

REPORT

The 3rd Working Group Meeting

on

the RCARO’s Future Role

19-21 January 2016

Ramada Plaza Hotel, Jeju, Korea

**1. Introduction**

As approved by the 37th NRM and 44th GCM, the 3rd Meeting of the Working Group was held at the Ramada Plaza hotel in Jeju, Korea on 19-21 January 2016 with the task of refining and finalising the proposals for the future role of the RCARO as set out in the report of the 2nd Meeting of the Working Group.

The Meeting was attended by 22 participants: Working Group Members from AUL (Mr. John Easey, Chair), CPR, JPN, NZE, PHI, ROK and Dir-RCARO; Director General of the Ministry of Science, ICT and Future Planning (MSIP); RCA Focal Person as a representative of the IAEA; RCA expert from NZE; experts from Korean institutes including Chonnam National University, KIRAMS and KONICOF; and RCARO staff. A WG member from PAK was not able to participate in the meeting due to other urgent commitments. A list of Meeting Participants is given in Annex 1. (Note: all annexes referred to hereafter are posted on the RCA website [www.rcaro.org](http://www.rcaro.org)).

**2. Opening Session**

**2.1 Opening Remarks by Mr. Kun-mo Choi, Director, RCARO**

Mr. Choi opened the meeting and welcomed members of the Working Group, experts and observers. He thanked participants for their attendance and looked forward to active discussions that would contribute to the assigned task of refining and finalising the proposals that had been developed in the previous Working Group Meetings. He looked forward to this being a fruitful meeting.

**2.2 Welcoming Remarks by Mr. Hai-Joo Moon, Director General, MSIP**

Mr. Hai-Joo Moon, Director General of the Space, Nuclear and Big Science Policy Bureau, MSIP, gave welcoming remarks. He highlighted the efforts made by the RCARO to meet the regional demands for the application of nuclear technology within the framework of the RCA. He mentioned that the Korean government, as RCARO’s host country, would provide continued support for the fulfillment of RCARO’s mission. He hoped that the meeting would successfully share various opinions on the agenda topics and agree a final document for presentation at the 38th RCA NRM that would provide a road map for the RCARO’s future role.

**2.3 Congratulatory Remarks by Mr. Sinh Hoang, RCA Focal Person, IAEA**

Mr. Sinh Hoang, RCA Focal Person, welcomed all the participants to the meeting and thanked the RCARO for hosting the event and providing such excellent arrangements and hospitality. He wished the meeting fruitful discussions and consultations on the future role of the RCARO.

**2.4 Designation of Rapporteur**

The meeting designated the RCARO as rapporteur.

**2.5 Adoption of Agenda**

The Chair requested any comments and suggestions on the provisional agenda which had been circulated prior to the meeting. There were none and the meeting adopted the agenda. The Meeting Prospectus and Programme are given in Annex 2 and Annex 3, respectively.

**2.6 Review of the Conclusions/Recommendations of the 2nd Working Group Meeting**

As background to the meeting discussions, Mr. John Easey reviewed each of the conclusions and recommendations made by the 2nd Working Group Meeting on the key topics: Supplementary Projects (SPs); Research Projects (RPs); Training Projects (TPs); Funding Model and Resources; and Revision of the RCARO mandate (Annex 4).

The term ‘RCARO Initiated Programme’ had been introduced and used during the previous meetings. However, this meeting’s WG members agreed that this term should be changed to ‘RCARO Managed Projects’ to more appropriately reflect that the projects are proposed by the GPs and the processes involved.

**2.7 Prospectus of the Meeting and the Report on the Discussions of the 37th NRM and 44th GCM**

Ms. Hyun-kyoung Jeon, Head of Programme Division, RCARO made a presentation on the prospectus of the meeting and the conclusions of the 37th NRM and 44th GCM (Annex 5).

