L.N. 245 of 2002

CIVIL PROTECTION ACT
(CAP. 411)

Radiological Emergency (Information to the Public) Regulations, 2002

IN exercise of the powers conferred by article 7 of the Civil Protection Act, the Minister for Home Affairs and the Environment has made the following regulations:-

Citation and commencement.

1. (1) The title of these regulations is the Radiological Emergency (Information to the Public) Regulations, 2002.

(2) These regulations shall come into force on such date as the Minister responsible for civil protection may by notice in the Gazette appoint.

Interpretation.

2. In these regulations, unless the context otherwise requires:

"radiological emergency" means –

(a) any situation that follows:

(i) an accident in the territory of Malta involving facilities or practices referred to in paragraph (b) of this definition from where a significant release of radioactive material occurs or is likely to occur; or

(ii) the detection, within or outside the Maltese territory, of abnormal levels of radioactivity which are likely to be detrimental to public health and environment in Malta; or

(iii) accidents from an external factor that may lead to release of radioactivity from a facility or practice; or

(iv) accidents other than those specified in paragraph (a) hereof involving facilities or practices referred to in paragraph (b) hereof from which a significant release of radioactive material occurs or is likely to occur; or

(v) other accidents from which a significant release of radioactive material or radioactive contamination occurs or is likely to occur; or

(b) any situation that is attributable to the facilities or practices referred to in paragraph (a) hereof, such as:

(i) any nuclear reactor wherever located;

(ii) any other nuclear-fuel-cycle facility;

(iii) any radioactive waste management facility;

(iv) the transport and storage of nuclear fuels or radioactive wastes;

(v) the manufacture, use, storage, disposal and transport of radioisotopes for agricultural, industrial, medical and related scientific research purposes; and

(vi) the use of radioisotopes for power generation in space vehicles;

"Act" means the Civil Protection Act;

"Board" means the Radiation Protection Board;

"Department" means the Department of Civil Protection established by article 3 of the Act;

"Director" means the Director of Civil Protection and includes, to the extent of the authority given, a public officer authorised in that behalf by such Director;

"Minister" means the Minister responsible for civil protection and includes, to the extent of the authority given, any person authorised on that behalf for any purpose of these regulations;

"population likely to be affected in the event of a radiological emergency" means any population group for which intervention plans in the event of a radiological emergency have been drawn up;

"population actually affected in the event of a radiological emergency" means any population group for which specific

protection measures are taken as soon as a radiological emergency occurs.

Prior information.

3. (1) The Director shall ensure that the population likely to be affected in the event of a radiological emergency is given prior information about the health-protection measures applicable to it and about the action it should take in the event of such an emergency.

(2) The information supplied shall at least include the elements set out in the First Schedule to these regulations.

(3) This information shall be communicated to the population referred to in subregulation (1) of this regulation without any request being made.

(4) The Director shall update the information and circulate it at regular intervals and whenever significant changes are made in the arrangements that it describes. This information shall be permanently available to the public in an appropriate manner.

Information in the event of a radiological emergency.

4. (1) The Director shall ensure that the population actually affected in the event of a radiological emergency is informed without delay of the facts of the emergency and of the steps to be taken and, as appropriate to the case in point, of the health protection measures applicable to it.

(2) The information provided shall cover the points contained in the Second Schedule to these regulations which are relevant to such type of radiological emergency. The Board shall, whenever so requested, notify neighbouring States of measures taken in this regard.

Information of persons who give assistance in a radiological emergency.

5. (1) The Director shall ensure that persons who are not on the staff of the facilities or who are not engaged in the practices involved in a radiological emergency as defined in paragraph (b) of the definition of the said term, but who might be involved in the organisation of emergency assistance in the event of a radiological emergency, are given adequate and regularly updated information on the health hazard which their intervention might involve and on the precautionary measures to be taken in such an event; this information shall take into account the range of potential radiological emergencies.

(2) As soon as a radiological emergency occurs, this information shall be supplemented appropriately, having regard to the specific circumstances of the emergency.

FIRST SCHEDULE

Regulation 3(2)

Prior information referred to in Regulation 3

1. Basic facts about radioactivity and its effects on human beings and on the environment.

2. The various types of radiological emergency covered and their consequences for the general public and the environment.

3. Emergency measures envisaged to alert, protect and assist the general public in the event of a radiological emergency.

4. Appropriate information on action to be taken by the general public in the event of a radiological emergency.

SECOND SCHEDULE

Regulation 4(2)

Information in the event of a radiological emergency referred to in Regulations 4 and 5

1. On the basis of the intervention plans previously drawn up in Malta, the population actually affected in the event of a radiological emergency will rapidly and regularly receive:

(a) information on the type of emergency which has occurred and, where possible, its characteristics (e.g. its origin, extent and probable development);

(b) advice on protection which, depending on the type of emergency, might:

- cover the following: restrictions on the consumption of certain foodstuffs likely to be contaminated, simple rules on hygiene and decontamination, recommendations to stay indoors, distribution and use of protective substances, evacuation arrangements,

- be accompanied, where necessary, by special warning for certain population groups;

(c) announcements recommending cooperation with instructions or requests by the competent authorities.

2. If the emergency is preceded by a pre-alarm phase, the population likely to be affected in the event of a radiological emergency should already receive information and advice during that phase, such as:

- an invitation to the population concerned to tune in to radio or television,

- preparatory advice to establishments with particular collective responsibilities,

- recommendations to occupational groups particularly affected.

3. This information and advice will be supplemented if time permits by a reminder of the basic facts about radioactivity and its effects on human beings and on the environment.

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