

Figure 1 The IAEA Model

The IAEA safeguards system is often cited as a general example of a functioning verification system that could be emulated in other areas of arms control. Clearly, the IAEA system cannot be transferred without change to other areas, if only because of the special nature of the nuclear industry for which safeguards are designed, and the unique history of the IAEA. Nevertheless, it is also clear that the success of safeguards provide a number of lessons upon which the designers of verification schemes in other arms control fields can draw. For example, organizational, legal, financial and technical aspects of the Agency's experience can provide valuable insight for efforts to develop a regime for verifying a ban on chemical weapons.

Perhaps the most significant lesson that the experience of IAEA safeguards can teach is that verification by an independent international agency through on-site inspections and associated intrusive techniques, in sensitive areas of commercial activity, is not only feasible, but can be made to work both effectively and efficiently. The specifics of how a particular multilateral arms control agreement is verified is a matter for the parties of that agreement to decide. One viable option, however, which should not be overlooked when making such decisions, is the approach demonstrated by IAEA safeguards.