



The year 2010

Last year, in its editorial for the ASN Annual Report on nuclear safety and radiation protection in 2009, the ASN Commission considered that the major topics for ASN in 2010 were the integrated vision of nuclear safety and radiation protection, international matters and the way in which it reported on its actions. These priorities reflect the main strategic areas defined in the 2010-2012 multi-year strategy plan.

Jean-Christophe NIEL, ASN director-general

Paris, 1st March 2011

In 2010, ASN continued to build an integrated vision of nuclear safety and radiation protection.

On all of the subjects it handles, ASN's aim is to develop a global vision promoting a coherent overall approach.

ASN therefore continued its work to create the new regulatory framework for BNIs, by incorporating nuclear safety, radiation protection and environmental protection issues into the texts, including working conditions and personnel safety at EDF nuclear power plants.

Having been alerted by the increase in the doses delivered to patients during medical examinations, it organised a seminar on medical imaging for all the stakeholders concerned, in order to review implementation of the justification principle and, more concretely, examine the conditions in which MRI could be used for certain examinations rather than the more irradiating scanner.

Other than reducing the risk at source, risk management is based on controlling urban development, emergency response plans and information. Therefore and on the basis of the Nuclear Security and Transparency Act (TSN), ASN continued its work to control urban development around basic nuclear installations (BNI). It contributed to the circular sent out on this subject to the *préfets*¹ and initiated consultation with local elected officials.

1. In a *département*, representative of the State appointed by the President

In the field of radioactive sources, ASN prepared for the integration of radiation protection and security, i.e., protection against malicious acts, a field for which it should be assuming operational responsibility in 2011, drafting legislative and regulatory texts and organising the operational aspects of this responsibility.

Finally, ASN set up its Scientific Committee, which is to provide guidelines for research work to be carried out or explored further by the licensees or research organisations, in the fields of nuclear safety and radiation protection.

In 2010, ASN continued its international commitment.


ASN is in charge of the world's second largest fleet of nuclear reactors and has extensive international commitments. This international involvement, representing about 5% of its activities, is both bilateral and multilateral.

In 2010, at the European level and within the framework of the Western European Nuclear Regulators' Association (WENRA), ASN made a major contribution to defining the safety objectives of the new reactors approved by this association and also worked on drafting a position statement on radioactive waste. After adoption of the Nuclear Safety Directive in July 2009, ASN took part in drafting a European directive on radioactive waste, which in particular includes the notion of the national radioactive waste and materials management plan developed in France. HERCA (Heads of the European Radiological protection Competent

Authorities), for which ASN is the Secretary, also produced joint position statements from radiation protection authorities. The foundations were thus laid out for a European Radiation Passbook, designed to make it easier to monitor workers exposed to ionising radiation in Europe.

At the 2009 tri-annual meeting of the parties to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, the decision was taken that international thematic meetings would be organised between two plenary meetings of the parties. In 2010, ASN organised the first of these meetings on the topic of national radioactive waste management organisations.

Finally, again in 2010, ASN began the "certification" of the ATMEA type reactor, for which its designers currently have no projects in France.



ASN continued to encourage pluralistic approaches enabling different views and viewpoints on nuclear activities to be compared.

In 2010, ASN reported on its actions through all the means enabled by the TSN Act.

ASN was therefore given a hearing by members of Parliament for the presentation of its Annual Report on Nuclear Safety and radiation protection in France in 2009. It was given a hearing on its radioactive waste management policy for the drafting of the national radioactive materials and waste management plan (PNGMDR), which it considers to be an essential tool for safe and long-term management of radioactive waste. The National Assembly's evaluation and monitoring commission questioned it on its role as an independent administrative authority.

Although previously covering only BNIs and radiotherapy activities, ASN has now extended publication on its website of its inspection follow-up letters concerning the entire scope of activities it regulates.

ASN continued to encourage pluralistic approaches enabling different views and viewpoints on nuclear activities to be compared. For the third periodic safety review of EDF's 900MWe reactors and the associated ten-yearly outage, ASN proposed a guide to the Local Information Committees (CLI) concerned, designed to help them, to look more closely into the subject should they so wish. ASN, together with the IRSN, opened up public access to the www.mesure-radioactivite.fr website which collates all environmental radioactivity measurements taken by the licensees, institutions, or any association that wishes to do so. ASN published its Tritium White Paper, which is the result of the work done by two pluralistic working groups, on the basis of which it prepared an action plan designed to obtain a clearer

understanding and better management of this radionuclide and its effects. Together with the Ministry responsible for the environment, ASN continued to chair the pluralistic working group to draft the above-mentioned PNGMDR and will take on board the lessons from the report by the Limousin pluralistic experts group (GEP) on the monitoring and future of the former uranium mines in the Limousin area.

ASN now systematically conducts extensive consultation of the stakeholders on the general regulatory texts it produces. The drafts of the BNI order and the associated decisions defining and detailing the new BNI regime as resulting from the TSN Act were therefore placed on ASN's www.asn.fr website for consultation.

In 2010, ASN's day to day activities were interspersed with a number of major, structural actions, both planned and unplanned.

In 2010, ASN carried out 1,964 inspections, in all areas, including two in-depth inspections involving about ten inspectors on the MÉLOX and CEA Saclay sites.

1,107 incidents were rated, including three at level 2. Mention must also be made of the radioactive pollution by the Feursmetal company, following inadvertent cutting of a gamma radiography device cobalt 60 source, and by two companies, one in Saint-Maur-des-Fossés and the other in Bondoufle, involving tritium emanating from a device from CEA and incorrectly considered to be non-radioactive.

The ASN emergency response centre was activated for a real emergency, to deal with the risk of flooding at le Blayais nuclear power plant during storm Xynthia. Seven emergency exercises were carried out to test the robustness of the national emergency response organisation and to broaden the scope of the situations tested. In 2010, for example, the first exercise to manage a reactor accident of malicious origin was conducted on the Tricastin site.

The pertinence and quality of ASN's actions and its contribution in developing the high level of nuclear safety and radiation protection in our country are to a large extent built on its staff's competence, reactivity and ability to respond. In order to extract the maximum benefit from this situation, ASN in 2010 initiated an action plan for human resources management.

ASN continues to enjoy the invaluable support of IRSN. ASN noted with satisfaction that the assistance it receives from IRSN would now partly involve specifically assigned human resources. In this, it sees a first step towards creating an arrangement for financing nuclear safety and radiation protection that would better match the resources to the demands placed upon them. ■