

Welcome (second part) by Lothar Hahn: Towards a harmonised safety practice in Europe

Ladies and gentlemen,

let me make some additional remarks on the outline which Jacques Repussard has presented to you.

We are noticing a rapid development of globalisation not only in Europe, but also worldwide. What does this mean for the TSOs, like IRSN, GRS and AVN?

Their first common challenge was within the framework of PHARE and Tacis to support the nuclear authorities in Eastern Europe. To my mind, the previous and coming engagement was and is an important investment in nuclear safety not only in the respective countries but also in the whole of Europe.

In the same way as the national nuclear regulators work together, the TSOs also have to find their specific way of closer co-operation. Each country has its individual safety tasks, some of them are of international interest. Let me enumerate three of them: The monitoring of the safety management of nuclear installations as an important element of safety culture is one of our most challenging tasks. Having objective indicators at hand, it would be easier to assess under safety aspects the operational procedures and personnel behaviour. A presentation later this afternoon will deal in detail with this issue. A further important task is knowledge management, as Jacques has indicated and mentioned.

As a third task let me mention the updating of rules and regulations. Here I see the possibility of developing a common understanding of safety in the sense of learning from each other besides the national specifics and interests.

Ladies and gentlemen,

It has always been Jacques Repussard's and my own intention to make EUROSAFE not a Franco-German solo run but a common European approach.

This is mirrored e.g. by the EUROSAFE Programme Committee, which is composed of members from various different European organisations. Here and now the perspective of joining in is offered to the new EU member countries. The common approach is also mirrored by the fact that the progress of the EUROSAFE activities is reported regularly to the CONCERT Group, aiming at keeping the colleagues informed and giving them the opportunity to express their interest to be more involved.

A concrete further step has been implemented by the participation of AVN in hosting next year's EUROS SAFE Forum in Brussels. This is a visible example of the extension of the concept to involve other European partners.

We now have the vision of a European TSO network, considering of course national and European boundary conditions. It is quite understood that attention has to be paid to any possible preferences, challenges and traps. After all, we have to make sure that the TSOs will not be overused but remain capable of dealing with necessary tasks in their own countries. Finally, their work should be independent of any national political constraints.

A concrete working result of our co-operation is the Safety Assessment Guide, which Jean-Christophe Niel from IRSN outlined at last year's Forum. This Safety Assessment Guide is now finalised and approved for pilot application within the three organisations AVN, IRSN and GRS. They are strongly committed to making it a reference guide for their own safety assessments. But the three organisations invite other TSOs to give it a multinational basis. In this respect they propose EUROS SAFE as an operational instrument to develop a concrete European approach

I strongly believe that exchanging experience between TSOs may help us to address the challenges jointly, as many of them need a harmonised approach.

In tomorrow's five technical seminars, the EUROS SAFE Forum offers a large number of presentations on topics dealing not only with those I mentioned above. I am convinced that every one of you will find your own field of interest and will be able to contribute your own ideas and experiences.

In this respect, let's move a step forward to a safer Europe and meet next year in Brussels. This should be understood as a signal for a further and closer co-operation of all TSOs in Europe.

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for your attention.

Now, I would like to welcome and to introduce to you Mr. Wolfgang Renneberg, Director General for Nuclear Safety at the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety. We are very anxious to hear his address.

Wolfgang, it's your floor.