

**The Specialized Command for Nuclear Security (CoSSeN) and its role to control and monitor individuals access to the French nuclear facilities:  
The administrative investigations**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Specialized Command for Nuclear Security (CoSSeN), is an organisation created by the French Government in 2016. Supervised by the Interior and Energy ministries and composed of Gendarmerie and Police officers as well as civil servants, it aims to enhance the response of state security forces regarding physical protection of civilian nuclear facilities and transports.

One of the main tasks of the CoSSeN is to control and monitor individuals accessing to nuclear facilities. As a young institution in the nuclear security field, the CoSSeN helps to prevent and detect internal threats in the French nuclear civil sector, by centralizing, harmonising and coordinating the response of state security forces regarding the protection of civil nuclear facilities and activities.

This safety concern is not new but constantly evolving considering the new threats. Indeed, civil nuclear security has captured a growing importance following the series of terrorist attacks in France and the intrusions carried out by Greenpeace.

For this end of administrative investigations, and to ensure an effective control of the individual access to nuclear facilities and protect our installations from any malicious acts, the CoSSeN has started to use ACCReD in 2017.

This operating system allows, from nine Police and Gendarmerie databases, to check if an individual who requires an access to one of the civilian nuclear sites is known or unknown from the security forces and presents a risk because of his vulnerabilities. This system ensures a better control because all criminal records can be taken into account and it allows to give a relevant advice to the operator. It also allows the access to a dedicated program concerning those who have ties with Islamic radicalisation. For example, an access to a nuclear site can be refused to those who hold a criminal record for offenses such as consummation/dealing of drugs, violence, extortion, robberies or even those with the manslaughter charge.

Moreover, the CoSSeN has an access to the Schengen Information System (SIS), “the most widely used and largest information sharing system for security and border management in Europe”. This system is essential to detect if a foreigner is known by the system and to consult alerts and prevent an eventual danger. The foreign workers represent approximately 10% of all requests, or about 40,000 people.

In addition, to give you an other example, we have access to a database to identify stolen or lost identity documents and their counterpart for vehicles. By questioning it, we are able to detect identity theft. This subject is very important, particularly for subcontracting, because people may be tempted to use stolen or lost documents in order to facilitate their mobility in industrial sectors and bypass controls related to their past.

In all the process, the CoSSeN only delivers a recommendation which allows the operator to make an informed decision and choose if the individual can or cannot access to the site. This decision can be contested, by the person concerned, to the Minister in charge of Energy within two months.

## **CONCLUSION**

To conclude, thanks to ACCReD and the work of investigators and analysts, the CoSSeN has handled more than 536 000 investigations and approximately 5200 thumbs down. In a current year, the CoSSeN should carry out more than 400 000 investigations. This access control system applies to employees of major French nuclear groups (EDF, CEA, ORANO...), as well as numerous subcontracted workers. In addition to the knowledge and follow-up of nuclear workers, our organisation provides a better understanding of companies who are working with the major French nuclear groups.

This operating system and more broadly the administrative investigation process are essentials to protect the internal security and public safety, and of course hard regulated by the law to not contradict individual liberties and rights. This system seems to reassure and satisfy the French nuclear groups, so that other operators in the energy or telecommunication sectors have already requested to benefit from it.