edition in 2002. It concluded that periodic exercises would be crucial in refining and improving the ENATOM forms and procedures.

18. The meeting expressed its appreciation to the Secretariat for the prompt and effective response demonstrated over the past few years. It noted that the Assistance Convention is likely to be the one most invoked in the future and expressed a general desire to focus additional efforts in strengthening the capabilities of the Secretariat and its network in this area.

19. The meeting took note of the fact that, to be promptly discharged, requests for assistance must be promptly made by the requesting State and must be provided through the Competent Authority or Permanent Mission to the focal point within the Secretariat, which is the ERC. The meeting also took note of past situations when failure to follow this procedure had resulted in considerable response delays. It also took note of the consequent importance of regularly updating and disseminating ENATOM.

20. The meeting noted that Article 6 of the Assistance Convention could lead to a situation where important information should be withheld by the IAEA from State Parties. However, the Scientific Secretary stated that the IAEA's ERC would normally endeavour to obtain clearance from the Accident State to release sufficient information to ensure that the objectives of the Convention namely to mitigate the accident consequences were met. At the same time, working diligently with the relevant State towards the longer-term publication of a comprehensive report, where deemed feasible and appropriate.

21. The meeting took note of the statement in response to a question from the Iraqi delegate, that the IAEA had not received a request for emergency assistance from Iraq under the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency, in relation to an alleged contamination with residues of depleted uranium ammunition on Iraqi territory.

ENATOM Preparedness Arrangements

22. The meeting noted the process for designating and modifying the national contact point information. It also took note of the definition of national warning points and national competent authorities contained in ENATOM and reported that the national arrangements of most States established pursuant to the Conventions could readily interface with the Agency under these arrangements and at the same time meet the obligations of the Conventions. However, while recognizing the merit of the ENATOM arrangements to have a single national warning point for both conventions, the meeting noted that for a few States, they had already established national structures that may not always fit the ENATOM model, where the terms used in ENATOM for the contact points and national competent authorities introduced some confusion of their roles. The IAEA Scientific Secretary indicated that for these countries the previous arrangements would continue until such time as an official change was made or special arrangements could be worked out in consultation between the IAEA and the State Party, which when finalized would be officially communicated.

23. While the reorganization of contact points arrangements described in ENATOM is recognized by the meeting as helpful in streamlining and optimizing interactions, it is voluntary. While it may be implemented within an appropriate time, in the transition, the meeting stated the importance of maintaining the previously approved links and to ensure that all appropriate information, including web site addresses and passwords, are forwarded to the existing contact points.

24. The meeting took note of IAEA ERC communication tests results presented by C. Nogueira de Oliveira and expressed concern at the results with some contact points. The meeting agreed that all national competent authorities present at the meeting should make a concerted effort jointly with the ERC to correct this situation.

25. The meeting identified several examples of errors in the distributed list of national contact points and recommended that the relevant competent authorities and the IAEA take steps to have them corrected as soon as possible. The meeting took note of the fact that contact point information changes often and recommended that the ERC should be proactive in verifying that the information on its list is correct.

26. The meeting took note of the global communications challenges and expressed their desire to see the development of a global communication strategy and system that would cover all information communication needs for all bodies involved under the framework of the Conventions before, during and after an emergency.

Electronic Information Exchange

27. The meeting noted the presentation by G. Winkler in which he described the current IAEA web-based arrangements for the communication of key nuclear emergency response data. It took note of the Secretariat's efforts in the development of the ENAC web site, and found the ENAC web site to be a good and useful tool. It took note of the survey from the recent exercise (JINEX-1), which indicated that the majority of users found the IAEA web site acceptable but slow and the information update time delays acceptable.

28. The meeting expressed the interest for the continued development of that system. It suggested that the system should be used for both routine and emergency communications, provided that the web site is structured so as to separate preparedness/archived information and on-going emergency/exercise information. Recognizing the increasing importance of such electronic communications media, the meeting suggested that the present web system would need to be made more reliable.

