

Position Statement #24



Nuclear Facility Safety Standards

Experience gained from the operation of nuclear power reactors over the past fifty years has demonstrated that when operated properly, this energy source provides safe, reliable, and environmentally acceptable electrical power for society. Yet, as the 1986 Chernobyl accident demonstrated, unsafe practices can have substantial cross-border impacts. Nuclear safety is a matter of international importance. A significant event anywhere in the world today will affect the operation, regulation, and public perception of nuclear power everywhere. Therefore, ANS supports the establishment and implementation of national and international* a safety standards in the design, construction, operation, and decommissioning of nuclear facilities.

The American Nuclear Society believes that consistent application of such standards provides a high level of safety. The ultimate responsibility for ensuring safety, however, rests with the operator of the nuclear facility in rigorously applying these standards. An effective and independent regulatory authority is also essential.

The American Nuclear Society supports the development and maintenance of national and international safety standards formulated with the participation of stakeholders and consistent with the recognized principles of nuclear safety. These principles include:

- establishing and maintaining effective and multiple defenses to protect individuals, society, and the environment from radiological hazards
- instituting reasonable features and practices to prevent and mitigate the consequences of accidents
- demonstrating that the radiological consequences of hypothetical accidents fall within prescribed and acceptable limits
- ensuring that the risk of accidents is acceptably small.

The American Nuclear Society is committed to working with those national and international organizations engaged in the development and implementation of nuclear safety standards. ANS will provide expert technical input and critically review proposed standards and communicate the benefits of resulting international standards to the public and to the appropriate regulatory agencies. ANS also supports the implementation of safety principles and practices globally, including transferring the relevant knowledge and know-how to others as appropriate and fostering the exchange of safety information among all affected parties, including designers, operators, regulators, and the public.