Physical Countermeasures to Sustain Acceptable Living and Working Conditions in Radioactively Contaminated Residential Areas

K.G. Andersson¹, J. Roed¹, K. Eged², Z. Kis², G. Voigt³, R. Meckbach², D.H. Oughton⁴, J. Hunt⁵, R. Lee⁵, **N.A. Beresford⁶ and F.J. Sandalls⁷**

- ¹ Risoe National Laboratory, DK-4000 Roskilde, Denmark
- ² GSF Forschungszentrum für Umwelt und Gesundheit, D-85764 Neuherberg, Germany
- 3 International Atomic Energy Agency, 1400 Vienna, Austria
- 4 Agricultural University of Norway, N 1432 Aas, Norway
- 5 Lancaster University, LA1 4YT Lancaster, UK
- 6 Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, LA11 6JU, Grange-over-Sands, UK
- 7 'Tamara', Locks Lane, OX12 9DB Wantage, UK

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Abstract The Chernobyl accident highlighted the need in nuclear preparedness for robust, effective and sustainable countermeasure strategies for restoration of radioactively contaminated residential areas. Under the EC-supported STRATEGY project a series of investigations were made of countermeasures that were deemed potentially applicable for implementation in such events in European Member States. The findings are presented in this report, in a standardised datasheet format to clarify the features of the individual methods and facilitate intercomparison. The aspects of averted doses and management of wastes generated by countermeasures had to be described separately to provide room for the required level of detail. The information is mainly intended as a tool for decision makers and planners and constitutes a basis for the STRATEGY decision framework for remediation of contaminated urban areas.

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Summary

Following a major nuclear accident, residential areas may be contaminated for many years, resulting in a multitude of economic, social and health-related penalties to the affected population. The implementation of robust, effective and holistic restoration strategies for these areas may be a requirement in sustaining acceptable living and working conditions. The STRATEGY project was launched within the European Commission's 5th Framework Programme with the ultimate goal of constructing a decision framework, which could be used by planners in connection with the selection of such remediation strategies for European Member States. In this context a need was identified for a comprehensive investigation of the various potentially applicable countermeasures. It was decided to report the findings of this investigation in a special datasheet format, which would clarify the various factors that would determine the feasibility of applying each countermeasure in a restoration strategy for a contaminated area.

The datasheets in this report represent a further development of previously developed databases, including new and updated technical data and a greater level of detail. One of the novel features of the STRATEGY database is the inclusion of social, psychological, ethical, legal and communication aspects, which have previously only been given limited consideration in reports outlining potential countermeasure options. A total of 27 countermeasures were found to be of possible relevance to urban contamination situations in European Member States, and these are described. The countermeasures are designed for treatment of different types of contaminated surface in the inhabited environment (streets, pavements, walkways, areas of soil of varying size, vegetation, snow-covered areas, walls, roofs and indoor surfaces of dwellings).

The justification and optimisation of urban countermeasure strategies strongly depends on casespecific parameters. For instance, average external doses (and thereby possibly averted doses by implementation of countermeasures) to persons living in different types of dwellings may deviate by as much as a factor of 10. Therefore, a methodology for evaluation of these doses in different urban environments has been included in a special section of this report. Also direct implementation costs (e.g., need for special equipment) and indirect costs (e.g., loss of value of an area) of countermeasure implementation can vary greatly according to the particular situation.

One of the cost elements that will arise after a decontamination has been carried out is that associated with the management of the waste generated by the countermeasures. These costs must be regarded as an inherent part of a countermeasure strategy, and descriptions of recommendable waste management options are therefore also included in this report.

The work has been reviewed outside the STRATEGY project group by groups of potential users and 'stakeholders' (representatives of individuals or organisations that would in some way be involved in parts of the implementation of a countermeasure strategy), and subsequently independently peer reviewed.

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Preface

The work described in this report was carried out under the STRATEGY project supported by the Commission of the European Communities under the 'Research and Training Programme in the field of nuclear energy' of the $5th$ Framework Programme (Contract FIKR-CT-2000-00018). A main objective of the STRATEGY project is to identify and describe countermeasures for sustainable restoration and long-term management of rural, urban and industrial ecosystems contaminated as a result of a nuclear accident. The findings are to be implemented in a system that can be used to facilitate efficient decision-making in the event of a nuclear accident. Further details of the STRATEGY project can be found on http://www.strategy-ec.org.uk/.

The contributions to this report of each of the authors are specified below:

K.G. Andersson & J. Roed: are the principal report authors and authors of all parts of the countermeasure descriptions in this report unless specified otherwise below. J. Roed also contributed to the sections on ethical, legal, social and communication aspects in the countermeasure descriptions.

K. Eged, Z. Kis, G. Voigt & R. Meckbach: are the principal authors of Chapter 4 on external doses and provided valuable comments to other sections.

D.H. Oughton, J. Hunt & R. Lee: are the authors of the sections on ethical, legal, social and communication aspects in the countermeasure descriptions and provided valuable comments to other sections.

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1 Introduction

1.1 General background

In the various member states of the European Union, radiological preparedness is organised in very different ways. In many of these countries the responsibility for decision-making, including decisions related to implementation of countermeasures, rests within authority organisations at a national level. However, for instance in Sweden, such decisions are taken on a regional basis by district councils ('länsstyrelser'), which may seek guidance and advice from central government bodies.

In the event of a major nuclear accident leading to contamination of large urban areas, the responsible decision-makers will, regardless of the structure of the preparedness organisations, be confronted with a host of questions and demands from, e.g., representatives of the affected populations and the press. It is under this pressure that the first decisions will have to be made on whether or not to intervene to reduce doses to affected populations. The long-term (external) dose in an urban area after a major nuclear accident is likely to be dominated by the radiocaesium isotopes $134Cs$ and, particularly, $137Cs$ (Andersson & Roed, 1999). Countermeasures for reduction of long-term doses may often be effectively implemented over a comparatively long period of time following an accident, as contributions to long-term dose received over the first months do not constitute a major part of the total dose integrated over, for instance, 70 years in most cases. However, to be efficient, some countermeasures, which can greatly affect long-term doses, need to be carried out as soon as possible after the contamination has occurred. An example of this is lawn mowing (and removal of the cut grass), which can in some cases, if applied early, prevent substantial long-term doses from contaminants that would otherwise be transferred to the underlying soil. As limited resources would be available, it is important that countermeasures are selected and applied optimally as a part of a holistic restoration strategy for the area. It is therefore advantageous if decisions on countermeasure strategies for reduction of long-term doses (though not necessarily their implementation) can be made at an early stage. However, it is even more important to ensure that the right countermeasures are introduced in a particular situation. If applied wrongly, some countermeasures could well do more harm than good, and the effect would often be irreversible.

