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Security of road transport routes for nuclear materials: regulatory framework and implementation procedures

When constructing a Basic Nuclear Installation (BNI), potential sites are carefully analyzed in order to select the one that guarantees the highest possible level security for the future installation. The same principle applies to the selection of transport routes between different BNIs, as not all routes offer the same level security. The French regulatory framework of the transport of nuclear materials fully address these concerns.

The decree of February 28, 2023 requires that all proposed routes be described in the Implementing Agreement Request submitted by Authorized Transport Operators (ATOs) prior to transport, with six key security criteria that routes must meet:
• Compliance with all applicable road traffic restrictions in France;
• Minimization of total transport duration and the number of stops;
• Identification of vulnerable points along the route, such as mandatory crossing points, bottlenecks, and major engineering structures;
• Identification of areas with weak communication network coverage;
• Identification areas without network coverage;
• Avoidance of urban areas potentially affected by radiological contamination.

In practical terms, the Transport Control Center of the Defense and Security Nuclear Expertise Directorate (DEND) is responsible for verifying the completeness and regularity of the request of Implementing Agreement in accordance with the regulatory framework.

The article explains how route security is integrated into the regulatory framework, how these requirements are applied in practice, and the specific methods and tools developed by DEND to meet them.

Country or International Organization

Instructions

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