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Radioactive waste conditioning in France: current policies and regulations, future challenges

The French radioactive waste management policy is defined by the Ministry of Energy Transition. The French nuclear safety authority (ASN) oversees their implementation. In order to obtain the authorization to condition radioactive waste, operator must demonstrate that conditioning processes ensure the safety of the waste and associated package and the safety of nuclear facilities at all stages of their lifecycle. French regulations distinguish two cases regarding waste conditioning:

- waste packages to be disposed of in existing disposal facilities must be authorized by the French National Radioactive Waste Management Agency (Andra) ;
- conditioning of waste packages to be disposed of in disposal facilities that are under development (e.g., deep geological disposal) may be authorized by the ASN, under specific conditions.

The proposed paper provides a detailed presentation of the following aspects:

- French radioactive waste management policy and waste streams ;
- Conditioning principles, and general rules on the conditioning of radioactive waste, including an actual example of radioactive source package conditioned in a French nuclear facility ;
- Oversight programs associated with waste packages production ;
- Operational feedback and current work to address the challenges encountered in the implementation of applicable regulations.

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