In order to speed up the decision making process and at the same time ensure that potentially important issues are not overlooked in the process of optimisation, it is of great importance that decisionmakers have access to systematic descriptions of the potentially applicable countermeasures for reduction of dose in the residential environment in advance of an accident. These descriptions should provide an overview of methods and factors affecting their application in a standardised format that facilitates intercomparison. The descriptions would allow the planners to assess in time whether some countermeasures would be likely to be more suitable/acceptable than others given the specific conditions in the area, e.g., with respect to topography, building tradition and soil type. Further, the descriptions would show local planners which equipment, consumables, skilled personnel, etc. must be available to carry out the countermeasures, and the availability in the local area of these resources could thus be assessed/secured prior to any emergency. Finally, first steps in the preparations for public interaction (information/dialogue) could be planned.

Recognising these needs, a first effort was made in the ECP-4 project supported by the European Commission to systematically describe restoration methods for contaminated urban, agricultural/rural and forested areas in a series of data sheets (Roed et al., 1995). These descriptions focused on the direct costs and efficiency in dose reduction of the various countermeasures and provided information on the type and amount of wastes (if any) that would be generated. For this suite of data sheets it was decided to express estimates of the required labour costs in units of time, as wages will vary considerably, both temporally and between countries/regions. In a later investigation in the EKO-5 project supported by Nordic Nuclear Safety Research (NKS), the data were updated with more recent findings and complemented with fuller descriptions of the countermeasures (Andersson, 1996; Andersson & Roed, 1999). A novelty in the EKO-5 database was the introduction of estimates of external dose in a number of types of contaminated urban environments, ranging from detached single-family houses to blocks of flats. The dose estimates were made assuming respectively wet and dry deposition, using the URGENT model (Andersson et al., 1995). The EKO-5 database was implemented in 1998 as part of a preparedness CD ROM created for the Swedish Rescue Service on restoration of contaminated urban areas. At this stage, several Swedish district councils had already implemented the information in their preparedness plans. The data were also implemented in an IAEA guide on decontamination of rural settlements (Andersson et al., 2001).

1.2 The STRATEGY project database

In 2000, the EC-STRATEGY project was launched (Howard et al, 2002). The overall objective of this project is to develop a decision framework for the selection of robust and practicable remediation strategies for European Member States, enabling sustainable management of contaminated urban, industrial, and agricultural areas. A requirement in this context was found to be the creation of a database describing the methods that would be considered to be relevant and practicable in at least some areas of the European Member States. Whereas the intervention justification and optimisation facilitated by previous databases has practically been limited to a balancing of direct intervention costs against averted dose, the STRATEGY database is aimed at providing a full overview of elements of cost and benefit that might arise due to the implementation of a restoration strategy.

This type of optimisation is clearly in line with the principles recommended in 2000 by the International Commission on Radiological Protection (ICRP, 2000). The ICRP emphasised that although 'the immediate advantage of intervening in a prolonged exposure situation is the expectation of obtaining averted (individual and collective) doses…', also other advantages must enter the decision matrix. These include 'the consequent reassurance gained by the population and the decrease in anxiety created by the situation'. It is further stated that 'disadvantages introduced by the intervention include costs, harm and social disruption associated with it. If the advantages of intervening offset the disadvantages, the net benefit of intervening will be positive and the intervention is said to be justified. The optimum protection option is not necessarily the option that results in the lowest residual annual doses, either individual or collective dose. Some options could result in a lower residual annual dose but give a smaller net benefit than the optimum option'.

Some of the 'new' perspectives in the STRATEGY database that would need to be considered in a holistic evaluation of countermeasure options are legal considerations, public perceptions and communication of technical information, as well as social, ethical and environmental impact. One of the lessons learned from the handling of the Chernobyl accident was, according to the EC-TACIS project ENVREG9602, that the psychological stress connected with a nuclear contamination of inhabited areas may be considered to be more harmful than the radiation. This implies that the ways in which introduction of dose reductive countermeasures may be perceived by the public constitute a crucial factor in connection with the choice of intervention. It also stresses the need for dialogue between experts and the affected population in order to properly understand the social and psychological factors at play in particular localities.

Further, on the technical side, new countermeasure investigations have been made improving the state of knowledge compared with earlier databases (Roed et al., 1998; Fogh et al., 1999; Andersson et al, 2001). Also new investigations of the behaviour of contaminants in the urban environment have been performed (Andersson et al., 2002), which together with Monte Carlo calculations performed within the STRATEGY project of urban dose in typical European dwelling areas led to an improved methodology for prediction of particularly the long-term doses.

Throughout the first months of the STRATEGY project, the partners developed a database template for the description of each of the countermeasures that would be considered (see below). To help the reader to better understand the headings of the various sections and information provided in this template (as given in the left column of the template below), general explanations are given in the right column of the template below.

The completed data sheets were commented on by the other STRATEGY project partners and peerreviewed by an independent expert in the field. In the STRATEGY project there is an 'end user' group (consisting of representatives of decision makers and regulators who may actually use the project results). The dialogue with this group, e.g., through meetings, ensured incorporation of viewpoints from the user community in the development of the database system. The overall conclusion of the end user evaluation of the database was that the project output seemed sensible and worthwhile. The urban part of the database was also discussed with two 'stakeholder' representatives (representatives of individuals or organisations that would in some way be involved in parts of the implementation of a countermeasure strategy). One of these represented the authority viewpoints, whereas the other had a practical background and experience from having carried out a number of the countermeasures in industry and at nuclear power plants as well as in the areas of the Former Soviet Union contaminated by the Chernobyl accident. This interaction enabled a number of improvements of the data sheets, and the 'stakeholder' representatives concluded that the database would be of great value to decision-makers.

A few of the terms applied in the database text require definition:

External exposure/dose is defined as exposure/dose to humans from radioactive substances *outside* the body. Conversely, *internal exposure/dose* is the exposure/dose to humans from radioactive substances *inside* the body.

