

Measures to ensure safe operation of the NPPs, safe construction/commissioning activities at Nuclear power projects and safety of radiation facilities during the COVID-19 crisis

Safe Operation of NPPs & Safety of Nuclear Projects under Construction

As a part of AERB's action to ensure safe operation of the Nuclear Power Plants (NPPs) during the COVID-19 crisis, AERB had shared the "Action plans adopted by worldwide NPPs to manage risks related to Covid-19" received from IAEA (prepared based on the feed backs from other operating countries), with NPCIL for information and comparing with their action plans. As reported to AERB, special measures have been taken by NPCIL to ensure safe operation of the NPPs, which are in line with the action plans shared by IAEA. NPCIL has taken necessary actions to protect the health of their work force during this COVID-19 crisis, through implementation of special measures like -- make their work force aware of COVID-19 and measures to prevent it, provide regular updates on COVID-19 to its work force, evaluate the developing situations on COVID-19 to advise station management to take appropriate action, operate the NPPs with the minimum staff strength required for safe operation of the plant such that reserve man power resource is in place during exigencies, maintain social distancing and avoid mass gathering at work spots, do sterilization of work area, carry out required medical screening of employees, establish Isolation Ward in hospitals at the employees' residential colonies to deal with any COVID-19 eventuality, have restrictions on meetings etc.

Arrangement for the operating NPPs or Nuclear projects to communicate with AERB during the lockdown period is in place and the same has been intimated to NPCIL/BHAVINI. During the lock down period AERB continues to function through telework i.e. work from home. AERB is in communication with the facility/projects through emails and telephone and the mandatory and urgent reviews and reviews pertaining to all the remaining regulatory oversight activities are being carried out through telework in time bound manner as required. Operating NPPs and NPPs under construction continues to report to AERB regularly. Site Observer Teams (SOTs) stationed at various sites also give daily reports on the activities of stations/projects. Thus regulatory oversight of the nuclear plants/projects is being carried out continuously.

Safety of Radiation Facilities

Due to lock down, routine regulatory inspections of the facilities are deferred temporarily. However regulatory consents for the radiation facilities, following graded approach, are being issued through on-line eLORA system. Radiological Safety Division of AERB being responsible for the regulation of radiation facilities, radiation facility users have been provided with the contact details of Head, Radiological Safety Division in the eLORA web page to contact in case of any urgent or emergency situation. SOTs and Regional Regulatory Centres (located at Delhi, Kolkata and Chennai) are prepared to cater to any requirement of special inspection, in case of requirement.