29. The meeting took note of the proposal by some JINEX-1 participants to add a "push" feature to the IAEA ENAC web site so that 1) the site could actively inform competent authorities when new or updated information is added; and 2) that national competent authorities can upload key information to the ENAC web site.

30. The meeting agreed that in future the passwords for access to ENAC should be given only to the NCA(A). However, while some countries were still considering making the adjustments to their contact points to reflect the new ENATOM arrangements, the meeting requested the Secretariat to consider giving access to the previously designated authorities of these countries on an interim basis and with an extended time limit.

31. The meeting expressed the need to re-examine the nature and content of the WMO products that should be provided. It also stated that the present IAEA transmission of WMO products by fax was not satisfactory and expressed a desire to have direct access to the WMO products web-site through the IAEA web site. The WMO representative said that this was not possible at the moment. Presently the IAEA would import the standard WMO products electronically from those lead RSMCs capable of generating them, and post copies of them to ENAC.

32. The meeting took note of a presentation by J. Lafortune on the proposed use of graphical representation to communicate key information during an emergency and found the proposed graphical data dictionary to be a good, simple tool. The meeting also expressed interest in an IAEA tool that allows the information contained in the ENATOM forms to be readily converted into a graphical representation and communicated via the web, and took note of the fact that such a system was not intended to replace existing national systems but was designed to complement them.

33. The meeting envisaged that, in the long term, most Member States would develop their own emergency information web site and that a link could be established from the ENAC web site to the national web site. However, the meeting also recognized that such an approach could introduce security issues. The meeting also took note that such a national web site would have to be declared authoritative and must be appropriately protected for it to be used within the context of the Conventions. Furthermore, the meeting recognized that a national web-site may involve language difficulties in the context of international communication.

34. The meeting expressed concern about the lack of harmonization and international guidance on the structure and content for the development of national information systems, in particular web-based systems. Recognizing that this aspect is under the control of the Member States, the meeting suggested that guidance may improve overall international communication by fostering the voluntary development of harmonized systems.

35. The meeting took note of the challenges that result from the co-existence of the European Commission's ECURIE system and the ENATOM systems and suggested that this issue should receive the concerted attention of the IAEA and the EC.

Communications Tests and Exercises

36. The meeting took note of the three types of exercises proposed by the IAEA in ENATOM. With regard to the CONVEX 2a exercises, the meeting suggested that the objective should be to verify the action of the National Warning Point contacting the National Competent Authority and including the time of this contact in their response to the ERC. They should respond as soon as possible. Furthermore, the meeting recommended that the response to a CONVEX 1a test should be *immediate* for the National Warning Point.

37. The meeting took note of the preliminary results of the JINEX-1 exercise, in which 55 States, including 86 contact points, participated. The meeting also took note and, reflected positively on the fact that the IAEA ERC sent about 20 messages during the course of this exercise, although delays were noted.

38. The meeting took note of the need to achieve better coordination of international exercises, which represent a considerable burden for preparation, conduct and evaluation on the Secretariat and other international agency resources. The frequency of such JINEX exercises should take into

account the national constraints of the Member States. Many States are in favour of a 3 year frequency instead of the 2 year frequency suggested by the Agency.

Emergency Response Network (ERNET)

39. The meeting took note of a presentation by C. Nogueira de Oliveira describing the emergency response network (ERNET), whose purpose is to optimize resources and provide a capability for rapid response to requests for emergency assistance, with the ERC as the focal point for coordination. The meeting also took note of the fact that since 1987 the IAEA responded to 134 events and coordinated 26 assistance missions. The meeting expressed sincere appreciation at the work performed by the IAEA in this respect.

40. The meeting also took note of the requirements for being part of ERNET, which include the need to meet detailed capability requirements, the need to participate in exercises and the requirement to respond in accordance with requirements contained in the IAEA safety standards. The meeting expressed their support of the concept, in particular of the need for ERNET members to take part in regular exercises. The meeting also suggested that, as much as possible, ERNET teams should be regionally-based, although the view was expressed that in a large transboundary emergency regional resources would probably be fully employed in their national response arrangements, and that teams would need to come from long distances to provide assistance.