DF (decontamination factor) is defined as the concentration of the original contamination on/in an object relative to what is left after a countermeasure has been carried out. This factor is used to measure the *decontamination efficiency* of countermeasures.

DRF (dose reduction factor) is here defined as the dose rate excluding natural sources before a countermeasure had been carried out relative to that after the countermeasure has been carried out, measured at a reference location in the environment. DRF is a measure of the relative reduction in dose rate obtained by application of one or several countermeasures.

'Surface DRF' (surface dose reduction factor) is defined as the DRF at a distance of 1 m from a surface, regarding the surface as having infinite dimensions, and assuming that no other sources are present. It is a factor that is used to describe the efficiency of countermeasures, which do not decontaminate a surface (i.e., which do not *remove* contamination from the area), but reduce the external dose above it (e.g., by burial of the contamination).

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2 Countermeasure descriptions

The countermeasures for which datasheets are presented in this chapter are listed in the index below, which has been supplemented with short countermeasure descriptions to provide a better overview of the options for treatment of the various types of contaminated urban surface.

2.1 Countermeasures for reduction of dose from contaminated roads, pavements and walkways

2.2 Countermeasures for reduction of dose from contaminated areas of soil including vegetation

2.3 Countermeasures for reduction of dose from contaminated walls of dwellings

2.4 Countermeasures for reduction of dose from contaminated roofs of dwellings

2.5 Countermeasures for reduction of dose from contaminated indoor surfaces

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3 Disposal of wastes

This chapter gives a series of descriptions of possible routes of transport, treatment and storage/disposal of the wastes that may be generated by the described countermeasures. These text sections have been placed in this separate chapter as their required length made it impossible to directly accommodate them in the datasheets. Also, for instance, the routes of disposal of contaminated soil waste generated by various countermeasures would be the same and need only be described once.

3.1 Soil waste from urban areas

Waste constituted by removed radioactively contaminated soil (or soil mixed with lignin) may be very large in volume, and it is important that safe and cost-effective strategies for the disposal of such waste can be identified. Current legal demands may in some countries restrict the applicability of costeffective strategies for waste disposal. It is important in the event of a major accident that any waste arising from decontaminating operations is regarded as an inherent part of the strategy for dose reduction.

Several safety aspects are of concern in connection with the establishment of a disposal site.

For instance, the waste depository must be constructed in a way that effectively prevents external radiation. Since the self-attenuation of radiation in soil is substantial, this problem can largely be overcome even with very simple repository designs. An example of this is the formation of simple, uncovered waste pile 'hills' in connection with a decontamination exercise in the Chernobyl-contaminated Novozybkov area in Russia in 1995 (Roed et al., 1996). The primary radionuclide of concern was here, as would be expected in connection with any major reactor accident, ¹³⁷Cs. It was found that the dose rate to a person standing on top of one of these hills containing contaminated topsoil removed from a vast area was only 15 % higher than that in the surrounding contaminated area. By covering the contamination with, e.g., a layer of uncontaminated soil excavated from deeper soil layers of the same area, this dose rate can be greatly reduced. Further, the formation of a 'hill' or bank of earth in the area will shield well against radiation from contamination far away. If a 137Cs contamination is distributed in the upper ca. 2 cm of soil, about one-third of the dose rate to a person standing in a large, plane field will normally be expected to come from contamination more than 16 m away (Andersson, 1996).

The waste deposit must also be constructed in a way that prevents effectively against downward contaminant migration, e.g., to the groundwater. Several simple and inexpensive designs may be envisaged to take care of this. One such repository design, based on the recommendations of Junker et al. (1998) is shown in Figure 1. It is here ensured that there is a considerable distance from the bottom of the constructed repository to the groundwater level. A layer of clay or clayey soil will capture and retain many pollutants, especially caesium if it is leaking out of the waste storage area. A relatively thick plastic layer placed on top of the radioactive waste layer will prevent rainwater from reaching the contamination. In addition to this, a 0.3 m thick gravel layer is here applied to drain off rain water, and at the very top, a layer of fertile soil is placed. Vegetation grown in this layer will prevent against erosion, and the soil layer will at the same time (together with the other layers) add to the shielding against the external radiation from the buried contamination. A ditch should be dug around the repository, to collect drained-off rainwater. It is envisaged that this type of repositories could be constructed in as large scale as 400 by 400 metres.

Other, more simple designs have also been suggested and tested on a limited scale in Norway and in large scale in the former Soviet Union (Lehto & Paajanen, 1994). For instance, Salbu et al. (1994) suggested the formation of 10 m long and 3.5 m wide surface trench repositories with an arched top to enable rain water to easily run off into ditches at the sides of the trench. The trench was equipped with a drainpipe at the bottom for inspection of radionuclide content in water that had passed through the

contaminated soil. The loss of radiocaesium from the soil waste area through rainwater migration was found to be very small, even for a peat soil, which is much less efficient in retaining caesium than is clay soil. Based on the work of Salbu et al. (1994), the total costs of disposal of contaminated soil (including worker salaries and use of machines) is estimated to be of the order of 2000-3000 Euro for each ha of land from which a topsoil layer of ca. 3-5 cm thickness is removed. The estimate assumes that repositories will be constructed in the contaminated area.

If other contaminants migrating more easily than caesium pose a problem, various stabilisation and solidification techniques can be applied to reduce this problem (Brodersen, 1993).

In constructing a repository it should further be ensured that the site will not be exposed to flooding (e.g., close to a river), and that the area is not prone to earthquakes. Old gravel pits should not be exploited for this purpose, as they will often provide too little distance to the groundwater.

Figure 3.1 The principles of a suggested repository for radioactively contaminated waste (e.g., soil). Recommendations of Junker et al. (1998).

Waste repositories should generally be constructed in the contaminated areas, to minimise transport expenses. Thereby, also doses to transport workers can be minimised. Further, it will probably be considered most reasonable by the population that the repository problems are shared by the whole affected population rather than imposed massively on a specific selected part of the inhabitants living near a large, centralised repository.

Due to the self-attenuation of the soil, the external dose rate to workers is unlikely to differ greatly from that to other people spending time outdoors in the area. However, the amount of time spent outdoors will be likely to be comparatively great for these workers, and as buildings provide a (highly variable) shielding against radiation, the dose rate is expected to be significantly higher outdoors than indoors.

