

The supervision on radiation protection in the Czech Republic

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The regulatory body for the safety use of radiation and other practices causing exposure to radiation is the State Office for Nuclear Safety (SONS).

The use of radiation sources is governed by the Atomic Act No. 18/1997 Coll. and Regulation No. 307/2002 Coll.

According to the Atomic Act and Regulation No. 307/2002 Coll. a systematic supervision on radiation protection (RP) observance should be ensured: the operator shall appoint a supervising person. The supervising person shall have a special professional competence taking into account the ionising radiation sources and a job profile.

There are 2 levels of these supervising duties:

1. Radiation protection officer (RPO)
2. Person with direct responsibility for radiation protection

The obligatory education, experience, the form of training and the procedure of verifying the special professional competence are defined in the Regulation No. 146/1997 Coll. The requirement for RPO in medicine are university degree of corresponding branch, 1 year experience in RP and course on RP (if working in controlled area). The requirement for person with direct responsibility in medicine are GCE from secondary school, health professional qualification, 1 year experience in RP and course on RP (if working in controlled area).

The verification of special professional competence is carried out in the form of written and oral examination before the appropriate examining commission of the SONS.

If the applicant passes the exam, he/she acquires certification to be a RPO or – and a person with direct responsibility.

The authorisation is valid for 1-10 years for RPO and for an indefinite period of time for person with direct responsibility.

SONS shall confirm the requirements for content of supplementary training with respect of RO.

Currently there are six licensed organisations that provide courses on radiation protection topic.

According to the regulation 307/2002 Coll., paragraph 66 a medical physicist specialist (SMP) shall be involved in the radiotherapeutic units and therapeutic units of nuclear medicine; in X - ray practice a medical physicist specialist shall be available since 1.1. 2007.

SMP shall be responsible for accuracy and safety of ionizing radiation application in clinical practice and for introduction of new radiological equipment and physical method into clinical practice. He or she shall be also responsible for managing the testing of ionizing radiation sources.

However, SMP is not necessarily charged with supervision on radiation protection, he/she can be appointed as RPO.

SONS issued Regulation No. 193/2005 Coll. "Mutual recognition of acquired competence of radiation protection experts". The regulation determines the conditions for acquire the special professional competence for foreigners and the aim is to remove the obstacles to the mobility of "radiation protection experts" within the EU.

The term Medical Physics Expert (MPE) has not been appointed in the Czech legislation yet.

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