**ARCAL: Improving radiation transport safety**

*The challenge…*

Many of the modern technologies used by the countries in Latin American and the Caribbean employ radioactive materials and equipment, applied in a range of fields such as agriculture, environment and health.

The transport of nuclear and radioactive materials is complex, and adequate physical protection of these materials and radiation safety is essential so that people and the environment are protected from exposure to harmful radiation.

A range of United Nations organizations and international bodies are involved in transport standards and work together with the IAEA in this area.

*ARCAL projects in transport and safety…*

ARCAL assists countries in the region to ensure that national institutions involved in the transport of radioactive materials have appropriate mechanisms at their disposal and are sufficiently prepared to carry out all the tasks involved in transport operations with an adequate and uniform level of quality both at the national and regional level.

Cooperation between ARCAL Member States and the IAEA has focused on development of guidance material, collection and analysis of information, interactions with transport safety bodies and preparation of expert missions and training courses. The main objective has been to harmonize the regulatory documents on the safe transport of radioactive materials at the regional and national level in compliance with international regulations.

*The impact…*

ARCAL has contributed to increased levels of quality and safety, including the recommendation of twenty-two procedures to be applied by competent authorities, consignors, consignees and carriers. ARCAL projects have also resulted in the development of a complete training manual on the transport of radioactive materials. A useful set of documents based on internationally accepted quality assurance has also been generated.

All participating countries now have a complete set of documents with which to harmonize transport activities in the region as well as to train personnel to apply the regulations and to communicate the requirements for transport safety and related guidance.

The transport of radioactive and nuclear materials is now carried out with an improved level of safety and the technical material resulting from this project is already in use by carriers and shippers in some participating countries.