3.2 Contaminated biomass from urban areas

This type of waste may be grass or turf removed from a lawn or trees and shrubs removed from, e.g., gardens and park areas. Particularly the specific activity of grass may be high if the grass is cut early after a dry contamination has occurred. Also leaves on a tree or shrub may have high specific activity right after contamination. This problem and its impact on worker doses is described in detail under the heading 'additional dose' under the 'Lawn mowing' procedure description. Protection of workers may occur either through shielding with metal between the worker and the waste, by increasing the distance (e.g., by remote controlled operation) and/or limiting the number of individual work hours.

A number of methods may be envisaged to make use of some types of the removed biomass, depending on the contamination level. For instance, aerobic degradation (composting) will produce material that may be useful for soil fertilising, whereas anaerobic degradation produces gas that may be used in energy production. Core wood from contaminated trees may, particularly early after an accident, where the contamination will largely be confined to the outer surface, be applied in industry, e.g., for making furniture. The IAEA have prepared a report, which provides estimates of the conversion factors between biomass (wood) contamination levels and annual doses that would be received due to the contamination, assuming conditions that are believed to adequately reflect 'typical' situations (Balonov et al., 2003). In ICRP publication 82 (1999) it is recommended that the annual individual dose contribution from these sources does not exceed 1 mSv. However, it should be stressed that intervention exemption levels in use currently vary widely between countries, and may be considerably lower than the recommended 1 mSv limit.

The wood pulping process in connection with paper manufacturing may significantly reduce the contamination in the paper product. A special wood pulping treatment has been described by Roed et al. (1995) giving a decontamination factor of as much as 50-100.

An option for comparatively strongly contaminated wood, wood waste and other biomass (e.g., shrubs) is to chip it and combust it in safely designed power plants, which provide adequate protection of workers as well as of the environment. Thereby, energy is generated and at the same time the mass of the waste would be reduced by a factor of 10-100 by combustion. The technology required to produce energy from biomass is long established. In more forest-intensive European countries, such as Finland, wood combustion accounts for approximately 19 % of the energy consumption (15 % large scale and 4 % small-scale wood firing).

The magnitude of stack releases from a combustion plant depends on the boiler temperature as well as on the applied aerosol filter type. For instance, Mustonen et al. (1989) reported that four Finnish plants equipped with electrostatic filters for fly ash precipitation were found to have aerosol collection efficiencies (mass) in the range between 71 % and 99.7 %. According to Hedvall et al. (1996), Swedish biomass-fuelled power plants emit between 1.4 % and 10 % of the caesium in the applied Chernobylcontaminated fuel to the atmosphere from the stack in the form of flue gas. Such releases may be greatly reduced by applying a baghouse filter. An efficient baghouse filter design has been proposed by Junker et al. (1998), essentially consisting of eight modules, each with 250 GORE-TEX membrane needle felt filter bags (each being 6 m long and having a surface area of about 2 $m²$) and a hopper for collection of fly ash removed from the filters.

At an operating biomass combustion plant in Rechitza, Belarus, a filter of this type has been tested (Roed et al., 2000). The boiler was, prior to the test, not equipped with any flue gas treatment system. For the test, a cyclone filter was constructed which the flue gas from the boiler would pass through before entering the bag filter. This was to reduce the total mass of the flue gas dust, and at the same time prevent sparks from reaching the bag filter. From the bag filter the flue gas was led to the 70 m high stack, from which it was released to the atmosphere.

Aerosol laser spectrometry measurements showed, as was expected, that the cyclone had rather little effect on the smaller particles. The cyclone was found to have removed less than half of the caesium in the flue gas. However, measurements revealed that only some 0.5 % of the caesium in the original flue gas was left after the baghouse filter.

If one megatonnes of biomass with a specific activity of 500 Bq kg^{-1} were combusted annually in a plant releasing as much as 10 % of the caesium in the fuel to the atmosphere, this would be expected to lead to an integrated dose over a life-time to individuals 1 km from the power plant of *only some* 20 µSv (Junker et al., 1998). As pointed out above, this could be further greatly reduced by installing a baghouse filter.

Doses to workers at a power plant fired with contaminated biomass have been investigated in detail, assuming a typical bio-energy power plant construction (Andersson et al., 1999). It was concluded that if people are working throughout an entire working year only ½ m away from the locations at the power plant with the highest dose rate (which would grossly over-estimate the worker dose), annual doses of 2-3 mSv can be expected if the biomass (wood) is taken from an area contaminated by ca. 1 MBq $m²$ of $137Cs$. Inhalation doses received at the plant through routine operation were found to be negligible. The maximum doses received at the power plant are received near concentrations of contaminated ash, as this is where the specific activity is highest. Doses to ash transport workers and workers at an ash repository would be expected to be of the same order of magnitude as the highest doses received at the power plant. In any case, worker doses should be assessed/minimised.

According to the recommendations of Junker et al (1998), the ash from combustion can be disposed of in thick plastic 'big bags' with typical volumes of ca. 2 m^3 . These are placed in a ground repository of the type described for disposal of contaminated soil (see section 3.1). Without combustion, the biomass repositories would need to be 10-100 times bigger, and the wood would still need to be chipped.

Also spreading of ash for fertilising fields has been suggested. The fertiliser may in some soils significantly reduce contaminant uptake to plants, and the total effect could thus reduce dose, depending on the ash contamination level. The legality and acceptability of this (or any other) solution should of course first be assessed.

Current legal demands may in some countries restrict the applicability of cost-effective strategies for waste disposal. It is important in the event of a major accident that any waste arising from decontaminating operations is regarded as an inherent part of the strategy for dose reduction.

3.3 Contaminated cloths and vacuum-cleaner filters from indoor cleaning in urban areas

The effect of cleaning procedures applied on indoor surfaces may be significant, particularly early after a contamination has occurred. The specific activity of dust collected in vacuum-cleaner filters or on cloths may vary greatly, mainly depending on the deposition mode (if contamination occurs in heavy rain, indoor contamination will generally not constitute a problem at all) and contaminant particle size (Roed, 1985). The contamination level in the vacuum-cleaner filters should in very heavily contaminated areas be assessed prior to disposal. If the contamination level exceeds the maximum permissible level, this waste should be collected, e.g., in thick polypropylene bags, which may be disposed of in repositories in the ground (see section 3.1). The waste may in some cases have relatively high specific activity, and worker doses in connection with disposal should be assessed/minimised.

