

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Dutch Safety Board's investigation reveals that the Netherlands and Belgium, and the Netherlands and Germany, cooperate well in a number of areas, but that there is room for improvement in others. The Dutch, Belgian and German parties involved have already started implementing some of these improvements. The Dutch Safety Board expects the parties involved to use this investigation report to further improve the cross-border cooperation wherever possible.

The Dutch Safety Board makes two recommendations to improve cross-border cooperation with regard to crisis management. The first recommendation focuses on improving joint preparations for the eventuality of a nuclear crisis. The second recommendation focuses on optimising the decision-making process in the event of a nuclear crisis. In a crisis, the main thing is to act as quickly and effectively as possible. For this reason, it is important to come to an agreement ahead of time on how the countries involved will arrange their joint decision-making to ensure effective crisis management.

To the Dutch State Secretary for Infrastructure and Water Management the Board recommends the following:

1. Improve – together with the responsible government members in Belgium and Germany – the cross-border cooperation aimed at limiting the potential consequences of a nuclear accident. In particular, pay close attention to:
 - harmonisation of the principles for nuclear accident response;
 - revision of the crisis plans which at the moment take insufficient account of cross-border aspects;
 - joint preparation by means of conducting joint emergency exercises, simulations, et cetera; and
 - harmonisation of crisis communications.
2. Enter into agreements with Belgium and Germany on supranational decision-making in a crisis situation that arises from a cross-border accident at the Borssele, Doel, Tihange or Emsland nuclear power plants. Provide that such decision-making is intended at least to take similar response measures on either side of the border and to communicate unanimously on those measures.

In order to limit the consequences of a nuclear accident when it occurs, it is vital that citizens follow the instructions of the competent authorities. This is only possible if citizens have sufficient confidence in the authorities involved and the protective actions to take. Public concerns indicate that this confidence is not sufficiently widespread at this time. It is of importance that the authorities concerned recognise and address these concerns. They could do so by providing citizens with information that meets their needs and enables them to make their own judgement. Transparency and clear communication can contribute to the public's confidence in the authorities involved.

To the Dutch Authority for Nuclear Safety and Radiation Protection, the Board recommends the following:

3. Recognise the concerns among the Dutch public about the safety of nuclear power plants and address them by:
 - entering into agreements with neighbouring countries about cross-border information provision with regard to licensing procedures, so that residents across the border within a 20-kilometre radius from the nuclear power plant in question are actively informed about these procedures and given the opportunity to participate;
 - communicating about incidents at nuclear power plants in language that is easy for the public to understand; and
 - giving priority to improving communication with regard to the risks of nuclear power plants, among others by setting up a central information point for the public to obtain information about what action to take in the event of a nuclear accident.