

What is the NSG's rationale for adding items to the Dual-Use List?

When the NSG meets to consider the addition of specific dual-use items and technologies and set their parameters, the guiding questions which inform discussions are "have proliferators actually sought these items?", "can the items be controlled?" and "is it feasible/useful to control them?". Discussions, in order to set parameters, will touch upon issues such as the proliferation risks associated to an item, its technical characteristics, other applications it may have, availability, number of possible suppliers, magnitude of non-nuclear usage and quantities needed. The results of these discussion lead the NSG to decide whether it is feasible to set controls, whether controls will have a significant effect, and whether alternative technical paths should also be controlled.

How does the NSG facilitate nuclear trade for peaceful purposes?

The NSG Guidelines facilitate the development of trade in this area by providing the means whereby obligations to facilitate peaceful nuclear cooperation can be implemented in a manner consistent with international nuclear non-proliferation norms. The NSG urges all governments to adhere to the Guidelines.

The NSG Guidelines introduce a degree of order and predictability among countries who are suppliers of listed items and harmonise standards and interpretations of suppliers' undertakings with the aim of ensuring that the normal process of commercial competition does not lead to outcomes that further the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Consultations among NSG participants are also designed to ensure that any possible impediments to international nuclear trade and cooperation are kept to a minimum.

Do the NSG Guidelines impede legitimate nuclear trade?

No. Contrary to fears that the NSG Guidelines act as an impediment to the transfer of nuclear materials and equipment, they have in fact facilitated the development of such trade.

For some time now, nuclear supply arrangements, or nuclear cooperation agreements, that serve as the legal foundation for nuclear transfers have incorporated NSG conditions of supply. The NSG commitments, when woven into the supply arrangements with a basis in respective national laws, provide governments with legitimate and defensible arguments that such arrangements diminish proliferation risk. In this manner, non-proliferation and trade purposes are mutually reinforcing.

What is the aim of NSG Outreach?

The aims of the outreach activities are to promote both adherence to the NSG Guidelines and enhance greater understanding of the role, mission and work of the NSG. The NSG is prepared to support efforts by non-participating governments to adhere to and implement the Guidelines through its outreach activities. Outreach facilitates an open dialogue on issues of common interest and concern related to nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear export controls.

Why adhere to the NSG Guidelines?

Adherence to the NSG Guidelines is a visible commitment by a government to a common international effort to implementing the international standard for responsible non-proliferation and supplier behaviour. Applying the NSG Guidelines and Annexes on a national basis helps governments to meet their export control obligations under United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540.



Further information about the NSG including the full list of FAQs can be found at

www.nuclearsuppliersgroup.org

Nuclear Suppliers Group



What is the NSG?

*Frequently Asked Questions
about the NSG*

What is the NSG?

The Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) is a group of nuclear supplier countries (“NSG Participating Governments”) that seeks to contribute to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons through the implementation of two sets of Guidelines for their nuclear exports and nuclear-related exports.

Who participates in the NSG?

There are currently 48 Participating Governments (PGs) of the NSG. The European Commission and the Chair of the Zangger Committee participate as observers.

Argentina (1994)	Cyprus (2000)	Ireland (1984)	New Zealand (1994)	South Africa (1995)
Australia (1978)	Czech Republic (1978*)	Italy (1978)	Norway (1989)	Spain (1988)
Austria (1991)	Denmark (1984)	Japan (1974)	Poland (1978)	Sweden (1978)
Belarus (2000)	Estonia (2004)	Kazakhstan (2002)	Portugal (1986)	Switzerland (1978)
Belgium (1978)	Finland (1980)	Latvia (1997)	Romania (1990)	Türkiye (2000)
Brazil (1996)	France (1974)	Lithuania (2004)	Rep. of Korea (1995)	Ukraine (1996)
Bulgaria (1984)	Germany (1974)	Luxembourg (1984)	Russia (1974)	U.K. (1974)
Canada (1974)	Greece (1984)	Malta (2004)	Serbia (2013)	U.S. (1974)
China (2004)	Hungary (1985)	Mexico (2012)	Slovakia (1978*)	
Croatia (2005)	Iceland (2009)	Netherlands (1978)	Slovenia (2000)	

(* Czechoslovakia separated into the Czech Republic and Slovakia – participation date 5 Mar 1993)

What are the NSG Guidelines?

