April 2016

Frequently Asked Questions: CNSC proposed changes to the equivalent dose limit for lens of the eye

Q: Who in my organization should read the Technical Note on proposed changes to the equivalent dose limit for lens of the eye?
A: The Technical Note is intended for staff who are responsible for the management of your radiation protection program.

Q: Is my organization expected to take specific actions?
A: Licensees are encouraged to read the enclosed information about upcoming changes to requirements for dose to the lens of the eye, and to take the actions described in the technical note to ensure the protection of their workers.

Q: When do the actions need to be completed by?
A: Licensees are encouraged to act in a timely manner in order to prepare for the proposed changes coming into force in the Radiation Protection Regulations, expected in 2016-2017. Future technical developments may result in the CNSC providing additional and/or complementary information on this matter at a later date. For an example, a future regulatory document on Dosimetry will include guidance on matters related to the lens of the eye.

Q: Do I need to respond to the CNSC?
A: No. CNSC staff is not requesting a formal response to this technical note. The intent of the note is for information purposes to assist licensees in preparing for proposed changes to the dose limit to the lens of the eye. As the process towards amending the regulations continues and with the development of related regulatory documents, CNSC staff will continue to engage with licensees on this matter and is available to answer any questions.

Q: Should licensees expect any changes to compliance verification activities related to this topic conducted by CNSC staff at this time?
A: No, CNSC staff will not be performing compliance verification activities against this technical note. The focus at this time is on promotional activities and transparency.
Q: What is the reason for the proposed amendments?

A: New studies have shown that cataracts can occur at significantly lower doses than originally thought. To ensure worker protection, the International Commission on Radiological Protection has recommended lowering the dose limits for the lens of the eye. In line with their recommendations, the CNSC is proposing to reduce the dose limit to 50 millisievert (mSv) per one-year dosimetry period and 100 mSv per five-year dosimetry period. The CNSC has carefully considered the body of scientific information, the expected impact on licensees, and stakeholder feedback, and will move forward with the proposed amendments to the *Radiation Protection Regulations* to reduce the dose limit for the lens of the eye.

Q: Who do I contact if I have questions?

A: All questions should be directed to cnsc.lensoftheeye-cristallindeloeil.ccsn@canada.ca.

CNSC staff will be holding information sessions with licensees on these proposed amendments in 2016.