Implementation of IAEA safeguards during the COVID-19 pandemic

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Agenda

• COVID-19 pandemic challenges to IAEA Safeguards
• In-field verification activities
• Headquarters verification activities
• Role of States
States’ responses to COVID-19

with significant impact on safeguards implementation

Flight restrictions

Immigration measures

In-country restrictions

Access restrictions to IAEA offices and labs

Access restrictions to State facilities / sites

Health and safety requirements
IAEA Safeguards immediate actions

To ensure business continuity

Prioritized activities for four weeks from first lockdown and reassessed regularly thereafter

Established centralized capability within Office of Deputy Director General for Safeguards to monitor daily in-field activities

Ensured staff had access to information/equipment and were equipped with the necessary IT capabilities for secure remote working for an extended time

Systematic COVID-19 testing by VIC Medical Services, for inspectors and technicians prior to and upon return from travel
In-field verification activities

IAEA Safeguards Business Continuity Measures

Benefited from regional offices, ensuring staff availability in the field

Greater reliance on compensatory measures

Drove long distances overland and crossed various national borders

Chartered private flights to transport over 220 staff to and from 12 States
**In-field verification activities**

*IAEA Safeguards Business Continuity Measures*

We conducted **most of the time-critical activities** and achieved a comparable level of safeguards effectiveness to pre-pandemic

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**Facilities with Remote Data Transmission** in 31 states

- >1600 data streams from safeguards equipment in facilities

**Limited:**

- Short notice inspections
- Inspections with no advance notice
HQ verification activities

IAEA Safeguards Business Continuity Measures

We continued work in Headquarters and regional offices, with minimal disruption. For example:

• Collecting, processing and analysing safeguards information continued

• Releasing statements on the activities and results of its in-field verification activities

• Maintaining the IAEA’s safeguards laboratories safe and operational
Other HQ activities

IAEA Safeguards Business Continuity Measures

• Recruitment of staff continued

• Introductory Course for Agency Safeguards (ICAS) adapted

• Safeguards training for States and traineeships redeveloped
Role of States

On IAEA Safeguards Business Continuity

- **States’ assistance**
  ensuring IAEA’s access to nuclear facilities, movement across borders and transfers through airports

- **States’ restrictions**
  e.g. suspending inspectors access to facilities, required additional in-field verification effort / activities

- **States’ compliance**
  with reports and declarations required under relevant safeguards agreements
Between July 2020 and 30 June 2021, IAEA inspectors on mission spent a total of nearly 2500 days in quarantine outside IAEA Headquarters

= 7 inspectors spending an entire year in quarantine
Conclusion

• Despite the difficult situation, the IAEA did not interrupt its verification activities

• The IAEA continues to rely on the essential cooperation of States to implement safeguards effectively and efficiently

• The IAEA was able to draw soundly-based safeguards conclusions for all States for 2020