

HERCA-WGE TASK FORCE – UKRAINE SUPPORT

UPDATE OF PROGRESS AS OF 4th AUGUST 2022 TO HERCA BOARD OF HEADS MEMBERS, WGE MEMBERS AND TASK FORCE PARTICIPANTS

Gareth Thomas (WGE and WGE TF Chair), Task Force participants

Dear HERCA Board of Heads members and WGE members

Following the previous communiques (5 April¹ and 6 May² 2022), I am pleased to report that the 'HERCA-WGE Task Force – Ukraine support' has continued to progress and completed the majority of objectives in its mandate³.

Introduction

Since the formation of the Task Force and its mandate in March 2022, excellent progress has continued. The Task Force has met 11 times and has facilitated and supported the delivery of several key pieces of work to aid and support Ukraine and Ukraine's neighbouring countries. These packages of work have ranged from:

- the sharing of all HERCA EP&R Country Fact Sheets⁴;
- the preparation and publication of a new guidance document focussing the HERCA-WENRA Approach (HWA) on the situation in the Ukraine⁵;
- a contacts directory for the neighbouring countries of Ukraine (Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and Moldova); and
- the coordination of a questionnaire which when answered will be used to allow the sharing and coordination of any required responses (i.e. protective actions) from countries neighbouring Ukraine.

The Task Force has also facilitated four coordination meetings between Ukraine and neighbouring countries and two meetings with all HERCA-WGE member countries.

In May 2022, at the HERCA Board of Heads meeting, the mandate³ was reviewed where the objectives were reduced to three deliverables. An update of these follows:

Progress against Task Force objectives:

1. Preparation

- *Identify overlays of existing HERCA documents (including the HERCA-WENRA Approach) to the situation in the Ukraine.*
- *Take into account, if possible, local documentation.*
- *Identify the first pragmatic needs not covered by the existing documentation; and*
- *Identify relevant recommendations and seek common positions on how or when the protective actions in HERCA documents may be applied or are unlikely to be required.*

Progress:

As stated in the previous two communiques, a guidance document focussed/ detailing the HERCA-WENRA Approach (HWA)⁵ has been written to support the response and cross-border coordination for all types of possible Nuclear Power Plant accident scenarios in Ukraine. The document is titled 'Application of the HERCA-WENRA Approach - Ukraine Conflict 2022'⁶. This guidance document details the overarching principles based on radiation safety considerations and provides an incentive for coordinated actions between neighbouring countries that may enhance their effectiveness.

This document was presented to the HERCA Board of Heads in May 2022 and where it was shortly after approved and uploaded to the HERCA website.

This document has been downloaded more than 80 times since being uploaded to the HERCA website.

2. Coordination of Emergency Centres

- *Identify the appropriate entity and coordination mechanisms during preparation phases in order to facilitate response (without duplicating the existing communication channels of IAEA USIE and EC ECURIE).*
- *Identify the relevant information to be shared.*

Progress:

As described in the previous communiques, the Task Force created two tiers of coordination meetings: Tier 1 comprising of Ukraine and neighbouring countries, and Tier 2 comprising of other HERCA-WGE member countries not involved in Tier 1 meetings.

To date, the WGE chair has facilitated four WebEx meetings (14, 25 April, 12 May, and 12 July 2022) with Ukraine and neighbouring countries. These meetings have allowed him to promote cross-border relationships and coordination between these countries, answer questions related to HERCA's functioning, including the HWA, and where possible, offer support (advice & guidance) to countries in need for HERCA's support if prior agreed at HERCA Board level. Feedback from all the countries, and Ukraine in particular, has been extremely positive.

In May 2022, a contacts directory was developed and shared with the Tier 1 countries. This comprised of a table listing the individual points of contact, lead responding agencies and contact details. This was agreed and shared on the 12 May 2022.

Also reported within the previous communique was the subject of the Task Force developing a questionnaire to share with Tier 1 countries. This has been completed and a questionnaire was sent to all Tier 1 countries on the 21 June 2022. Ukraine was the first country to complete and share their responses. It has been agreed that the remainder of responses will be shared prior to the next meeting (to be arranged for early September 2022).

In addition to these Tier 1 meetings, two Tier 2 meetings have been undertaken on the 29 April and 22 June 2022. These meetings have been primarily focused on

providing the HERCA-WGE member countries with an update of the current situation in the Ukraine and work of the Task Force.

The Task Force members have been very impressed with Ukraine regulators existing adoption of the HWA, maintenance of its emergency arrangements throughout the conflict to date, active participation with the Task Force and neighbouring countries, and the positiveness and dedication of its staff during such difficult and stressful operational and personal circumstances.

3. Communication

Internal (within HERCA, and WENRA).

- *External (via the HERCA website).*
- *Create a forum of discussion between Ukraine and other countries on the HERCA framework related to emergency preparedness.*

The Task Force has prepared this 3rd communiqué to provide updates of the progress being made. HERCA BoH (and WENRA) may consider this communiqué useful for preparation of external communications if they consider it appropriate to do so (for example sharing with ENSREG).

The Task Force identified no existing forum for emergency preparedness coordination discussions and therefore created the Tier 1 and Tier 2 meetings as described above. In the event of an emergency occurring, it is envisaged that the European Community Urgent Radiological Information Exchange (ECURIE) platform⁷ will be activated. Arrangements also exist to coordinate amongst EU civil protection authorities⁸.

Summary

The Task Force has been operating and meeting routinely since early March 2022. It is believed that the majority of its objectives have been met, albeit recognising any work that may be generated from the current questionnaire and responses may still require Task Force consideration and/ or agreement.

It is therefore recommended that should any further work be identified, it is to be considered, and potentially undertaken by the HERCA-WGE as normal business. However, should events in Ukraine dictate that the Task Force should reconvene, this should be supported.

Task Force members

The Task Force consist of the following country participants:

- 1 UK Gareth THOMAS / Darren CUMMINGS
- 2 Luxembourg Patrick MAJERUS (corresponding)
- 3 Spain Alfredo MOZAS GARCIA
- 4 Switzerland Annina FRISCHKNECHT / Daniel STORCH
- 5 France Olivier RIVIERE / Olivier ISNARD / Nathalie TCHILIAN
- 6 Germany Patrick BRINGEL
- 7 Poland Dawid FRENCEL
- 8 Belgium David RASQUIN/ Geert BIERMANS
- 9 Austria Peter HOFER
- 10 Latvia Daina ZAGATA / Dace SATROVSKA
- 11 EC (observer) Bharat PATEL

References:

1. HERCA TF Communiqué #1 - 5 April 2022, distributed to HERCA Board Members
2. HERCA TF Communiqué #2 - 6 May 2022, distributed to HERCA Board Members
3. HERCA TF Mandate (revised) – approved at HERCA Board of Heads meeting 19 May 2022, distributed to HERCA Board Members
4. HERCA EP&R Country Fact Sheets <https://www.herca.org/?s=Fact+Sheets>
5. HERCA-WENRA Approach (HWA) <https://www.herca.org/download/4696/>
6. Application of the HERCA-WENRA Approach - Ukraine Conflict 2022 <https://www.herca.org/download/9475/>
7. European Community Urgent Radiological Information Exchange (ECURIE) https://inis.iaea.org/search/search.aspx?orig_q=RN:29042571
8. Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism, as amended by Regulation (EU) 2021/836