Current legal demands may in some countries restrict the applicability of cost-effective strategies for waste disposal. It is important in the event of a major accident that any waste arising from decontaminating operations is regarded as an inherent part of the strategy for dose reduction.

3.4 Contaminated snow from urban areas

Removal of snow in an urban or industrial area may lead to extremely large amounts of waste (Qvenild & Tveten, 1984). It would generally not be considered realistic in practice to melt all this snow and extract the contamination, although simple filtration designs would be expected to have a large effect. Alternatively, the snow masses may be dumped in the vast oceans, where the impact on the ecosystem would be considered to be limited. It should be ensured that the snow is not disposed of in, e.g., lakes where the waste may give rise to significant sediment contamination problems or lead to contamination of drinking water. As the snow may thus need to be transported over large distances, the transport expenses will often be high.

Current legal demands may in some countries restrict the applicability of cost-effective strategies for waste disposal. It is important in the event of a major accident that any waste arising from decontaminating operations is regarded as an inherent part of the strategy for dose reduction.

3.5 Contaminated roof pavings from urban areas

Contaminated roof pavings removed from a roof to reduce dose are likely to be of those types that are most efficient in retaining the deposited contamination. Clay, concrete and slate roofing materials may all contain significant amounts of mica, which can strongly bind caesium. If these materials were manufactured by firing at high temperature ($>$ ca. 1200 °C), or, e.g., coated with silicon, the fixation of the contamination is, however, not nearly as great (Andersson et al., 2002). Roofing materials, to which caesium is strongly bound may be stored in piles in a restricted area without significant risk of contaminant migration. Simple ground repositories of the type suggested for contaminated soil waste (see section 3.1) may be recommended, depending on the contamination level. Legal demands concerning toxicity of asbestos materials must be taken into account in connection with handling and disposal of the waste. Costly vitrification processes have been suggested for increasing the water resistance of asbestos (Inaba et al., 1999), but simpler solutions would be recommended, of the type suggested for disposal of, e.g., fly ash from combustion (see section 3.2).

Current legal demands may in some countries restrict the applicability of cost-effective strategies for waste disposal. It is important in the event of a major accident that any waste arising from decontaminating operations is regarded as an inherent part of the strategy for dose reduction.

3.6 Waste from roof cleaning in urban areas

Solid waste removed by roof cleaning methods may include loosened particles from the roof materials, sludge (e.g., from the roof gutter, which would also be decontaminated), algae and moss. Many of these materials will normally retain contamination (particularly caesium) well, and the volume of this solid waste will thus be difficult to reduce by extraction. The waste will often arise from wet roof treatment procedures. Here, the solid waste will initially be present in usually large volumes of water, but can be easily removed by simple filtration, as practically all contamination has been found to be associated with the solid part of the waste (Fogh et al., 1999). If the waste will go to the sewer system then it will be collected in the sewage sludge. The specific activity of this waste will however be smaller than that of the rest of the sewage sludge, so that no special action has to be taken.

For filtration, a filter material that has been successfully tested in practice (for water containing contaminants) is the commercially available polymer fibre textile called 'TYPAR', with a pore size of 0.14 mm. The cost of this material is only ca. 0.50 Euro per m^2 (Roed et al., 1996). If the waste water from operation of a roof cleaning device on a mainly caesium-contaminated roof is filtered *in situ,* the water will be sufficiently clean of contamination to allow recycling in the decontamination operation (Roed et al., 1996). In practice the cleaning and recycling of water may be carried out through very simple means. Roed et al. (1996) described a set-up, where the waste water from cleaning a roof was

collected in the roof gutter and led through a down-pipe into a large vessel. Inside this vessel, a plastic coated metal net was covered with 'TYPAR', which only the liquid fraction of the waste could penetrate. On the other side of the filter the water was pumped into another vessel, from which it could be recycled for the roof-cleaning operation (see Fig. 1).

Figure 3.2 Simple set-up for filtration of waste water from roof cleaning in Belarus.

The dry waste should be collected, e.g., in thick polypropylene bags, which may be disposed of in repositories in the ground (see section 3.1). The waste may in some cases have relatively high specific activity, and worker doses should be assessed/minimised. Legal demands concerning toxicity of asbestos materials must be taken into account in connection with handling and disposal of the waste.

Current legal demands may in some countries restrict the applicability of cost-effective strategies for waste disposal. It is important in the event of a major accident that any waste arising from decontaminating operations is regarded as an inherent part of the strategy for dose reduction.

3.7 Asphalt waste from urban areas

Removed contaminated asphalt will generally only be contaminated on the exposed surface. The migration of contaminants into bitumen (and concrete) has been reported to be negligible (Andersson, 1991). If it is not possible to efficiently remove the surface dust layer, to which the contamination will largely be confined, removal of asphalt surfaces, e.g., by planers, may generate rather large volumes of waste.

One way of dealing with this waste would be to bury it in repositories similar to those suggested for storage of contaminated soil (see section 3.1), which must provide sufficient safety both in relation to radiation and toxicity. Over very long time periods both aerobic and anerobic degradation of bitumen has been recorded (Roffey & Norqvist, 1991).

A much more inexpensive possibility would be to mix the removed, often not very strongly contaminated asphalt with new asphalt, as would be in-line with common practice in the asphalt industry, and re-use it for road paving. Naturally, the possibilities for re-use depend on the contamination level, but the dilution with new asphalt as well as the radiation attenuation by incorporation of the contamination

in the whole asphalt mass rather than having it confined to the surface will greatly reduce the dose rate above the asphalted surface. A limiting factor for this option is likely to be public acceptability. Also the local legality of the solution must be assessed. The choice of method also depends on the size of the affected area.

Current legal demands may in some countries restrict the applicability of cost-effective strategies for waste disposal. It is important in the event of a major accident that any waste arising from decontaminating operations is regarded as an inherent part of the strategy for dose reduction.

