

TRITIUM WORKING GROUPS Objectives and approach

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In 2008, the French Nuclear Safety Authority (ASN) decided to set up two working groups to review current scientific knowledge about the environmental and health impact of tritium (“Tritium Impact” group) and to review the sources and impact of tritium (“Tritium: Defence in Depth” group) and to issue recommendations, where necessary.

From the very outset, the desire for a pluralistic approach was at the heart of the composition of these groups. They are broadly made up of French stakeholders – authorities, expert bodies, research organisations, operators and civil society groups. All these bodies had the opportunity to express their opinions through a presentation and discussions and to issue a written text, which is reproduced in full in this white book. The texts express the point of view of their authors only. The summaries that follow set forth the main points discussed and present the various points of view. If there was disagreement on any point, this is stated. The summaries are concluded with a series of recommendations from the working groups.

The specific brief the groups received was to explore the following topics:

- the potential for tritium accumulation along the food chain and whether there is a need to reassess the health effects of beta radiation from tritium (“Impact” group),
- consequences of the future increase in tritium discharges, and industrial solutions for tritium separation and sequestration from liquid or gaseous discharges (“Defence in Depth” group).