

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY
RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 288
TO BE ANSWERED ON 13.12.2012

REGULATORY INSPECTION NOT DONE BY AERB

*288. SHRI JAGAT PRAKASH NADDA :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) has not conducted 85 per cent of regulatory inspections for both industrial radiography and radiotherapy units;
- (b) if so, the reasons thereof;
- (c) the details of the measures taken by Government to ensure that timely inspections are conducted by AERB; and
- (d) whether it is fact that AERB failed to enforce safety provisions and compliance with its own stipulations in the case of unit in Kerala?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES & PENSIONS AND
PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY)

(a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.288 FOR ANSWER ON 13.12.2012 BY SHRI JAGAT PRAKASH NADDA REGARDING REGULATORY INSPECTION NOT DONE BY AERB.

(a) to (c) The facilities and activities coming within the regulatory control of AERB range from large Nuclear Power Plants to small medical x-ray units. AERB has been following a graded approach in regulatory control of these facilities and activities, which is primarily based on the safety significance and technological complexity.

In the case of radiation applications in the public domain for medical and R&D, there have been limitations posed by the large number of units spread across the length and breadth of the country and the accelerated growth in the number of such facilities. Owing to their large number and varied degree of radiological hazard potential. AERB has been following a graded approach with respect to their regulatory control.

The basis for conducting regulatory inspections by AERB is as follows :

- Radiological risk associated with each category of Licencee
- Reported incidents during the year
- Issues related to individual Licencees
- Recommendations arising from Inspections

The basis for inspection by AERB is in line with international practices.

Regulatory Inspection is only one of the tools for checking compliance. The mechanism for monitoring of radiation facilities also include a system of safety status reports, which the facilities are required to furnish periodically, and their review in AERB. Inspections are carried out on a sample basis, for verifying that the ground realities are in line with the status reports and the license conditions.

With the recent augmentation in its manpower, AERB is enhancing the inspection coverage of the radiation facilities, in accordance with the frequency of inspections suggested in the draft manual.

For ensuring safety in use of diagnostic X-ray facilities, AERB follows an approach involving control during manufacture/sale of the equipment and random Inspections of facilities. Initiatives have been taken with regard to X-ray facilities, for formation of State-level Directorates of Radiation Safety (DRS), accreditation of Quality Assurance providers, etc.

Additional initiatives taken up by AERB recently, with regard to facilitating regulation of X-ray facilities are; (a) rationalization and simplification of the existing regulations for users in diagnostic x-ray practice, by way of amendments of AERB Safety Code, (b) enhancing regulatory control on Manufacturer/supplier, over the user, (c) development of an easy and approachable interface for the user to facilitate easy registration, using the new web based system and (d) public awareness programs.

(d) Deficiencies with respect to some of the X-ray units, reported by the Directorate of Radiation Safety (DRS) Kerala were operational discrepancies that could readily be rectified. The violations observed were practice-specific, such as TLD badge not been issued and not related to built in safety, which enabled the institution to rectify the deficiencies in the defined period.