3.8 Street dust waste from urban areas

Since contamination on streets is largely confined to the thin street dust layer (Andersson, 1991), removed street dust can have high specific activity. It is therefore important that workers at a disposal site, as well as transport workers, are adequately protected against the radiation from this type of waste. Calculations have shown that in an area with a contamination level of 1 MBq $m²$, containers of street dust may give a dose rate to operators (drivers) of 50-100 μ Sv h⁻¹ (Ulvsand et al., 1997). Further, modern vacuum sweepers are often equipped with a water tank in which the dust is collected. This type of vacuum sweeper is preferable, as the water attenuates the radiation from the contamination in the collected dust. Protection of workers may occur either through shielding with metal between the worker and the waste, by increasing the distance (e.g., by remote controlled operation) and/or limiting the number of individual work hours.

Disposal of street dust may occur in a repository similar to those suggested for storage of contaminated soil (see section 3.1). It has been shown (de Preter, 1990) that the number of highly selective caesium sorption sites in street dust, which to some extent originates from erosion and weathering of urban surfaces, did not differ greatly from what was found in, e.g., micaceous tile samples. In other words, the same mechanisms in mica that strongly bind and retain particularly caesium in the soil are generally responsible for strong fixation also in street dust. This means that downward migration of caesium ions in a street dust layer will be very limited. If other contaminants migrating more easily than caesium pose a problem, various stabilisation and solidification techniques can be applied to reduce this problem (Brodersen, 1993).

Current legal demands may in some countries restrict the applicability of cost-effective strategies for waste disposal. It is important in the event of a major accident that any waste arising from decontaminating operations is regarded as an inherent part of the strategy for dose reduction.

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4 External dose in the urban environment

4.1 General methodology

In this chapter estimates are given of the external doses that individuals or populations would receive if they were staying in a 137Cs contaminated urban area. Three different types of urban environment with different population densities were considered: semi-detached two-storey houses, rows of twostorey terrace houses and multi-storey blocks of flats. Each environment structure is described by a central building surrounded by buildings of the same type. Beyond the immediately surrounding buildings it was assumed that there were lawns.

Using a Monte Carlo code the exposure field was determined in a number of representative 'evaluation locations' where persons may be present indoors and outdoors in/around the central building of each environment (Meckbach et al., 1988). Based on assumptions regarding the time that persons would be considered to spend in each evaluation location, dose rates to inhabitants in the area can be estimated.

The described methodology enables integration of dose contributions from each of the various contaminated 'intervention elements' (surfaces such as roofs, walls, garden soil areas, trees and streets) in the environment over different periods of time. The dose that can be averted over a period of time by implementation of a countermeasure on an intervention element at a specific time can be estimated by multiplying the contribution to dose over the period from the contamination on the intervention element by the achievable fractional dose rate reduction (given under the heading 'Countermeasure Effectiveness' in the relevant datasheet).

4.1.1. Kerma estimates

Based on Monte Carlo photon transport calculations, the contributions of the various contaminated intervention elements to the air kerma per photon per unit of area at the various evaluation locations (*ksur,loc*) were calculated and reported relative to a reference air kerma per photon per unit of area at a height of 1 m above an idealised, smooth, infinite ground surface, which is surface-contaminated with $137Cs$. Naturally, this reference value depends on the composition and density of air and soil used in the calculations. Tables 4.1-4.6 and Figures 4.1-4.3 show the characteristics of the three different types of environment as well as calculated values of *ksur,loc.*

Figure 4.1. Urban environment with semi-detached houses.

Table 4.1. Construction details of the buildings and their surroundings studied in urban environment

(Semi-detached houses)

The neighbouring buildings were simulated as simple unstructured boxes, the trees as spheres.

Table 4.2. Relative contribution of the various deposition areas to the air kerma per photon per unit area at the evaluation locations inside and outside the semi-detached house

Reference air kerma: 825 pGy per γ.mm⁻² (1 m above an infinite, smooth air-ground interface) Source energy: 662 keV

1: The contributions from the neighbouring buildings can be considered as if they came from the roofs of these buildings because after a deposition the roof has generally the greatest contributions to the air kerma rate among the structural parts of a building.

Figure 4.2. Urban environment with row of terrace houses.

Table 4.3. Construction details of the buildings and their surroundings studied in urban environment

(Row of terrace houses)						
a, Row of terrace house						
External walls	11.2 cm brick, 5 cm air, 11.5 cm breeze-block					
Internal walls	Load bearing walls: 22 cm brick					
	Partitioning walls: 10 cm concrete					
Floors	Ground floor: 20 cm concrete					
	First floor and attic: 18 cm concrete					
Roof	2.4 cm tiles					
Windows	0.4 cm glass (windows fraction 14%)					
b, Area surrounding the buildings						
Plane areas with streets, walkways (park) and garden with trees						
Streets, walkways	10 cm concrete					
Parks, garden areas $30 - 50$ cm soil						
c, Material densities $(g.cm^{-3})$	Air 1.293×10^{-3} ; soil 1; concrete 2.3; brick 1.8; breeze-block 0.96; wood 0.6; gypsum 1.0; plasterboard 0.96; glass 2.5 ; glass-wool 0.022; tiles 1.92;					

The neighbouring buildings were simulated as simple unstructured boxes, the trees as spheres.

Table 4.4. Relative contribution of the various deposition areas to the air kerma per photon per unit area at the evaluation locations inside and outside the row of terrace house

Reference air kerma: 825 pGy per γ.mm⁻² (1 m above an infinite, smooth air-ground interface) Source energy: 662 keV

Figure 4.3. Urban environment with multi-storey house-blocks.

Table 4.5. Construction details of the buildings and their surroundings studied in urban environment

(Row of terrace houses)

The neighbouring buildings were simulated as simple unstructured boxes, the trees as spheres.

Table 4.6. Relative contribution of the various deposition areas to the air kerma per photon per unit area at the evaluation locations inside and outside the row of terrace house

Reference air kerma: 825 pGy per γ.mm⁻² (1 m above an infinite, smooth air-ground interface) Source energy: 662 keV

4.2 Application

The air kerma rate for a given photon energy, *E*, at an evaluation location due to an intervention element is the product of the air kerma per photon per unit area and the number of photons emitted per unit area and unit time from the surface. This latter is called source strength and can be obtained from measurements. The time dependence of the exposure field can be described by changes in the source strengths.

