Communication risks in decommissioning a nuclear reactor

Based on the experience of

the Horia Hulubei National Institute of Physics and Nuclear Engineering – ROMANIA

in decommissioning VVR-S nuclear reactor for scientific research purpose, produced by the Soviet Union

http://andr.ro/en/news/regional-ministerial-conference-on-nuclear-energy-technology-and-radioactive-waste-management/

Regional Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Energy, Technology and Radioactive Waste Management, Bucharest, 2018

What experience Romania has?

IFIN HH created

The Romanian School

for

Decommissioning

Scientific Nuclear Reactor

(the only one in this part of the world)

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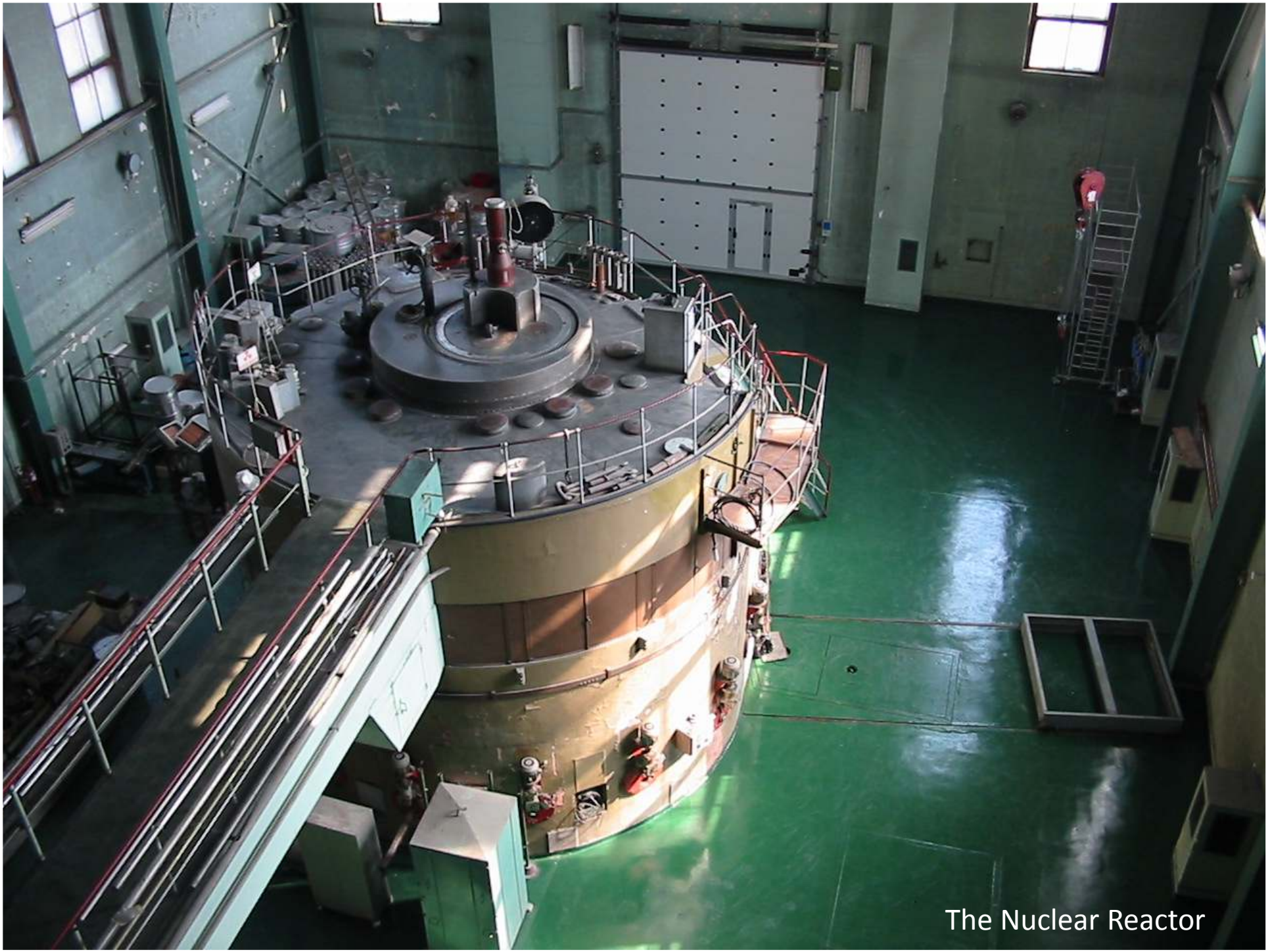

