

DELEGATION OF THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES  
DELEGATION DE LA COMMISSION DES COMMUNAUTES EUROPEENNES  
PRESS AND INFORMATION SERVICE

INFORMATION NOTE

Euratom - IAEA  
Inspection Techniques

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The entry into force of the Euratom-IAEA Agreement marks the integration of the Communities' regional safeguards set up in 1959 with the worldwide safeguards system maintained under the provisions of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The negotiation of this agreement has also been the occasion for an up-dating of the Euratom system to bring it into line with modern inspection methods. In common with the IAEA system the Euratom safeguards system has three main activities: the examination of the nuclear installations in the Community and their evaluation to define the specific safeguards techniques and strategies to be applied; the keeping of a nuclear material accounting system, based on periodic returns from all the operators of nuclear facilities in the Community on the status of the materials they detain; the carrying out of on-site inspections.

But the Euratom system goes further. Two features of the Euratom safeguards are unique: 1. all activities are carried out on the basis of direct contacts with the nuclear operation in the Community, without intervention of the Member States (whose role in this area is substantially limited to the right of being represented whenever inspections are carried out in their national territory). 2. infringement of safeguards obligations in the Community is subject to the imposition of a wide range of sanctions, mainly of an economic nature, by the Commission.

Improved Methods

Safeguards techniques have dramatically expanded over the past decade to cope with the development of peaceful nuclear industries, and in particular such activities as irradiated fuel reprocessing and fuel fabrication.

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The Euratom safeguards system has shown a remarkable degree of adaptability. Thus, the number of Euratom inspectors, fewer than ten in the early '60s, is now about sixty, out of a total safeguards staff of 115. The bulk of the inspection effort, initially almost totally concentrated on the few research and power reactors then operating in the Community, is now concentrated on the "sensitive" facilities (fabrication, reprocessing, etc.), relatively few in number, but which account for an extremely large proportion of the total inventory of "sensitive" nuclear material (highly enriched uranium, plutonium) in the nearly 400 nuclear facilities falling under Euratom safeguards.

#### Commission Staff

Euratom inspectors are members of the Commission's multinational staff and are appointed in their capacity by the European Commission. They have access to all places, data and persons in the facilities they are inspecting.

The IAEA's inspectors normally have access only to predetermined locations.

International discussions are still going on with a view to improving safeguards systems. The Commission intends that the Community should participate fully in these discussions and that the Euratom safeguards system should be extended and adapted as necessary to reflect changing standards and obligations.

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