4.2.1. Reference source strength

The activity per unit area $A_{ref}(t)$ [Bq.mm⁻²] at time *t* after the deposition can be described according to the decay law:

$$
A_{ref}(t) = A_{ref}(0) \cdot e^{-(\lambda_r \cdot t)}
$$

where $A_{ref}(0)$ is the deposited activity at $t=0$ and λ_r is the decay constant of the radionuclide considered. If we define the reference surface geometry as an infinite smooth air-ground interface (an idealized lawn) with the radionuclides deposited only on the ground (this means that there is no roughness of the surface and there is no initial penetration into the deeper layers) then the source strength $S_{ref}(E,t)$ ${\rm [mm^2,s^1]}$ of the photons of this radionuclide emitted with energy *E* per unit area and time can be defined according to Meckbach (1997):

$$
S_{ref}(E,t) = S_{id}(E,t) = A_{ref}(0) \cdot e^{-(\lambda_r t)} \cdot y(E) = A_{ref}(t) \cdot y(E),
$$

where $A_{ref}(0)$ is the initially deposited activity on an undisturbed lawn and $y(E)$ [s⁻¹.Bq⁻¹] is the yield of photons with energy *E* per decay.

4.2.2. Effective source strengths

The different surfaces in urban environment have different initial retentions compared to the reference surface and have different parameters for the function describing the long-term behaviour of the deposited material. This means that for describing the air kerma rate above the various surfaces we can use so called *effective* source strengths, $S_{sur}(E,t)$, where

$$
S_{_{sur}}(E,t) = S_{_{id}}(E,t) \cdot s_{_{sur}}(E,t) = S_{_{ref}}(E,t) \cdot s_{_{sur}}(E,0) \cdot w_{_{sur}}(t)
$$

and $s_{sur}(E,0)$ refers to the reduction of the source strength due to only partial initial retention (Roed 1987a; Roed and Jacob 1990), initial penetration and roughness of the surface compared to the idealised reference surface, and $w_{sur}(t)$ refers to the weathering and/or the long-term migration of the deposit. For each urban surface, *sur* with effective source strength, *Ssur(E,t)* an effective source strength, $s_{sw}(E,t)$ *relative* to the reference source strength can be defined.

4.2.3. Long term behaviour

Summarising the results of measurements (Jacob et al. 1987; Roed 1987b; Roed and Jacob 1990; Jacob et al. 1990) the weathering processes and the effect of migration generally follow a two-class exponential behaviour with time. In this function there is a "mobile fraction", *a* with shorter half-life, *b* due to the loose binding to the surface or due to the higher migration rate (in the case of permeable surfaces) and there is a "fixed fraction", *(1-a)* with a longer half-life, *c* due to the strong binding to the surface or due to the lower migration rate:

$$
w_{sur}(t) = a \cdot e^{-(b \cdot t)} + (1 - a) \cdot e^{-(c \cdot t)}
$$

where $w_{sur}(t)$ is the activity fraction retained after weathering for time *t*, and *a*, *b* and *c* are parameters for each surface (see Table 4.7.).

4.2.4. Relative effective source strengths of urban surfaces

The parameter values for the analytical approximation of the relative effective source strengths are summarised by Andersson et al. (2002), Andersson et al. (1995), Roed (1990) and Roed (1987 a,b) and shown in Table 4.7. The values presented here are considered to be 'best estimates', whereas actual values may vary depending on, e.g., materials, geometrical arrangements and weathering conditions. The figures are generally smaller than one (except trees) and are characteristic for Western European conditions.

Surface	$s_{\text{sur}}(E,0)$	$s_{\text{sur}}(E,0)$	$\mathfrak a$	$T_{I} = (ln 2)/b$	$T_2 = (ln 2)/c$
	$\frac{d}{v}$	wet	mobile fraction	(vear)	(vear)
Windows	0.01	0.01	0.8	0.2	
Vertical walls	0.1	0.015	0.2	0.2	20
Roofs with tiles	0.7	0.7	0.5	$1 - 4$	$25 - 50$
Payed areas	0.4	0.55	0.5	0.2	
Trees		0.1	0.8	0.2	
Lawn ^a	09	0.7	0.46		50

Table 4.7. Parameters describing the analytical approximation of the relative effective source strengths due to initial retention and subsequent weathering and migration from urban surfaces.

^a: $s_{\text{sur}}(E,0)$ relative to the idealised reference lawn (see above). In the case of dry deposition the value of 0.9 refers only to the surface roughness; in the case of wet deposition the value of 0.7 refers both to the surface roughness and initial penetration.

4.2.5. Air kerma rates from the idealised reference surface

The air kerma *rate* 1 m above the idealised reference surface, \vec{K}_{ref} due to the radionuclide considered can be calculated by multiplication of the source strength of the reference surface $S_{ref}(E,t)$ by the air kerma per photon per unit reference area *Kref(E)* according to:

$$
\mathcal{K}_{\text{ref}}\left[\frac{pGy}{s}\right] = S_{\text{ref}}\left(E,t\right)\left[\frac{\gamma}{mm^2\cdot s}\right]\cdot K_{\text{ref}}\left(E\right)\left[\frac{pGy}{\frac{\gamma}{mm^2}}\right] = A_{\text{ref}}\left(0\right)\cdot e^{-(\lambda_r\cdot t)}\cdot y(E)\cdot K_{\text{ref}}\left(E\right)
$$

This formula is only valid for radionuclides which emit photons with one discrete energy, *E*. In the case of ^{137}Cs the photons with an energy of 662 keV are emitted with a yield of 0.85 Bq⁻¹.s⁻¹ and the air kerma per photon per unit reference area is 825 pGy per γ.mm-2. The air kerma rate can also be expressed as

$$
\stackrel{\bullet}{K}_{\text{ref}} = A_{\text{ref}}(0) \cdot e^{-(\lambda_r \cdot t)} \cdot g_{\text{ref}}\,,
$$

where g_{ref} $\frac{S}{R}$ $=$ $\sum y(E) \cdot K_{ref}(E)$ *mm Bq s pGy* g_{ref} $\frac{S}{R_{eq}}$ $=$ $\sum y(E) \cdot K_{ref}$ *E* r_{ref} $\frac{S}{R_{\alpha}}$ = $\sum y(E)$. $\overline{}$ $\overline{}$ $\overline{}$ ╛ $\overline{}$ L L L L L ∑ 2 is the air kerma rate per unit activity

per unit area (ICRU 1994).

