

The NB Interview

BIOGRAPHY

Alexey Viktorovich Ferapontov

Acting Chairman

Rostechnadzor

Alexey Viktorovich Ferapontov was born in Moscow in 1963. He graduated from the Moscow Institute of Electronic Machine Building and the Russian State Open Technical University of Railways as a Candidate of Technical Sciences. He then worked as Deputy Director General of Rosgosstrakh Insurance Company and Deputy Director General of Ingosstrakh Insurance Company. In 2003, he joined Gosatomnadzor of Russia/Rostechnadzor. There he worked as Deputy Director of FSUE VO Safety, and Deputy Director of FSUE SEC Industrial Safety. In 2008, he was appointed a Deputy Chairman of the Federal Environmental, Industrial & Nuclear Supervision Service (Rostechnadzor). In November of 2010 he became State Secretary - Deputy Chairman of Rostechnadzor and in April 2013 was appointed Rostechnadzor Acting Chairman.



Russia - a comprehensive approach to exports

AS WELL AS having an ambitious domestic nuclear newbuild programme, Russia is a major exporter of nuclear facilities and services. *Nuclear Business* editor Judith Perera spoke to Rostechnadzor Acting Chairman Alexey Ferapontov about the assistance which the regulatory body offers to recipient countries.

JP: Russia's regulatory body has a wider remit than just nuclear. Can you explain why this is?

AF: Historically there used to be an independent dedicated body for nuclear and radiation safety regulation - Gosatomnadzor (GAN).

Then in 2004 an administrative reform was initiated in Russia. Within this reform several regulatory bodies, including nuclear, were combined in one and called Federal Environmental, Industrial and Nuclear Supervision Service (Rostechnadzor).

JP: What is your approach to nuclear construction abroad?

AF: Russia has a comprehensive approach to nuclear construction abroad. Not only does it build a facility, but also it provides assistance in the establishment or improvement of nuclear infrastructure, including support to a regulator of a customer state. Rostechnadzor and state nuclear corporation Rosatom signed an agreement for cooperation in providing coordinated assistance in this area to countries, which are planning to construct NPPs according to Russian design. Our duty is to cooperate with the regulatory bodies of those countries. Inter-agency agreements on safety regulation in the use of nuclear energy are the legal basis for such activity. Usually the scope of our cooperation covers all functions and responsibilities of a nuclear regulator. If necessary, we also provide training for regulatory body personnel. For this purpose we developed a comprehensive modular programme. The scope of training can be easily modified by combining different training elements of this programme. The training course includes theoretical and practical parts.

In addition to bilateral contacts we participate in multilateral cooperation aimed at supporting countries embarking on a nuclear power programme. Russia is a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency's Regulatory Co-operation Forum (RCF), which is a platform for optimising efforts to assist newcomers and to develop co-operation with other donating countries. At the moment our cooperation with embarking countries comprises Turkey, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Belarus and Iran. We assist in the establishment of a regulatory body, in their preparation and development of a legal and regulatory framework, in planning and implementation of oversight activity, as well as safety reviews.

JP: Do you take into account the specific conditions of each country?

AF: We have to adapt to the conditions of each country. We take into consideration differences in culture, in regulatory practices, in legislation (most important) and the level of expertise. Vietnam has experience in safety regulation of a research reactor. It means that there is some qualified regulatory staff. Iran also has a few nuclear installations and well trained personnel. Bangladesh has just reorganised its regulatory body, thus making it more independent. Our cooperation with Bangladesh regulatory body is at the initial stage. Turkey is a member of the OECD Nuclear Energy Agency and has an access to knowledge and expertise of the most developed nuclear countries.

JP: Has the difficult international political situation with respect to Iran caused you any problems?

AF: I can say we have very good relations with Iran's regulatory body. There is a high level of trust and we are sure the regulator is trying to implement all necessary actions to comply with the IAEA recommendations. The Vice President of Iran is responsible for nuclear safety at the Bushehr NPP so there is a support at a very high political level. As regulators we have the same goals, which do not change due to political situations. I have just come from a meeting with the head of Iran's regulatory body where we discussed the most important

ongoing activities to ensure safety enhancement and future plans. The Bushehr NPP is under operation now, and I hope that Iran will join the *Convention on Nuclear Safety* in the near future.

JP: What about Belarus?

AF: During the USSR, Belarus was fully integrated into the country's industry including the energy construction process. The people who worked in those sectors then had experience not only in construction but also in the clean up of Chernobyl. Yesterday we had a meeting of the RCF steering committee where Belarus made a very good presentation and applied for support. As part of the process Belarus should prepare an action plan to identify the gaps in meeting the IAEA recommendations. As soon as it defines the gaps and develops a plan to bridge them, RCF members, including Russia, can offer assistance.

JP: What about technology transfer? Does the fuel fabrication plant being built in Ukraine as a joint venture involve transfer of any technologies?

AF: Transfer of technology has nothing to do with the activity of the regulatory body. The mission of the regulator is to create conditions for protecting people and the environment from nuclear and radiation hazards. Other governmental bodies make a decision about transferring of nuclear technologies. As for the fuel fabrication plant in Ukraine, Russian technology is used there, the process of its transfer is vested in Rosatom and Federal Service of Export Control.

Our role is to communicate with the Ukrainian regulator and provide them assistance if they need any. I do not foresee any problems in this regard because the regulatory body of Ukraine is mature and we have long-lasting friendly and open relations with them.

JP: Have you offered any help to Japan's new regulatory body?

AF: Earlier this week we signed a Memorandum of Co-operation with the Japanese Nuclear Regulation Authority which covers the following areas:

- Licensing of activities in the field of peaceful use of nuclear energy;
- Oversight and control of activities including the development and implementation of inspection programmes;
- Safety regulation in management of radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel;
- Oversight of physical protection of nuclear facilities, radiation sources, storage facilities, nuclear materials and radioactive substances;
- Control of quality assurance of equipment for nuclear facilities;
- Regulatory activities in emergency preparedness and emergency response, etc.

Cooperation under this Memorandum will be implemented by exchange of information, through expert visits, joint seminars and consultations, scientific visits, training courses and workshops. The next step is to determine specific practical activities under the Memorandum. We both are ready for open cooperation.



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