

Organizing the safety of radioactive material transports from the CEA Marcoule site - ABSTRACT

Marcoule is the reference center of the CEA's Nuclear Energy Division (DEN) for research on spent fuel treatment, radioactive waste management, and dismantling of nuclear facilities at the end of their service life.

About 1600 people on the site participate in research for radioactive waste management, R&D on fuel reprocessing for future nuclear reactors and for the decontamination and dismantling of old reactors and of the first French reprocessing plant (UP1).

In the course of these activities the engineers, researchers and technicians generate nearly 1000 transports of radioactive materials leaving the center for other French, European or American laboratories or, in most cases, for waste interim storage sites.

The large number of transports of hazardous materials must be secured to ensure the safety of life, property and the environment (Marcoule has received ISO 14001 certification) and for regulatory compliance. The organization set up by the Transport Office of CEA Marcoule is designed for this purpose.

Before each shipment, the Transport Office examines each proposed transport to assess and resolve any difficulties that could arise.

The Transport Office then identifies the container to be used according to the nature and quantity of the material being transported; it undertakes all the administrative procedures to obtain the necessary authorizations and to inform the authorities, then selects a carrier and specifies the date of the shipment in agreement with the applicant and consignee.

On the day of the shipment, a Transport Office field employee systematically performs the regulatory inspection at the point of departure as specified by the ADR. This inspection consists in verifying the material, the package, the shipping documents and the transport vehicle.

If the inspection is satisfactory the vehicle is allowed to leave the center. Only Transport Office employees are empowered to sign this authorization on behalf of the Director.

In addition to these operational activities, the Transport Office also ensures personnel training.