



REPORT

Working Group Meeting

on

“The RCARO’s Future Role”

10-12 June 2014

Ramada Plaza Hotel, Jeju, Korea

1. Introduction

The 36th Meeting of the National RCA Representatives (NRM), which was held on 1 to 4 April, Wellington, New Zealand, agreed that a Working Group be formed to consider the future role of the RCARO, including the issues raised in the Strategic Paper presented by the Director of the RCARO.

As a follow up, a meeting of the Working Group was held at the Ramada Plaza hotel in Jeju, Korea on 10-12 June 2014. The Meeting was attended by 22 participants: Working Group Members from AUL (Dr. John Easey, Chair), CPR, JPN, NZE, PAK, PHI, ROK, Dir-RCARO; RCA National Representative (NR) ROK; experts from Korean institutes including, KAERI, KIRAMS and KONICOF; and RCARO staff. A list of the participants is given in Annex 1. (Note: all annexes referred to hereafter are posted on the RCA website www.rcaro.org).

2. Opening Session

2.1 Welcome Remarks by Mr. Kun Mo Choi, Director, RCARO

Mr. Choi opened the meeting and welcomed members of the Working Group and observers. He also introduced Mr. Seung Ho Hong, the new RCA National Representative of ROK, and also the Director, Space & Nuclear Cooperation Division, Ministry of Science, ICT & Future Planning (MSIP). He recalled the background and aim of the meeting. He thanked participants for their participation despite of their busy schedule and wished active discussion and fruitful meeting.

2.2 Congratulatory Remarks by Mr. Seung Ho Hong, Director, MSIP

Mr. Seung Ho Hong, Director, Space & Nuclear Cooperation Division, MSIP, gave congratulatory remarks and welcomed the participants. He noted that the RCA has contributed greatly to its Government Parties (GPs) through successfully implementing projects using nuclear science and technology in various areas. He went on to observe that the RCA programme had played a pivotal role in enhancing nuclear technology cooperation in Asia-Pacific region and the increased demand from the GPs for retaining and using nuclear science and technology in the region.

He noted the successful operation of the RCARO and that it was being encouraged by the GPs to take more and new initiatives for their benefit. As its host country, Korea fully supported the RCARO taking on more initiatives and expanding its role in the RCA activities. He wished the Workshop great success.

2.3 Introduction of the Chair of the WG by the Dir-RCARO

Following introductory remarks by Mr. Choi, Dr. John Easey chaired meeting.

2.4 Designation of Rapporteur

The meeting designated the RCARO as rapporteur.

2.5 Introduction of the prospectus of the WG Meeting

The Chair briefly reviewed the prospectus for the meeting and outlined its key tasks. (Annex 2)

2.6 Adoption of Agenda

The meeting adopted the agenda as set out in the distributed draft with small adjustments on the timing of presentation of the NR of PAK due to his changed travel schedule. (Annex 3)

3. Session I – Perspective of the Government Parties on the RCARO

3.1 Introduction of the Past Activities of the RCARO

Mr. Choi delivered a presentation (Annex 4) on the past activities of the RCARO. Dr. Easey noted with appreciation the RCARO's efforts and achievements, which had been undertaken with limited resources.

3.2 PHI NR's Perspective on the RCARO Activities

Dr. Alumanda Dela Rosa commented that the accomplishments of the RCARO in increasing visibility and viability of the RCA were highly valued. In this regard she noted especially that the publication of the RCA Success Stories, the maintenance of the RCA website and RCA/UNDP partnership projects as examples where the needs of the region had been addressed by the RCARO through its active interactions with the Government Parties (GPs).

She commented that the current profile of the RCARO appeared to be more that of a Korean rather than a regional entity and ways and means should be sought to emphasize its regional make up and character. Her presentation is given in Annex 5

3.3 PAK NR's Perspective on the RCARO Activities

The PAK NR gave a short introduction to the activities in Pakistan and then reviewed positively the activities undertaken by the RCARO. He made some suggestions concerning future collaboration with the RCARO. (Annex 6)

Conclusions:

The Meeting noted the successful operations and achievements of the RCARO

over the past years which had been undertaken with limited resources.

The contributions of all the GPs to the RCA programme, including the contribution of ROK to the RCARO, needed to have greater emphasis and should be fully documented in all relevant RCA documentation, especially that submitted to the IAEA Technical Cooperation Department.

The regional nature of the RCARO and its operations should be emphasized.

The future roles and functions of the RCARO should be fully reflected in its mandate, with due regards to the resources that could be made available.