**3. Session I: The RCARO’s Future Role I: RCARO Managed Projects**

**3.1 Presentations on the SP, RP, TP Procedures Recommended by the 2nd WGM**

Mr. John Easey and Mr. Kun-mo Choi delivered presentations setting out the detailed guidelines, criteria and procedures for each of SPs, RPs, and TPs, which had been developed and recommended by the 2nd WGM (Annex 6-1, Annex 6-2, and Annex 6-3).

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| **Conclusions:**  The WG took note of the presentations on the SP, RP, TP procedures. The WG noted that these procedures, as parts of the meeting report, had been forwarded to the 37th NRM for NRs consideration. |

**3.2 IAEA’s analysis on its role under the RCA Agreement**

Mr. Sinh Hoang gave a presentation (Annex 7), on the legal opinion prepared by the IAEA Office of Legal Affairs (OLA) on the role of the IAEA under the RCA Agreement (Annex 8) and specifically,

* The role of the IAEA under the 1987 RCA, and,
* The Involvement of the IAEA in RCA projects not funded by or through the IAEA.

Mr. Sinh Hoang clarified that the involvement of the IAEA, although not necessarily financial, must be included in the procedures for the RCARO Managed Projects, if these are to be under the umbrella of the RCA[[1]](#footnote-1). The meeting noted that the RCA Focal Person is a member of the RCARO SAC and has the capacity to mobilize technical and other expertise from the IAEA.

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| **Conclusions:**  The WG took note of Mr. Hoang’s presentation on the IAEA’s role under the RCA Agreement. |

**3.3 RCA MTS 2018-2023**

Ms. Alumanda Dela Rosa gave a presentation on the RCA Medium Term Strategy (MTS) 2018-2023 (Annex 9).

Ms. Alumanda Dela Rosa outlined the enhanced roles that had been proposed by the Working Group on this subject, especially for the area of the RCA operational management structure, as well as the procedures to effectively oversee, implement and monitor the execution of the MTS 2018-2023. She noted that there would be an emphasis on the critical leading role of RCA GPs in the planning, monitoring, evaluation and management of regional cooperation undertakings and explained that, as part of the execution strategy, four different WGs would be established in the following areas: financial gap analysis, resource mobilization, human resources, and MTS mid-term review. In relation to this, there was discussion on the RCARO’s possible role in supporting the activities of these working groups.

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| **Conclusions:**  The meeting noted that the enhancements in the RCA operational management structure for the MTS 2018-2023 as approved by the 44th RCA GCM should be reflected in RCARO Managed Projects. |

**3.4 Integrated Approach to the Future Role of the RCARO in Support of the RCA Programme**

Mr. John Easey gave a presentation on an integrated approach to the future role of the RCARO in support of the RCA Programme (Annex 10). Specifically, he focused on three key considerations: Compliance with the RCA Agreement; RCA Medium Term Strategy 2018-2023; and Integration of the Procedural and Operational Details.

There was a broad discussion on the merits of having an integrated approach at the operational level to present a holistic approach for all the RCA procedures. It was noted that this process had to be achieved in conformity with the Agreement. However, it was agreed that issues related to RCA policy were matters that should be discussed and decided by the NRs and were not within the scope of the specific tasks set for this WG by the NRs.

The meeting reviewed and revised the criteria and guidelines for SPs, RPs and TPs previously developed at the 2nd WGM.

While SP Category 2 has been formulated to be compatible with the existing fast-track process in the GOR, the WG member from JPN raised concerns that this existing fast-track process might not be in full compliance with the RCA Agreement.