The NSG Guidelines are sets of conditions of supply that are applied to nuclear transfers for peaceful purposes to help ensure that such transfers will not be diverted to unsafeguarded nuclear fuel cycle or nuclear explosive activities.

The first NSG Guidelines were published in 1978 by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as an Information Circular INFCIRC/254 (subsequently amended) to apply to nuclear transfers to non-nuclear weapons states for peaceful purposes to help ensure that such transfers would not be diverted to unsafeguarded nuclear fuel cycle or nuclear explosive activities. Between 1978 and 1991, the NSG Guidelines and Technical Annexes remained in place, but the Group did not meet regularly. Since 1991, the NSG has met regularly. In 1992, the NSG adopted the Part 2 Guidelines, published the same year by the IAEA as an Information Circular INFCIRC/254 Part 2, to apply to nuclear-related transfers for peaceful purposes.

The aim of the NSG Guidelines is to ensure that

nuclear trade for peaceful purposes does not contribute to the proliferation of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, and that international trade and cooperation in the nuclear field is not hindered unjustly in the process.

What is the difference between the Part 1 and Part 2 Guidelines?

The NSG Part 1 Guidelines govern the export of items that are especially designed or prepared for nuclear use. These include: (i) nuclear material; (ii) nuclear reactors and equipment therefor; (iii) non-nuclear material for reactors; (iv) plants and equipment for the reprocessing, enrichment and conversion of nuclear material and for fuel fabrication and heavy water production; and (v) technology (including software) associated with each of the above items. These items are known as Trigger List Items as the transfer of an item triggers safeguards.

The NSG Part 2 Guidelines govern the export of nuclear-related dual-use items and technologies, that is, items that can make a major contribution to an unsafeguarded nuclear fuel cycle or nuclear explosive activity; but that have non-nuclear uses as well, for example in industry. These items are known as Dual-Use Items.

Why were the NSG Part 2 Guidelines created?

The NSG Part 2 Guidelines for transfers of nuclear-related dual-use equipment, material and technology (also known as the ‘Dual-Use Guidelines’) were created by NSG participants between 1991 and 1992 after it became apparent that export control provisions then in force had not prevented one state party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) from pursuing a clandestine nuclear weapons programme, which later prompted United Nations (UN) Security Council action. A large part of this clandestine nuclear weapons programme effort had been to acquire dual-use items not covered by the NSG Guidelines and then use these items to build Trigger List items.

By developing the NSG Part 2 Guidelines, the NSG further demonstrated its commitment to

nuclear non-proliferation by ensuring that dual-use items were controlled to ensure their non-explosive use. These items would, however, continue to be available for peaceful nuclear activities that are subject to International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards, as well as for other industrial activities where they would not contribute to nuclear proliferation.

The Dual-Use Guidelines were published as Part 2 of the IAEA’s INFCIRC/254 in 1992, and the original Guidelines published in 1978 became Part 1 of INFCIRC/254.

What have the NSG Guidelines achieved?

The NSG’s activities reflect the non-proliferation and peaceful nuclear cooperation objectives that NSG participants share with all State Parties to the NPT and parties to other international legally binding non-proliferation instruments. Controls on the transfer of items and technologies listed on the NSG Control Lists provide essential support for the implementation of these treaties and for the continuation and development of peaceful nuclear cooperation, thus also facilitating the safe expansion of access to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy consistent with the highest non-proliferation standards.

“The NSG Guidelines have significantly strengthened international solidarity in the field of transfers of nuclear material, equipment, and technology, by creating a high watermark for the transfer of such sensitive goods.”

What is the NSG’s rationale for adding items to the Trigger List?

The guiding question for listing items is “do the items meet the ‘especially designed or prepared’ (EDP) criteria for the processing, use, or production of special fissionable material?”. The EDP term originates from Article III.2 of the NPT. The Trigger List covers EDP equipment, components, materials, subsystems and facilities for processing, use and production of special fissionable material.