4.2.6. Air kerma rates due to contaminated urban surfaces

In order to obtain the air kerma rate $\hat{K}_{sur,loc}$ at given location *loc* from a given surface *sur* the source strength of the surface $S_{sur}(E,t)$ has to be multiplied by the air kerma per photon per unit deposition area *Ksur,loc(E)*:

$$
\begin{aligned} \mathbf{\dot{K}}_{sur,loc} \bigg[\frac{pGy}{s} \bigg] &= S_{sur} \big(E, t \bigg[\frac{\gamma}{mm^2 \cdot s} \bigg] \cdot K_{sur,loc} \big(E \bigg) \bigg[\frac{pGy}{mm^2} \bigg] \\ &= A_{ref} \big(0 \big) \cdot e^{-(\lambda_r \cdot t)} \cdot g_{ref} \cdot s_{sur} \big(E, t \big) \cdot k_{sur,loc} \big(E \big) \end{aligned}
$$

4.2.7. Evaluation of doses

The *individual dose rate* at *one* evaluation location due to *one* intervention element (e.g. all roofs in the environment) to one member of a population group is:

$$
\overrightarrow{ID}_{p,sur,loc}\left[\frac{pSv}{h}\right] = \overrightarrow{K}_{sur,loc} \cdot C_{p,loc} \cdot PT_{p,loc} \cdot 3600
$$

- *Cp,loc* : conversion coefficient from air kerma to effective dose for population group *p* at indoor or outdoor evaluation locations*.* [Sv.Gy-1]
- $PT_{p,loc}$: permanence time of the evaluation location by an individual from the population group *p*. [hours per day]

At any time instant these kerma rates can be calculated if the time dependence of the relative effective source strengths of the different surfaces are known. The *individual dose* at *one* evaluation location due to *all* intervention elements can be calculated in two steps: firstly, by separate integrations of the dose rates (assuming time independent permanence time and dose conversion coefficients) and secondly, by a summation over the surfaces, *sur*:

$$
ID_{p,loc}[pSv] = C_{p,loc} \cdot PT_{p,loc} \cdot 3600 \cdot \sum_{sur} \int_{i}^{f} K_{sur,loc} dt
$$

The *collective dose rate* at *one* evaluation location due to *one* intervention element (e.g. all roofs in the environment) to a whole population group is:

$$
\left[\overrightarrow{CD}_{p,sur,loc} \left[\frac{\overrightarrow{person. pSv}}{h} \right] = \overrightarrow{K}_{sur,loc} \cdot C_{p,loc} \cdot O_{p,loc} \cdot 3600 \right]
$$

 $Oc_{n,loc}$: occupancy of the evaluation location by the members of the population group *p*. [persons hours per day]

The air kerma rates are integrated over the time and summed over surfaces similarly as in the case of calculation of individual dose in order to get the total air kerma at an evaluation location. Summations over the evaluation locations and population groups will provide the *collective dose* from the whole environment.

The *dose conversion factors* used outdoor and indoor (Table 8.) were chosen according to Golikov et al. (1999). The *averted doses* can be calculated using the decontamination (DF) or surface dose reduction factors (DRF) considering the dose reductive efficiency of the selected countermeasures.

Table 4.8. Dose conversion factors used outdoor and indoor.

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5 Conclusions

The Chernobyl accident demonstrated that the consequences of radioactive contamination of inhabited areas can be severe and manifold. Over the years a large number of methods have been suggested and tested for reduction of these adverse consequences. It has been demonstrated that countermeasures exist, which can greatly reduce the external dose to urban populations. However, clearly also other aspects than dose reduction must be considered in connection with the formation of a countermeasure strategy for a contaminated area.

A series of investigations has been made of countermeasures that were deemed to be potentially applicable in member states of the European Union for reduction of dose in an urban complex contaminated as a result of a nuclear accident. The countermeasures were described in a uniform format accommodating a host of factors that may impinge on the justification and optimisation of the methods in nuclear preparedness. The level of detail in the countermeasure descriptions decisively advances them over other existing decision support databases.

Some of the suggested countermeasures produce waste, which must be disposed of in a way that is legal, safe and acceptable. The handling and disposal of this waste should be seen as an inherent part of a dose reduction strategy, and its costs, in directly assessable monetary as well as in social/health/psychological terms, should enter the matrix forming the foundation for decisions. Therefore, a series of descriptions of management options for the waste generated by the described countermeasures has been included in this report.

The doses that can be averted by the introduction of a countermeasure strongly depend on a number of case-specific parameters, including the type of contaminants, environment characteristics (e.g., wall thickness) and behaviour pattern of the population. Detailed calculations of dose contributions from each of the various contaminated surfaces in an urban environment are a necessary requirement in estimating the dose that can be averted by a countermeasure. The dose calculations in this report can also be used to demonstrate which types of surface contribute most to dose over any specified period to individuals or groups of people living in specified urban environment types. This is important in pinpointing where dose reduction is most needed in the particular case from a radiological viewpoint. In analysing countermeasure options it is generally convenient to balance the advantages against the disadvantages, e.g., in monetary terms. The valuing of averted dose and a number of other important implications of countermeasures is, however, to a great extent politically driven and case-specific.

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Physical countermeasures to sustain acceptable living and working conditions in radioactively contaminated residential areas

K.G. Andersson, J. Roed, K. Eged, Z. Kis, G. Voigt, R. Meckbach, D.H. Oughton, J. Hunt, R. Lee, N.A. Beresford and F.J. Sandalls

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Abstract (max. 2000 characters)

The Chernobyl accident highlighted the need in nuclear preparedness for robust, effective and sustainable countermeasure strategies for restoration of radioactively contaminated residential areas. Under the EC-supported STRATEGY project a series of investigations were made of countermeasures that were deemed potentially applicable for implementation in such events in European Member States. The findings are presented in this report, in a standardised datasheet format to clarify the features of the individual methods and facilitate intercomparison. The aspects of averted doses and management of wastes generated by countermeasures had to be described separately to provide room for the required level of detail. The information is mainly intended as a tool for decision makers and planners and constitutes a basis for the STRATEGY decision framework for remediation of contaminated urban areas.

Descriptors INIS/EDB COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS; DECISION MAKING; DECONTAMINATION; EMERGENCY PLANS; RADIATION DOSES; REMEDIAL ACTION; SURFACE CONTAMINATION; URBAN AREAS; WASTE MANAGEMENT