41. The meeting also took note of the list of capabilities required within ERNET and generally found the ERNET document to be one of the best and most useful documents recently produced by the EPRU. The meeting also expressed the opinion that the relevant competent authorities must be more proactive. Several of them stated they were actively examining how their countries could contribute to ERNET. The meeting recognized that additional detailed procedures would need to be established.

Interaction with International Organizations

42. The meeting took note of a presentation by M. Crick in which he outlined the structure and purpose of the IACRNA, principally for coordinating preparedness of relevant international agencies and thereby meeting the IAEA's relevant obligation for liaison under the Assistance Convention. Recognizing the complexity of the interactions, the meeting found the Joint Plan to be a well structured and clear document while recognizing that much work remains to be done in inter-agency coordination.

43. The meeting took note of the fact that joint international exercises are not currently institutionalized and are determined on a case-by-case basis to dovetail with other exercises and suggested that a more systematic exercise programme may be required to ensure the maintenance of the effectiveness of the international emergency response system.

44. With regard to international exercises, the meeting expressed the desire to be better informed about the progress and the discussions of IACRNA.

Technical Documents and Tools

45. The meeting took note of a presentation by T. McKenna describing current IAEA efforts in the development of emergency preparedness and response standards, and of other technical

documents and tools to provide for the application of the standards. Additionally these activities were parts of the functions assigned to the Agency under Article 5 of the Assistance Convention. The meeting generally found the recent documents to be very clear and useful. Some participants would be interested in additional and more complete guidance on emergency response centres and on dose projection for radiological emergencies. The Scientific Secretary informed the meeting that more guidance was going to be provided on emergency centres in the next version of TECDOC 953.

46. The meeting also expressed an interest in obtaining the documents in languages other than English and Russian, in particular for the Arabic-speaking countries. Finally, the meeting expressed a clear interest to be able to obtain the list of documents and the documents themselves from the ENAC web site.

47. The meeting took note that a new version of the computer code INTERRAS is being developed by the IAEA, that this new version will be applicable for dose projection in radiological emergencies as well as nuclear accidents, and that this code will be made available to Member States.

48. While recognizing that the IAEA is developing general guidance on recovery following a nuclear accident or a radiological emergency, the meeting expressed an interest in the development of practical guidance and procedures in this area.

Enhancing National and Regional Capabilities

49. The meeting took note of a presentation by G. Winkler describing the IAEA technical co-operation programme and its regional approach, both in support of its statutory functions and those assigned to the IAEA under Article 5 of the Assistance Convention. It also noted the so-called 'Model Project' for upgrading and strengthening regulatory infrastructure for radiation safety, for which the fifth element was 'emergency preparedness and response'. It took note of the effectiveness of the current train-the-trainer approach, which, from 1998 to 2000, resulted in the training of 3300 national participants from an investment of 16 person-days of IAEA staff and 116 person-days of expert time. It also took note that the standard training material and technical documents made for harmonized regional approaches. The meeting expressed its appreciation to the IAEA for these initiatives.

IAEA Emergency Response Centre

50. Given the high emphasis placed by the meeting on the importance of the IAEA role during a nuclear accident or a radiological emergency, the meeting noted the general lack of resources for the ERC compared with the responsibilities assigned to it.

Meeting Outcome

51. The meeting took note of the arrangements made by the IAEA for emergency notification, information exchange and assistance. It provided feedback during the meeting and made suggestions for consideration by the Secretariat for 1) operational changes to the system; 2) detailed comments on the documentation; and 3) future actions by the Secretariat to strengthen emergency preparedness and response arrangements which are attached as respective annexes to this report.

52. There was general appreciation of the IAEA's Emergency Preparedness and Response Unit (EPRU) for its efforts in recent years to promote implementation of the Conventions, to improve international coordination in emergency preparedness and response, and to encourage good practice. The meeting voiced its support for continued efforts in this area.