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| **Conclusions and Recommendations**  **Conclusions:**  The meeting agreed that the RCARO Managed Projects should comprise SPs, RPs and TPs. The selection of projects from those three will depend on the decision of the NRs and availability of fund.  The meeting agreed that it was important for an integrated approach to be taken with regards to the processes and procedures for the selection and implementation of activities proposed for the RCARO Managed Projects in support of the RCA Programme under the existing Agreement.  The meeting finalised the criteria and guidelines for SPs, RPs and TPs which is appended as Annex 12 of the WGM report and recognized that it is preferable to have SPs, RPs and TPs under the umbrella of the RCA. Noting the report of the OLA, the majority of WG members were of the opinion that the RCARO Managed Projects could be properly delivered within the current RCA Agreement.  The JPN member of the WG raised several legal concerns on the proposed SPs, RPs and TPs, such as: RCARO’s mandate under the Agreement; whether SPs, RPs and TPs could be recognized as RCA activities; and, RCARO’s legal capability to take responsibility in terms of the implementation of projects, legal capability on the management of financial contributions and conformity of fast-track mechanism with the Agreement.  The CPR member of the WG stated that RCA Programme should be planned and conducted under the RCA Agreement and strict enforcement of the RCA Agreement and IAEA’s involvement in RCA activities should be required.  **Recommendations:**  The WG recommended that the 38th NRM endorse this integrated approach (Annex 11) and procedures for the RCARO Managed Projects (Annex 12), which will be appended to the RCA GOR as revised Annex 3.  The concerns raised by the members of the WG from JPN and CPR may be shared with the NRs during the 38th NRM. |

**4. Session II: The RCARO’s Future Role II: 2016 Action Plan on RCARO Managed Projects**

**4.1 Presentations on the 2016 Action Plan**

Mr. Kun-mo Choi presented the 2016 action plan for the RCARO Managed Projects (Annex 13).

He reported that there had been success in securing an initial fund that would be sufficient for initiating one of the RCARO’s Managed Projects in 2016.

The meeting noted that the issues that had inhibited further discussion by the 37th RCA NRM, namely the need for a resolution of questions related to legal and funding issues, had been comprehensively settled with the opinion provided by the IAEA OLA and this announcement that funding had been secured to initiate the RCARO programme with budgets allocated for 2016 and 2017. It would therefore be possible to commence the RCARO Managed Projects in 2016, if approval by the NRs were forthcoming at the 38th RCA NRM.

As a consequence, the meeting discussed which of these projects should be recommended for implementation. It was generally agreed that first priority of the RCARO Managed Projects should be a TP, to be held in 2016, informing key representatives of the new RCA GPs about RCA policy, procedures and related matters. It was also recommended that in 2017 the programme should be expanded to include another area in addition to the TP.

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| **Conclusions and Recommendations**  **Conclusions:**  The meeting noted that the issues that had inhibited further discussion by the 37th RCA NRM, namely the need for a resolution of questions related to legal and funding issues had been addressed with the opinion provided by the IAEA Office of Legal Affairs (OLA) on the involvement of the IAEA and this announcement that funding had been secured to initiate the RCARO Projects with budgets allocated for 2016 and 2017.  It would therefore be possible to commence the RCARO Managed Projects in 2016, if approval by the NRs is forthcoming at the 38th RCA NRM.  **Recommendations:**  It was recommended that in 2016 the RCARO Managed Projects commence with a TP, specifically the topic of informing the new RCA GPs about RCA programme, policy, procedures and related matters.  It was recommended that, subject to available funding in 2017, the RCARO Managed Projects continue with activities in the TPs area supporting the new RCA GPs. In addition, consideration should be given to either the commencement of an RP and/or for the initiation of an additional TP to support the training on specialist areas related to the Working Groups that are required to support the implementation of the RCA MTS 2018-2023. |

**5. Session III: The RCARO’s Future Role III: Support to IAEA and Other Matters**

**5.1 IAEA’s Challenges in Staffing Related to the RCA Administration**

Mr. Sinh Hoang gave a presentation on IAEA’s challenges in the management and implementation of the RCA Programme (Annex 14).

