

Nuclear Energy and Civil Society

Nuclear regulators and the public

Information officers from regulatory bodies meet once a year under the auspices of the Working Group on Public Communication of Nuclear Regulatory Organisations (WGPC) to exchange information and experience related to communication with the public and to carry out related studies. In 2009, the main activity of the Working Group on Public Communication of Nuclear Regulatory Organisations (WGPC) consisted of discussing the transparency of regulatory activities, local public information, the use of public perception surveys and crisis communication in the case of high media interest. Surveys were conducted on these subjects amongst regulators whose answers are being analysed and compiled into WGPC guidance reports. The reports will be issued in due course, the first of which is expected in 2010.

Radiological protection

The trend in radiological protection towards judgemental optimisation of protection is resulting in an increasingly important role for civil society in decision-making processes. The NEA Committee on Radiation Protection and Public Health (CRPPH) has been a pioneer in the study of stakeholder involvement over the years, and has remained actively engaged in this work. In 2009, the CRPPH continued its exchange of specific, concrete experience in stakeholder engagement, and in this context is organising a workshop on stakeholder engagement in post-accident consequence management. As part of the input to this workshop, the CRPPH Expert Group on Stakeholder Involvement and Organisational Structures (EGSIOS) just finished a report analysing how stakeholder involvement has impacted on emergency management organisations in terms of their processes and structures. This study complements an earlier EGSIOS report on stakeholder involvement impacts on radiological protection authorities and expert institutions. Further supporting elements for the workshop are being provided by an assessment study of

the Working Party on Nuclear Emergency Matters (WPNEM) that synthesises lessons learnt from the INEX-3 international nuclear emergency exercise on decision making in post-emergency consequence management.

In addition, the CRPPH has commissioned the preparation of a document to summarise its stakeholder involvement activities over the past 10–15 years, which will characterise the important regulatory and practical aspects of this work.

Radioactive Waste Management Committee (RWMC) Forum on Stakeholder Confidence (FSC)

The RWMC Forum on Stakeholder Confidence (FSC) met in Eastern France in April 2009 in the context of a workshop entitled Repositories and Host Regions: Envisaging the Future Together. It was organised with the assistance of the CLIS (Local Information and Oversight Committee) of the Meuse/Haute-Marne Underground Research Laboratory located at Bure, and the support of Andra, France's National Radioactive Waste Management Agency. Amongst the participants were a number of FSC delegates and invited representatives (national and international) of institutional authorities, local and district councils, civil society organisations, universities, waste management agencies and the European Commission. The theme of the workshop was the territorial implementation of France's high-level and long-lived intermediate-level radioactive waste disposal programme. Sessions addressed the French historic and legislative context, public information, reversibility, environmental monitoring and the issue of memory. Follow-up at the September 2009 regular meeting of the FSC highlighted learning about retrievability and reversibility (R&R), and emphasized the mutually beneficial exchange that can be made with the NEA group addressing R&R. Andra also reported renewed dialogue with local representatives subsequent to the workshop.



View of the offices of the Local Information and Oversight Committee at Bure.