53. In particular, the meeting expressed a strong appreciation for the IAEA in organizing this first meeting of national contact points. It agreed that such a meeting was valuable, recognizing that there should be considerable work by both the Secretariat and Parties between now and any future meetings.

54. With regard to the need for future meetings of national contact points, the meeting expressed strong support for on-going, periodic meetings with all national contact points on a biennial basis, coordinated if possible with activities under regional technical co-operation projects to optimize resources, which could be organized within the current regional framework, and which could examine regional implementation issues. In the interim, the meeting expressed a great desire for a communications process that will maintain an effective liaison between the competent authorities and the IAEA. Finally, the meeting took note of the fact that this was the first such meeting and suggested that future meetings could be more focused on selected high-priority items.

55. Recognizing that the proposed actions arising from this meeting represent a great investment in resources and recognizing that the competent authorities are responsible for implementing such actions, the meeting suggested that some authorities could volunteer to carry out designated development and implementation tasks provided that the overall work is facilitated and coordinated by the IAEA to ensure consistency and compatibility of the outputs.

Annex I.
SUGGESTIONS FOR OPERATIONAL CHANGES FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE SECRETARIAT

56. The meeting made suggestions for consideration by the Secretariat that the following operational changes be made to the existing system:

	Priority
A. structure the ENAC web site in such a manner that there will be a clear distinction between preparedness/archived information and on-going emergency/exercise information.	1
B. make available emergency preparedness and response documents for downloading from the ENAC web site.	1
C. request updates to the information on the contact point list at least twice a year.	1
D. provide a report on the success of each communications test through faxed forms and through the ENAC web site after each test.	1
E. carry out simple exercises for validating and improving ENATOM procedures[1]:	1
F. provide the ENAC web site address and password to all Member State competent authorities and to permanent missions.	2
G. provide regular updates on the discussion and work progress of IACRNA, possibly on ENAC web-site.	2
H. modify the objectives of the Convex-1a and Convex-2a exercise to include immediate reply by the National Warning Point to the former, and contact of the National Competent Authority and reply as soon as possible for the latter.	2
I. distribute WMO meteorological products containing isoconcentration contours of activity in air and deposition only after the source term has been defined by the Accident State[2]	2
J. invite States to nominate teams to join ERNET.	2
K. make a link into the INES/NEWS system from the ENAC web-site.	3
L. request Member States to voluntarily inform the Agency in a concise manner of the degree to which they plan to implement or have implemented ENATOM, and make this information available on the ENAC web-site	3

[1] The process proposed was as follows: 1) IAEA writes scenario; 2) IAEA provides scenario to several countries; 3) competent authorities work through the scenario, fill out the forms as they understand and send them to IAEA; 4) IAEA compares the results to determine which areas need to be improved.

[2] It was noted that should a State require the isoconcentration information for a Unit release before a source term was available, it could be obtained from WMO through its National Meteorological Service.

Annex II.
DETAILED COMMENTS ON THE ENATOM DOCUMENTATION

57. The following comments were provided to the Secretariat for its consideration when issuing future amendments and new editions of the ENATOM manual. Additional specific comments have been deposited in the meeting file for the meeting, which the Secretariat is encouraged to review when producing the next edition.

	Priority
A. Make it clear in ENATOM which parts of the document are derived from obligations under the Conventions and which parts are not. [1]	1
B. Consider changing the term "emergency classes" to "emergency conditions" and re-examine the title of the conditions in order to avoid the possible confusion introduced by the fact that the emergency classes in ENATOM have the same titles as on-site classification levels at nuclear power plants and that these levels often have different definitions.	2
C. Clarify the use of the meteorological products provided by the WMO, which include plume trajectories at various altitudes and projected isoconcentration contours based on a unit release of Cs-137. The meeting expressed some concern at the misleading nature of the latter before a source term assessment has been completed.	2
D. Consider the following specific comments on the ENATOM document: i) Provide more definitions on page 3. ii) Consider list of abbreviation on page 5. iii) Clarify that if the NCA does not exist or has not been officially nominated, the permanent mission should be contacted iv) Clarify the use of "site area emergency" versus "site emergency". v) Define better the use of the 'Alert' classification[3]. vi) Clarify the issue of media attention contained in page 4, foot note sub para (e) needed to be clarified in terms of intent and obligation	2
E. Consider the following specific comments on the EMERCON forms for Nuclear and Radiological Emergencies (N-1, N-2, R-1, R-2 and MPA): i) Allow printed hand writing for speed. ii) Require meteorological information only if the release is transboundary. iii) Consider whether the form should be modified to clarify whether the message or even an individual field in the message is provided on a courtesy basis or as an official notification under the convention[4]. iv) Better define deterministic effects.	2

