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## Press release

### Public dialogue on improving the safety of French 900 MWe nuclear reactors : outcomes of a unique approach

From 6 September 2018 to 31 March 2019, in accordance with its mission, France's High Committee for Transparency and Information on Nuclear Security (HCTISN) organized a public dialogue on improving the safety of the 900 MWe reactors of the French nuclear fleet in the framework of their 4th periodic safety review\*. Support was provided by the main players in nuclear power plant safety : EDF, the Nuclear Safety Authority (ASN), the Institute for Radiological Protection and Nuclear Safety (IRSN), and the National Association of Local Information Committees and Commissions (ANCCLI).

This occasion for exchange and dialogue with the general public took place under the watch of two guarantors of the National Commission for Public Debate (CNDP) chosen by the HCTISN.

The dialogue, open to all citizens, was designed to :

- **inform citizens** about the improvement measures proposed by EDF with a view to continuing the operation of its 900 MWe nuclear reactors beyond 40 years (32 reactors spread over 8 sites \*\*);
- **gather their views** on those measures and on the issues to be considered during the generic phase of the reactors' 4th periodic safety review – which will end in late 2020 with an opinion from ASN ;
- **involve the public in this way** right from the beginning of the review process, during the generic phase which concerns all the reactors, before the public inquiries that will be held over the next decade for the reactors concerned.

#### **Key figures of the consultation**

- **16 meetings** organized with the public throughout France with the support of Local Information Commissions (10 public meetings, 3 thematic workshops, 3 meetings of student « mirror » groups) and information desks in public offices ;
- **1,300 participants** at meetings ;
- **4,000 connections** to the internet site <https://concertation.suretenucleaire.fr> ;
- **1,600 contributions** and questions asked via the site.

#### **Measures deemed relevant and ways of improvement to be considered**

The HCTISN notes that the public generally considered relevant the measures proposed by EDF, including corium recovery (core-catcher), « last-resort » diesel generators, and reduction in power plant water intake volumes.

The public also raised the following issues:

- prevention of malevolent acts and cyber-security ;
- the impacts of climate change, notably to take into account the risks from extreme heat waves, floods and coastal erosion;
- Human and Organizational Factors, in particular concerning training and skills preservation for both EDF staff and subcontractors, both during normal operation and during an accident.

### **Five recommendations adopted by the HCTISN**

- All the players in the public dialogue should report on how they take into account the contributions of the public in the field of nuclear safety;
- Ensure the continuity of public information, in particular by maintaining and regularly updating the digital platform, technical dialogues and, more generally, by sharing information locally ;
- The results of the dialogue should be made available to the public during the public inquiries due to be held, one for each of the reactors concerned ;
- The possibility of conducting a single public inquiry for reactors at the same nuclear power plant site should be explored;
- The initiative for a public dialogue should be repeated for the 4th periodic safety review of French 1300 MWe reactors.

The generic phase of the 4th periodic safety review\*\*\* of French 900 MWe reactors will end in late 2020 with an opinion from ASN that will itself be submitted to public consultation. It will be followed over the next decade by public inquiries organized for each of the reactors concerned.

*\* The operating life of nuclear installations situated in France is not limited by license. French regulations stipulate that each nuclear installation must undergo a periodic safety review every 10 years. After analysis of the report submitted by the operator, the Nuclear Safety Authority (ASN), an independent administrative authority that regulates nuclear installations, communicates to the Government its conclusions on the safety level of the installation and can set requirements as a condition for continued operation.*

*\*\* Blayais, Bugey, Chinon, Cruas-Meysses, Dampierre-en-Burly, Gravelines, Saint-Laurent-des-Eaux, Tricastin.*

*\*\*\* In the generic phase, the operator sets out the main lines of its safety review program for all the reactors of the same power level in a document called Fulfillment Report, on which the Nuclear Safety Authority gives its opinion.*

Several players contributed to conducting this public dialogue :

- **the HCTISN** originated the process and made sure the consultation would be carried out in accordance with the main principles relating to information and public participation ;
- **a steering committee** composed of 5 members appointed by the HCTISN defined the dialogue process and ensured its proper implementation ;
- **an operational committee** including representatives of EDF (the project owner), the Nuclear Safety Authority (ASN), the Institute for Radiological Protection and Nuclear Safety (IRSN) and the National Association of Local Information Committees and Commissions (ANCCLI), ran the consultation and issued a report about it that is available on the digital platform : <https://concertation.suretenucleaire.fr/>

Two guarantors registered on the national list of guarantors drawn up by the National Commission for Public Debate (CNDP) were appointed by the HCTISN to ensure the proper conduct of the consultation. Their report was published on June 12, 2019 and is available on the digital platform : <https://concertation.suretenucleaire.fr/>.

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