4. Session II - the RCARO's Future Role based on the Strategic Paper by the RCARO

Mr. Choi and Dr. Easey delivered presentations on each of the discussion points based on the strategic paper (Annexes 7 & 8). In his presentation Dr. Easey emphasized the importance of taking a needs-based approach to the issues and thus ensure that the recommendations cover the full extent of the GPs requirements. The meeting had extensive discussions following the briefing on each of the discussion points.

4.1 Discussion Point I – Implementation of Supplementary Projects

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions:

The meeting agreed that there is an important place for supplementary projects (SPs) within the RCA programme.

It was important to have a rigorous definition of SPs and to establish specific criteria for their acceptance and application. In particular, a mechanism would be needed to define how the SPs would be implemented and this would be either using the normal TC cycle or the fast-track mechanism through the RCARO, depending on the funding source and the urgency or immediate impact of the proposal.

The meeting noted that SPs could not be implemented unless there were additional funds provided to support these projects. Sources for the additional funding could be the IAEA, the GPs or external donors. In addition, "in kind" contributions from the GPs related to the provision of human and physical resources should be encouraged.

Technical support for the SPs could be provided by the GPs, if it is not provided

by the IAEA.

The function of the RCARO to support and administer SPs should be included in its mandate.

Recommendations

The meeting recommended that the GPs seek ways to support SPs to the maximum extent possible through provision of appropriate resources.

It is recommended that the mandate of the RCARO be adjusted to enable the administration and implementation of the SPs.

It is recommended that the WG establish specific criteria for the application and operation of SPs within the RCA programme.

4.2 Discussion Point II – Support of the Research Projects

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

The meeting agreed that the re-inclusion of research projects (RPs) would be beneficial to the overall RCA programme and that the RCARO could support and implement RPs on behalf of GPs.

The mandate of the RCARO should be adjusted to ensure that it was compatible with these additional activities.

Criteria for developing, proposing and approving RPs would need to be established as well as mechanisms for their operation and conduct. The drafting of these documents should be undertaken by the WG.

The RPs could not be implemented unless there were additional funding sources available.

Services of technical experts from the IAEA/GPs would be needed to support the RPs.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the GPs and IAEA consider committing resources to support RCA RPs.

It is recommended that the WG establish appropriate criteria and mechanisms governing the proposal, development, approval and operation of the RPs.

It is recommended that the mandate of the RCARO be adjusted appropriately to

enable the administration and implementation of the RPs.

4.3 Discussion Point III – Supporting Training/Education Programmes

Dr. Nam (Director, Nuclear Training & Education Center, KAERI) introduced the Asian Network for Education in Nuclear Technology (ANENT) to the meeting for consideration of the RCARO as a possible tool to promote the education programme initiative of the RCARO. Her concept paper on ANENT is given in Annex 9.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

The meeting recognized the importance of education/training programmes to underpin the sustainability of the RCA technology transfer programme.

Considering that urgent ad hoc training needed in the region might not be able to be addressed immediately by the IAEA to meet the identified gaps, the RCARO could assist in supporting ad hoc training, if it could secure sufficient funding support.

The wide range of training and educational programmes needed to be clarified to see how they may best address the needs of the GPs.

There are a number of initiatives in the training and education sector that may be able to assist in addressing needs within the RCA programme. The Asian Network for Education in Nuclear Technology (ANENT) e-learning programme could be an example of such support that might assist the RCARO's initiative for training and education programme.

Recommendations

The WG should develop guidelines, procedures and criteria for undertaking ad hoc training for the GPs by the RCARO.

The RCARO should be authorized to undertake support for ad hoc training subject to the appropriate criteria and availability of adequate funding.

The WG should be further tasked to investigate the possibility of the broader educational support for the GPs being provided with the assistance of the RCARO.

The RCARO's mandate should be adjusted to be consistent with these training and education initiatives.

4.4 Discussion Point IV – Coordination of the RCA Working Groups and ad hoc Committees

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

The meeting supports the proposal that the RCARO assists and coordinates support for WGs and ad hoc committees established by the GPs.

Recommendations

It is recommended that, as appropriate, the RCARO assist in supporting and coordinating WGs and ad hoc committees established by the GPs.

The mandate of the RCARO should be adjusted to be consistent with this increased function.

Adequate financial and physical resources from the IAEA, the GPs and additional donors will have to be made available to enable the RCARO to undertake these tasks.

