

**The National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurements**

**ACADs (08-006) Covered**

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**Keywords**

NCRP information, guidance, recommendations, NCRP mission, history, Public Law 88-376.

**Description**

This document provides a brief background of the history, mission, roles and responsibilities of the National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurements, as well as link to the NCRP’s website.

**Supporting Material**

The National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurements

The National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurements (NCRP) seeks to formulate and widely disseminate information, guidance and recommendations on radiation protection and measurements which represent the consensus of leading scientific thinking. The Council is always on the alert for areas in which the development and publication of NCRP materials can make an important contribution to the public interest.

The Council’s mission also encompasses the responsibility to facilitate and stimulate cooperation among organizations concerned with the scientific and related aspects of radiation protection and measurements.

NCRP has been active in the areas of radiation protection and measurements since its inception as “The Advisory Committee on X-Ray and Radium Protection” in 1929. It was originally established to represent all of the national radiological organizations in the United States on a collective, scientific basis and to serve, in essence, as the United States national analog of the International X-Ray and Radium Protection Committee which was created in July 1928 under the auspices of the Second International Congress of Radiology and, subsequently, evolved into the International Commission on Radiological Protection. NCRP originally operated as an informal association of scientists seeking to make available information and recommendations on radiation protection and measurements. More than 30 major reports were produced during the early period of the NCRP's history including the first recommendation specifying a maximum permissible level of exposure.

With the vast increase in the use of radiation that took place in the 1940s and 1950s, the NCRP's program expanded significantly to meet the new needs and, subsequently, it was recognized that continuation of the informal mode of operation was inappropriate. As a result, the NCRP was reorganized and chartered by the U.S. Congress in 1964 as the National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurements.

The Charter of the Council (Public Law 88-376) states its objectives as follows:

"To:

1. collect, analyze, develop and disseminate in the public interest information and recommendations about (a) protection against radiation (referred to herein as radiation protection) and (b) radiation measurements, quantities and units, particularly those concerned with radiation protection;
2. provide a means by which organizations concerned with the scientific and related aspects of radiation protection and of radiation quantities, units and measurements may cooperate for effective utilization of their combined resources, and to stimulate the work of such organizations;
3. develop basic concepts about radiation quantities, units and measurements, about the application of these concepts, and about radiation protection;
4. cooperate with the International Commission on Radiological Protection, the Federal Radiation Council, the International Commission on Radiation Units and Measurements, and other national and international organizations, governmental and private, concerned with radiation quantities, units and measurements and with radiation protection.”

It should be noted that while the Charter recognizes the importance and the national character of the NCRP, it does not make the Council a governmental body; it is a private corporation. Also, the Charter does not entitle the Council to congressional appropriations. NCRP is a nongovernmental, not-for-profit, public service organization and has status as an educational and scientific body which is tax exempt [under provision 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code].

The Council treats nonionizing radiation as well as ionizing radiation. It has produced more than 150 scientific reports, the major output of the Council. Approximately three to six reports are produced each year, and more than 1.5 million copies of NCRP publications have been distributed. In addition, the annual meeting, open to the scientific community and the public, addresses, each year, a timely scientific issue.

The work of NCRP has a significant impact on almost all activities in the United States which utilize or create radiation. The recommendations of the Council are important to radiation users — medical, industrial and governmental; to the general public; and to other state, national and international groups concerned with radiation matters.

The recommendations promulgated by the Council provide the scientific basis for radiation protection efforts throughout the country. Individuals and industrial organizations employing radiation sources turn to these recommendations to be sure that their equipment and practices embody the latest concepts of protection. Nongovernmental groups concerned with improving protection efforts and disseminating information on radiation protection look to the Council for guidance. Governmental organizations, including the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the Public Health Service, the Environmental Protection Agency and state governments utilize NCRP's recommendations as the scientific basis of their radiation protection activities. NCRP also works closely with various international bodies concerned with radiation protection, such as the International Commission on Radiological Protection.

Similarly, the work of NCRP on measurement of radiation has found broad application throughout the United States and the world. Effective dissemination of information about radiation properties and effects requires that the measurement techniques employed and the quantities and units used be comparable throughout the United States and the world. The Council contributes to this goal by formulating and publishing the consensus of scientific opinion on various measurement problems. In the measurement area, NCRP works closely with the International Commission on Radiation Units and Measurements.

Participants in the Council's program voluntarily contribute their services in support of the Council's objectives. Their ability and experience represent the cornerstone of the Council's program and are a major force for progress in radiation protection and measurement.

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