[3] The meeting could not agree on the need to keep "Alert" on the forms. Some said it was important for rumour control while others said it was not important in the context of the conventions.

[4] There was some disagreement here. Some said that another box would make the form too complex and that, anyway, a *warning* is assumed if the transboundary box is not checked (see small print in the back of the form). Others said that the small print would not be noticed and that there was a need to make it absolutely clear on the front page if this is an official notification or not.

Annex III.
SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTIONS BY THE SECRETARIAT TO STRENGTHEN THE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE SYSTEM

58. The meeting suggested the following actions to be considered by the Secretariat in developing its future plans for strengthening and harmonizing international emergency preparedness and response arrangements for nuclear and radiological emergencies:

	Priority
A. Through a mechanism involving Member States, examine the global communications issues and develop an overall consolidated communications strategy. Co-ordinate the creation of a standard platform for international nuclear and radiological emergency response, including communication strategy, standardized communication lines and protocols, standardized data formats and physical quantities.	1
B. In particular, make a concerted and coordinated effort with other relevant international agencies to consolidate the two emergency communication systems present in Europe, namely ENATOM and ECURIE and consider developing common tools that meet both the obligations of the conventions and that have a broader application including for those IAEA Member States that are not parties to the conventions.	1
C. Assess the outcome of this meeting and, considering the needs and capabilities of the IAEA Secretariat, national competent authorities of States Parties, non-party Member States and relevant international organizations, develop and implement a long-term strategy for the continuous improvement of the international preparedness and response system.	2
D. Develop a long-term plan for how mechanisms for international assistance can be further developed, including implementation and evaluation. Improve the national coordination mechanisms and the interface between the IAEA and relevant competent authorities to maximize the effectiveness of the ERNET system.	2
E. Facilitate another meeting of all national contact points within two years. Consider creating a Secretariat responsible for the preparation and conduct of the next meeting. Co-ordinate the meeting with activities performed under Technical Co-operation projects in order to optimize attendance by appropriate representatives of Member States.	2
F. Strengthen the use of electronic media for emergency communications. Consider the upgrade of the ERC server and addition of a second server (and possibly a mirrored site) for redundancy and reliability. Add a capability for users to change their passwords once they have signed onto the ENAC web site.	2
G. Pursue the development of the ENAC web site through some mechanism that involves Member States. This work should cover development of standards for graphical user interface; content, structure and forms of information; and proposed strategy for links to national web sites.	2

	Priority
H. Define detailed requirements for the meteorological products to be generated and provided during an emergency. Examine with WMO ways to facilitate electronic access to WMO products through the ENAC site.	2
I. Examine the need and, if appropriate and feasible, develop a more systematic emergency exercise programme aimed at verifying the main response objectives of the IAEA, and the effectiveness of the interface with the Competent Authorities. Consider conducting small scale exercises on a regular basis to validate and improve procedures in the long term .	2
J. Consider the development of practical guidance and procedures on recovery aspects from nuclear and radiological emergencies.	2
K. Implement the proposed graphical data dictionary on a voluntary basis. Create a mechanism to carry out its continued development, maintenance and improvement.	3
L. Noting that the BSS contains and reflects the guideline levels of the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission for contamination of foodstuffs moving in international trade, provide further assistance in the harmonization of the practical implementation of those standards, including inter alia, standard guidance on operational intervention levels, measurements, sampling, and assessment, and establishing a mechanism for States to consider make appropriate undertakings	3