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| **Conclusions and Recommendations**  **Conclusions:**  The meeting took note of the scope of the IAEA’s challenges in the management and implementation of the RCA Programme. The suggested modalities for possible support (cost free experts and extra budgetary contributions) were recognized. However, other measures would be necessary that could include outsourcing of some duties to the RCARO for example.  The question of the RCARO undertaking support for the IAEA’s secretariat duties for the RCA needs to have clarification about the legal status of the RCARO under the existing RCA Agreement in order for the possible detailed support to be identified.  **Recommendations:**  In order to reduce the workload regarding secretariat duties for the RCA carried out by the IAEA, outsourcing to individual experts or organisations including the RCARO could be used to address specific needs such as preparation of documents.  The TC Department may consider defining for consideration of the NRs those secretariat duties for the RCA which must be kept in house and those that might be outsourced.  The NRs are encouraged to come to a consensus on an acceptable position under which the RCARO can provide secretariat support and be in accordance with the RCA Agreement. |

**5.2 Other Matters on the RCARO’s future role**

The meeting noted that, under the MTS 2018-2023, one of the recommended tasks is to review and ensure alignment of the mechanism for resource mobilization. A working group would be set up specifically for financial gap analysis and resource mobilization. It has been identified that there is on-going need for resource mobilization to support the RCA Programme. The meeting also noted that the RCARO mandate includes negotiation and securing funding for RCA projects. However, there is a need to increase specific expertise and capability in the field of resource mobilization.

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| **Conclusions and Recommendations**  **Conclusions:**  The meeting expressed its high appreciation of the RCARO in fund raising and promotion of the RCA and noted the difficulties of the RCARO for carrying out these tasks because of the lack of resolutions on the legal status of the RCARO.  The efforts of the RCARO in its mandate to secure funding for RCA projects may be enhanced through appropriate collaboration with experts of GPs in this field.  **Recommendations:**  The meeting recommended RCARO to participate in the working group for the MTS 2018-2023 on the financial gap analysis and resource mobilization. |

**6. Session IV: Action Plans**

**6.1 Action Plan**

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| Schedule | Action |
| 28 January 2016 | Responses by WG members to the Chair on the draft report and decision on final report by the Chair |
| 5 February 2016 | Finalized meeting report of the 3rd WGM to be sent to the members of the WG |
| 16 May 2016 | Report of the 3rd WGM outcomes to the 22nd RCARO SAC Meeting |
| 38th NRM  (17-20 May 2016) | Report of the 3rd WGM outcomes to the 38th NRM by the Chair of the WG |
| 1 June 2016 | Follow-up actions upon the decision by the 38th NRM |

**7. Closing**

Mr. Kun-mo Choi thanked the WG for its strong participation and its contribution to the advancement of the development of the future roles of the RCARO. He wished all participants safe journey home.

**ANNEXES**

Annex 1 – List of Meeting Participants

Annex 2 – Meeting Prospectus

Annex 3 – Meeting Programme

Annex 4 – Presentation by Mr. Easey ‘Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations of the 2nd WGM’

Annex 5 – Presentation by Ms. Jeon ‘Prospectus of the Meeting and the Report on the Discussions of the 37th NRM and 44th GCM’

Annex 6-1 – Presentation by Mr. Easey ‘Supplementary Projects’

Annex 6-2 – Presentation by Mr. Easey ‘Research Projects’

Annex 6-3 – Presentation by Mr. Choi ‘Training Programme’

Annex 7 – Presentation by Mr. Hoang ‘IAEA’s Role Under the 1987 RCA Agreement’

Annex 8 – Legal Opinion of the Office of Legal Affairs, IAEA, on its role under the RCA Agreement

Annex 9 – Presentation by Ms. Dela Rosa ‘Report of the WG on RCA MTS and SP’

Annex 10 – Presentation by Mr. Easey ‘An Integrated Approach to the Future Role of the RCARO in Support of the RCA Programme’

Annex 11 – An Integrated Approach to the Future Role of the RCARO in Support of the RCA Programme

Annex 12 – Procedure for Development of Projects by the DIR-RCARO

Annex 13 – Presentation by Mr. Choi ‘2016 Action Plan for the RCARO Managed Projects’

Annex 14 – Presentation by Mr. Hoang ‘IAEA’s Challenges in the Management and Implementation of the RCA Programme’

1. This was based on the response of the Office of Legal Affairs, IAEA which showed that Government Parties may cooperate in other projects that are not under the umbrella of the RCA. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)