

COMMUNICATION FROM THE NMEu EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (ERT)

Subject: COVID-19 AND THE GLOBAL SUPPLY OF Mo-99 & OTHER ISOTOPES

Brussels, 6 April 2020

The Security of Supply Working Group (SoS WG) Emergency Response Team (ERT) held a teleconference on 6 April 2020 to discuss the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Mo-99 and other radioisotope production.

NTP informed the ERT that its manufacturing operations continue to proceed uninterrupted and despite difficulties NTP has been able to find selective flights to ship product to international markets, which is a positive change from last week.

Similarly, radioisotope shipments from Europe continue to be made via cargo on passenger flights but last-minute cancellations, rebookings, and delays are frequent. This also results in increased costs due to radioactive decay of delayed shipments and some airlines are proposing pandemic surcharge rates.

The ERT was informed that a group of nuclear medicine companies continues to make progress in efforts to arrange dedicated charter flights between the U.S. and Europe for shipments of medical radioisotopes. In addition, efforts continue to persuade a European airline that has not carried radioactive material for many years to resume doing so.

All organizations reported that operations continue and that there have not been any production disruptions due to COVID-19 impact on personnel.

NMEu advises that continued logistics difficulties create risk to security of supply of both bulk Mo-99 and Tc-99m generators, though no specific shortages are foreseen at the present. Medical institutions should contact their Tc-99m generator suppliers or radiopharmacies to be informed of the expected supply situation.

The ERT will continue to carefully monitor the situation, consult as needed, and Nuclear Medicine Europe will provide regular communication updates.

Bernard Ponsard,
Chairman ERT

Ira Goldman,
Chairman NMEu SoS WG

For the reactors:

Bernard Ponsard, Chairman ERT, SCK CEN

For the Processors:

Frank DeLange, Curium

Erich Kollegger and David Achiolas, IRE

For the Generators:

Ira Goldman, LMI

Nassar Hussain, GE HC (sent a report prior to the meeting)

For Transport

Gilles Degauque, Transrad

Rapporteur

Jocelyne Baldasso, NMEu