

THE YEAR 2009

Paris, March 2nd, 2010

What are the salient points of ASN operations in 2009?

Three years after the TSN Act was passed, 2009 was a year of consolidation for ASN.

2009 saw the drafting of the ASN multi-year strategic plan (PSP) for the period 2010-2012 "Affirm the role and responsibilities of ASN", following an exemplary participative process. The preparation of the plan involved seminars in all ASN entities and a wide-ranging debate at the ASN 2009 Convention, which brought together the 440 ASN staff on 5 May 2009.

For ASN, 2009 was also a year of major projects, to which all the entities made a strong commitment.

As far as regulations are concerned, ASN continued its efforts to clarify the regulations governing basic nuclear installations (BNI), in particular the drafting of the BNI order and its related decisions, in order to meet the end of 2010 deadline. At the same time, ASN devoted itself to developing pressure vessel regulations, with the aim of involving all stakeholders. In this respect, it is worth mentioning that the modification of the 1943 Act by Act 2009/526 of 12 May 2009 clarified ASN's regulatory role. In collaboration with the Ministry in charge of ecology, ASN also drafted the new French National Radioactive Materials and Waste Management Plan (PNGMDR) required by the Waste Act of 2006.

In the regulatory field, ASN extensively reviewed the preparatory process for its annual program of inspections, in order to better identify national priorities while leaving greater initiative to the regional divisions. In 2009, ASN carried out more than 2100 inspections of BNIs, small-scale nuclear activities and radioactive material transport operations.

In the field of transparency and public information, ASN considers that it is responsible for ensuring correct implementation of the transparency requirements of the TSN Act, whether with regard to the parties being regulated, or civil society as a whole. In 2009, ASN reinforced its own actions concerning the general public, the media, and its professional and institutional audiences: launch of the ASN Newsletter, overhaul of the www.asn.fr website, improvements to the *Contrôle* review, organisation of professional conferences and symposia, iodine tablet

distribution to populations living near nuclear power plants, and so on. ASN organised the international conference on the safety of radiotherapy treatments in Versailles in December 2009, and prepared the launch of the www.mesure-radioactivite.fr website for the French National Network of Environmental Radioactivity Monitoring (RNMRE). In 2009, ASN also organised national seminars, in particular concerning radiation protection, with the main nuclear licensees and small-scale nuclear operators (nuclear medicine, industrial radiography, etc.).



Jean-Christophe NIEL
ASN Director-General

As an independent administrative authority, ASN was also invited to attend several Parliamentary hearings. ASN is highly in favour of these hearings, which provide it with an opportunity to report on its actions.

On the international stage, ASN continued in 2009 to make a significant commitment to international relations, with the aim of helping to improve safety and radiation protection worldwide and the goal of achieving recognition as "an international benchmark" for good practice.

Europe is the priority area for international action by ASN and it makes an active contribution to the work of WENRA (Western European Nuclear Regulators' Association) in the field of nuclear safety and of HERCA (Heads of

European Radiation Control Authorities) in the field of radiation protection, with a view to reinforcing European cooperation. The creation of an EU regulatory framework took a significant step forward with the adoption of the directive on the safety of nuclear installations in June 2009.

In 2009, ASN also continued to work on the MDEP (Multinational Design Evaluation Program) project launched with the NRC.

ASN had to deal with a number of internal difficulties involved in setting up certain major projects, such as improving its emergency response arrangements. ASN also considers that it will have to develop its management self-sufficiency if it is to achieve a level of independence more in keeping with its status and indeed closer to that of some of its foreign counterparts.

Another significant event of 2009 was the fact that ASN found itself faced by a number of "unforeseen circumstances".

In the exercise of its duties, ASN has to constantly adapt in the face of the unexpected. Alongside the more “routine” unforeseen circumstances, such as dealing with incidents and unscheduled requests from licensees or users of ionising radiations, the following noteworthy events occurred in 2009:

- “serious” matters that must be treated as such (refusal to approve EDF laboratories, problem with EPR I&C, level 2 incident in the ATPu) were given extensive media coverage. Apart from the immediate management required, these situations have significant consequences in terms of mobilisation of ASN staff;
- relatively frequent activation of the crisis centre (5 times in 2009) for which ASN will need to analyse the operating experience feedback, in particular with regard to the trigger criteria for these situations.

... but also by more long-term duties concerning:

- implementation of the TSN Act and its decrees for BNI regulation: application of Article 26 of the TSN Act, penalties, BNI creation, application of Public Health Code (CSP) texts, the content of the Waste Act;

- transparency: implementation of Articles 19 and 21 of the TSN Act, development of relations with the HCTISN, initiatives towards the CLI and professionals, etc.

In the course of these activities, ASN is required to interact with many stakeholders. ASN’s performance and effectiveness depends on the quality of its day-to-day relations with them. ASN is particularly attentive to this aspect. Independence without isolation.

ASN would be unable to work the way it does without the competence, responsiveness and ready availability of its staff. The same applies to the IRSN and the members of the advisory committees which, together with ASN, contribute to the development of the high level of nuclear safety and radiation protection in our country.

