Risk perception and public awareness: lessons learned

Autorité de sûreté nucléaire - France
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   - Iodine distribution campaign
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2018 Kantar barometer

How would you define your views towards nuclear energy?

- Adverse
- Hesitating
- Supportive
Target actions

• Iodine distribution campaign

• Consultation on reactors life time extension

• Public debate on the national plan for the management of radioactive waste
Iodine distribution campaign (1/2)

- **A long lasting campaign (since 1997)**
- Complementary campaign, extended radius (10-20 km)
- **Principles:** People living in the vicinity of 19 NPPs are asked to collect iodine tablets from their pharmacy
- **Objectives**
  - Boost the collection rate from pharmacies
  - Teach self-protection reflexes in the event of a nuclear alert
- **Audience:** general public – a massive communication plan

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<th>Municipalities</th>
<th>Residents</th>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Pharmacies</th>
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<td>850 000</td>
<td>1 000</td>
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<td>1 063</td>
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<td>1 800</td>
<td>646</td>
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Findings

• Call-to-action: residents at the heart of this action and asked to act
• Public awareness regarding their own protection (sheltering, etc.)

• Very positive feedback on the tablet collection process (very easy)
• High awareness of the campaign (90 % are familiar)

• 50 % of concerned residents collect iodine tablets
• When iodine tablets are not collected: doubts in relation to the likelihood of an accident, and the effectiveness of iodine in case of an accident
Consultation on reactors life time extension (1/2)

- **Objective:** Involve the public, collect contributions
- **Means:**
  - A press conference
  - A dedicated website (400 subscribers)
  - 13 public meetings
  - 3 workshops
  - Meetings with students
- **Key figures:**
  - 75 questions through the website
  - 1,300 attendees to the public meetings (150 speeches)
  - 107 contributions, including from foreign countries
  - 390 emails
Consultation on reactors life time extension (2/2)

- Opportunity for the public to meet various players in the nuclear industry, and different stakeholders
- Pedagogical material was appreciated
- Public meetings both at national and local levels
- Contributions about the environmental impact, ageing management, conformity assessment, post Fukushima process, financial capability of the licensee, the cost-benefit ratio of the project, human resources, emergency preparedness, safety culture.

=> Incorporate these contributions in the decision-making process
Public debate on the national plan for the management of radioactive waste (1/2)

• First-of-a-kind public debate

• Main issues highlighted for the forthcoming plan
  • The management of very low-level waste, namely generated from the decommissioning operations
  • The management of low-level long-lived waste
  • The conditions and procedures for the industrial phase of the deep geological repository
  • The anticipation of future needs for spent fuel storage facilities
  • The management of radioactive material, and how to prevent undue burden on future generations

• Appendix aimed at providing educational information
  • General information on radioactivity and fuel management
  • Focus on detailed information on fuel management, transportation, international benchmarking
Within the National Commission for public debate, with a dedicated commission for the public debate on radioactive material and waste management.

17th April - 25th September 2019
27 public meetings, different patterns
- 7 general meetings in large cities such as Paris, Lille, Rennes, Bordeaux, Lyon, Strasbourg
- 16 topical meetings, at the local level, near the nuclear sites

A dedicated website: https://pngmdr.debatpublic.fr/
Lessons learned

Call-to-action campaign

- Interest of the general public in health-related issues (radon, iodine, etc.)
- Residents growing involvement in their own protection, areas of improvement identified for the next campaigns
- Prevent wrong behaviours such as denial, panic
- Raise a radiation protection culture

=> For the regulatory body, provide reliable, legible and objective information, and the correct assessment of the risk
Lessons learned

Public consultation and public meetings-debate

- Requires educational material for complex technical issues
- Broadening the panel of stakeholders is challenging: typically the same “informed” stakeholders are involved including pros and opposed
- Independence and transparency in a timely manner are key-factors for a successful communication on risk
- Direct and proactive communication (e.g. press conference) and dedicated platforms to answer citizens questions are complementary and both are necessary
- Fostering public awareness through “bridges” is beneficial: Parliament, Local committees, High committee for transparency, pluralistic groups, etc.
- Taking into consideration public inputs to enhance our decision-making process
Thank you for your attention