4.5 Discussion Point V – Proposal of Pilot Projects and Recruitment of a Senior Staff Member

The meeting discussed the issue of Pilot Projects during the session on Supplementary Projects.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

The meeting recognized the importance of adequate staffing levels and competencies for the RCARO to be able to implement the projected increased future roles, as well as maintaining its existing functions.

The recruitment of a senior staff member and/or dispatch of cost free experts from the GPs would provide more regional participation in the operation of the Office, as well as assisting in extending regional outreach, which would significantly assist the RCARO in its regional activities.

Recommendations

The mandate of the RCARO should be adjusted to enable the RCARO to recruit

a senior staff member from one of the GPs and it is noted that the RCARO has identified the staffing levels and competencies needed to support and implement the proposed new initiatives.

The RCARO should clarify the necessary procedures required, secure the required funding and undertake the recruitment.

The GPs are strongly encouraged to provide cost free expert assistance to the RCARO in support of the proposed increased functions.

4.6 Discussion on Other Possible Issues which are not covered by the Strategic Paper

The meeting did not identify any additional issues relevant to the matters covered in the strategic paper.

5. Session III – Tasks and Challenges for Implementation of Plans for the RCARO's Future Role

5.1 Discussion on Action Plan

Schedule	Action
13 th June 2014	Distribution of drafted WG report to the WG members for comments
20 th June 2014	Responses by WG members to the Chair on suggested revisions and changes
4 th July 2014	Distribution of the revised WG report to WG members and RCARO
11 th July 2014	Responses from WG members and RCARO to Chair
18 th July 2014	Chair to provide final version of the WG report to the WG members, RCARO and RCA Focal Person
19 th August 2014	Distribution of the WG report by the RCA Focal Person to the NRs and to SAC
19 th September 2014 (43 rd RCA GCM)	Presentation of the report of the WG to the 43 rd RCA GCM in Vienna, this will be undertaken by Dr. Dela Rosa on behalf of the Chair

Upon approval of the 43 rd RCA GCM	RCARO seeks to secure funding for recruitment of the senior staff from one of the GPs
Venue and timing for the 2 nd WG meeting to be arranged (subject to approval of the 43 rd GCM)	2 nd WG meeting to prepare guidelines and procedures and other documentations related to the future activities of WG as recommended at this meeting (section 5.2) for presentation at the 37 th NRM
16-19 th March 2015	37 th RCA NRM
April 2015	Follow up actions after the 37 th NRM

5.2 Discussion on Future Activities of the WG

The WG discussed the actions that are necessary to implement the recommendations and the part that might be played by the WG.

It is recommended that the future activities of the WG should be as follows;

- To establish specific criteria for the application and operation of SPs within the RCA programme,
- To establish specific criteria for the application and operation of RPs within the RCA programme, as well as mechanisms for their operation and conduct,
- To develop guidelines, procedures and criteria for undertaking ad hoc training for GPs by the RCARO,
- To investigate the possibility of the broader educational support being provided with the assistance of the RCARO,
- To prepare a revised RCARO mandate covering the proposed extended RCARO functions for the attention of the NRs and
- To prepare option papers for consideration of the NRs on possible funding models to support RPs and to support SPs implemented by the RCARO.

6. Closing

The WG noted with appreciation the progress made through the efforts of the RCARO to increase the regional awareness and visibility profile of the RCA and to seek financial support from donor agencies other than the IAEA.

The WG considered it was essential to maintain and further strengthen this role of the RCARO.

Mr. Choi thanked the WG for its strong participation and its contribution to the advancement of the development of the future strategies for the RCARO. He looked forward to the report being presented to the 43rd RCA GCM and hoped that the meeting there would provide the endorsements so that the RCARO can expand its operations and increase its contributions to the effective implementation of the RCA programme. He wished all participants safe journey home.

ANNEXES

Annex 1 – List of Meeting Participants

Annex 2 – Meeting Prospectus

Annex 3 – Meeting Agenda

Annex 4 – Presentation by Mr. Kun-mo Choi, “RCARO and its Activities”

Annex 5 – Presentation by Dr. Alumanda Dela Rosa, “Philippine NR’s Perspectives on the Activities of the RCARO”

Annex 6 – Presentation by Dr. Waqar Ahmad, “RCARO, Pakistan’s Perspective”

Annex 7 – Presentation by Mr. Kun-mo Choi, “Discussion Points”

Annex 8 – Presentation by Dr. John Easey, “The Potential for Increasing the Role of the RCA Regional Office”

Annex 9 – Presentation by Dr. Youngmi Nam, “Asian Network for Education in Nuclear Technology (ANENT)”