Communicating with Civil Society

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WHO THIS MODULE IS FOR

The audience for this module consists of professionals in the nuclear sector whose responsibilities include communicating with civil society on nuclear security issues— either on a day-to-day basis or during a crisis. Such professionals may not be specialists in marketing or public relations, but they understand the importance of communicating effectively with their local community, civil society organisations, politicians and the media.
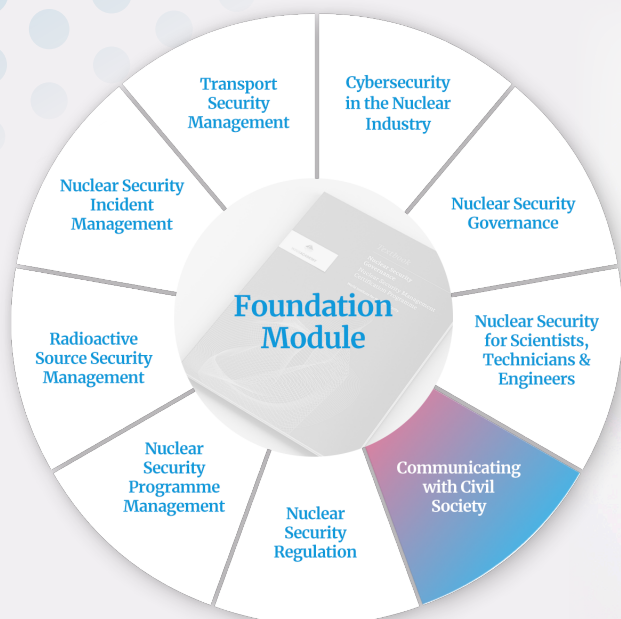
KEY ISSUES

The support of civil society is necessary for the successful development and use of nuclear and other radioactive materials. When community members trust the organisation and its leaders, the support they provide can be invaluable. When distrust and conflict are the norm, protests, negative media coverage, lawsuits, and the like can harm an organisation's reputation, financial performance, and ability to conduct business.

There is a growing realisation that civil society has legitimate interests in nuclear security issues. Furthermore, organisations are discovering that when civil society plays a more active role in the decision-making process, all sides benefit. Learning how to share information honestly and transparently—while maintaining the security of sensitive information—has become an important part of the work carried out by government officials, regulators and operators alike.

KEY LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, participants will understand the basic elements of the communication process, the crucial role that trust plays in any relationship, and the numerous benefits of stakeholder dialogue and active engagement with civil society. They will also understand the communication needs of traditional and social media and how to communicate about nuclear security in a crisis.

OUTLINE