The Nuclear Reactor

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Now the nuclear
fuel has a new home –
Mayak Russian Federation
-30 C

Target groups

Domestic and International Audience (1)

I. Public administration

I.1. Dedicated governmental bodies

I.2 National / Central Government

I.3. Local Administration: County or District or Province / Municipality

Target groups
Domestic and International Audience (2)

II. Non - Governmental structures

- II.1. Citizens
- II.2. NGOs
- II.3. Media
- II.4. Business Community

Risk1: The main risk

Not to communicate

The decommissioning process does not start!

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Risk2: To forget that unexpected risks are probable and possible

Be sure that **unexpected communication risks will occur**

Unexpected communication risks

- Lack of governmental support
  - The regulatory body has a great role
- To discover how nice is public communication – is possible to become a public hero!
- Decommissioning a nuclear reactor for scientific research is a surprise generator each day
- The competitors of the decommissioning team could orchestrate negative media campaigns

Risk3: Communication capabilities are part of everyone's DNA!

- **NO!**
- Communication training is the solution
- The Nuclear Safety Director from IFIN HH has a communication training
- IFIN HH – ELI-NP have together around 25 persons trained as communicators

Risk4: Wrong identification of the potential anti-decommissioning process actors

- Local community
- Civil society
- Media

Who may be the main real supporters of the decommissioning process?

- Local community
- NGOs – they prove their usefulness during the whole process if you take them as partners
- Media – this is a great topic to cover for many years

The strongest supporter: Local community

Reasons:

1. **Lack of risk of nuclear incidents**
2. **<u>Business</u>**
   a) Increasing **the price of the land** during decommissioning (1 $ - 60 – 80$ / square meter in Magurele, next to Bucharest)
   b) **Speeding up the business in the region** based on the impact studies for the reactor decommissioning
   c) **The jobs of the local employees** – involve them in the reactor decommissioning process

Risk5: To forget the influence of the scientific research in the communication process in favor of technical aspects of nuclear safety

Include advanced research in your communication plan!

ADVANCED RESEARCH

- it is like a **darling kid -** gives hope to the citizens
- take scientists with you on TV shows and meetings!

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Risk6: Not talking about low probability risks, but with huge impact!

First time: Scared but trusting you!

Afterwards: It will become your real and indispensable partner!

Change the national communication culture if necessary! (See the Romanian – European exercise for 7.7 magnitude earthquake – **EARTHQUAKE 2018**)

Risk7: Your organization does not have a team of independent experts prepared to speak about the decommissioning process if an accident occurred

- Prepare a group of experts ready to publically support decontamination of the nuclear reactor.
- The independent experts are credible for media.

But, make all possibility to have as

The main public voice –

the director general

Risk8: Media is not from our team!

1. **WRONG!**
2. **Train the journalists to understand the decommissioning team and researchers.** The President of NHK (Japan Public Radio and Television Corporation) said last year in Romania after listening to IFIN HH – ELI-NP communication experiments: "We trained the researchers to speak more clear, but we did not think to train our journalists to understand the researchers / experts."
3. Help media to have **real news about decommissioning** of the nuclear reactor.
4. **Calibration of the information** – you need between **15 – 25% of the population** to really understand what a decommissioning process means and the public support will be with you.

Risk9: Speaking like in the Facility

1) Speak in standard language!

2) Avoid to much technical or scientific terminology!

3) Do not be too popular!

4) Keep the communication in the day by day logic!

Risk10: Forgetting the internal communication

Your staff is the main informal source for the media during hot periods!

1. Inform the employees about the beginning of the decommissioning process.
2. Keep the staff updated. Make the rules very visible.
3. Declare the end of each phase and celebrate!
4. Give to the decommissioning team a perspective for the jobs.
5. Declare the end of the decommissioning process.

Common potential projects

1. We are interested to be part of international teams to offer services in this field.

2. Training for communication skills in decommissioning nuclear reactors. (in Romania and on the spot)

Conclusions

1. **Communication** is part of the **nuclear reactor decommissioning** process.
2. We need **training** to have an **effective public communication**.
3. The communication activity is **paving the future of the nuclear energy** in the world.
4. IFIN HH – ELI-NP – MHTC are **service providers** in these fields: **decommissioning scientific reactors** and **risks communication**.

Thank you for your attention!

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