

Euratom Safeguards Office. Report 1999-2000

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A re-evaluation of the Euratom Safeguards Office (ESO) missions related to the implementation of Chapter VII of the Euratom Treaty has been conducted in the second half of the year 2001. It led to recommendations made to the Commission on ESO's objectives, working methods, and internal structure and management policy. A changing environment for the nuclear industries' activities, but also in the legal framework in which safeguards are applied, led ESO to take the initiative of preparing a new draft regulation, replacing Regulation (Euratom) 3227/76. Reporting by the nuclear installation operators on nuclear material flows and inventories was fulfilled in compliance with Euratom treaty requirements. All data was checked and clerical errors or inconsistencies corrected. Verification activities conducted by ESO inspection staff led to the conclusion that, apart from some discrepancies between evaluations carried out by operators and ESO inspectors, which are in the process of being solved, no diversion of nuclear materials from its intended use was established. Effective co-operation between ESO and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on the territory of the EU resulted in confirmation - reflected in the Safeguards Implementation Report (SIR) 2000 issued by the IAEA - that no evidence of nuclear material diversion or misuse of equipment or facilities placed under the safeguards in the EU was found. In addition to its global conclusions, the SIR 2000 identified some areas for improvement concerning different technical aspects and verification procedures. The need for enhanced co-operation with the IAEA for the implementation of the Additional Protocols to the existing safeguards agreements was clearly stated. Founded on the legal bases of the Euratom Treaty, ESO activities are financed by two different budget appropriations, one concerning general functioning of ESO as any other service of the Commission and the second one related to specific operational costs in the field of nuclear safeguards. Details on the way in which the budget was spent in 2001 are provided in this report. As an overall conclusion of the Annual Report 2001, the Commission states that the objectives defined for ESO's activities as set out in Chapter VII of the Euratom Treaty were satisfactorily met.