

A BOTTOM UP EXPERIENCE: THE FRENCH RPO AND QUALIFIED EXPERTS REGIONAL NETWORKS

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YOU SAID: FEELING OF LONELINESS?



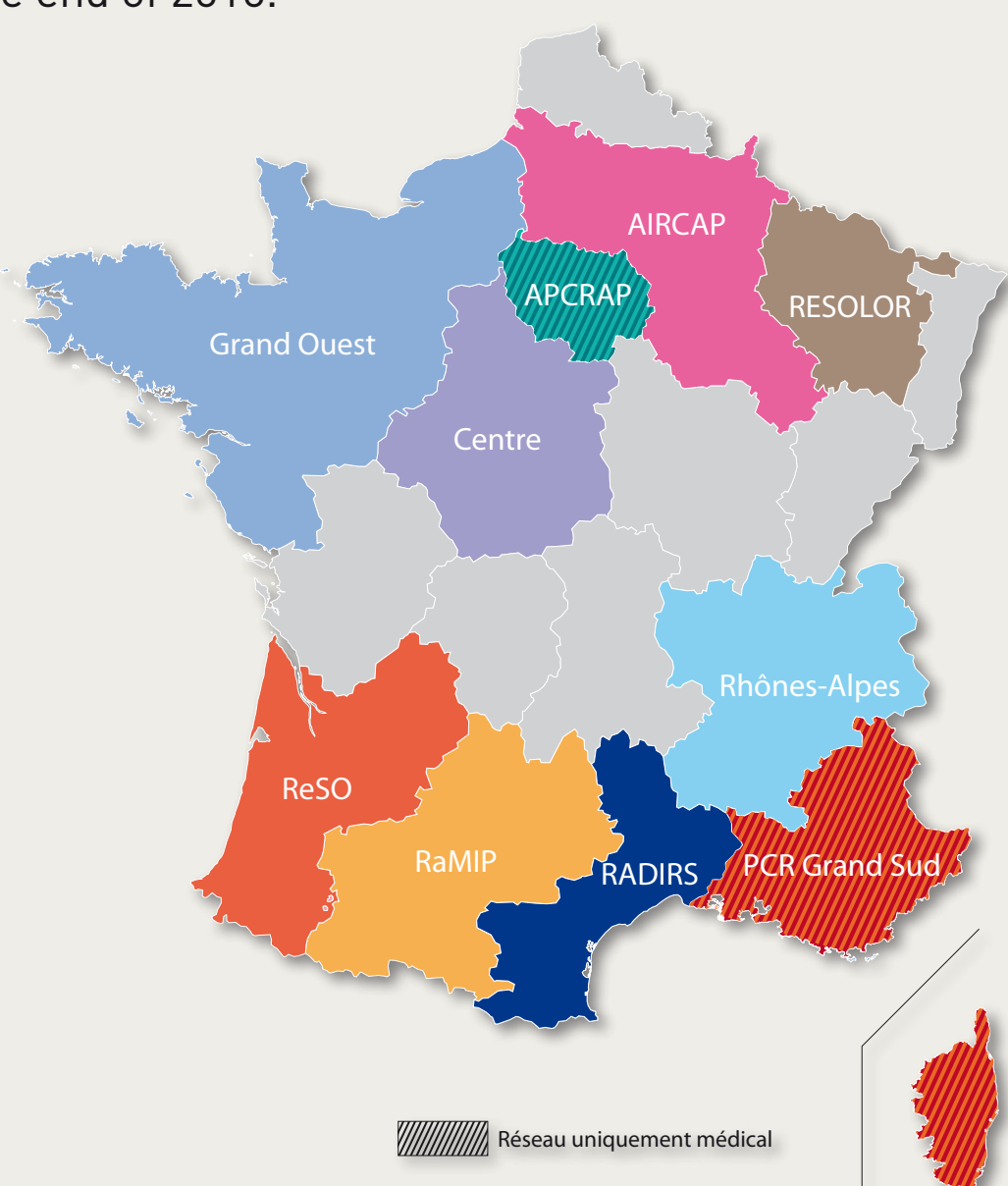
In France there are around 20000 RPO's, Qualified Experts and other "local" radiological protection stakeholders, who, very often, felt lonely and not well recognised in their hospitals, industries or research centres.

AN ANSWER FROM THE "FLOOR": TO SET UP REGIONAL NETWORKS

In order to facilitating feedback experience exchanges and providing them updates on regulations and scientific evidences, radiological protection stakeholders started setting up regional networks a few years ago.

At the beginning of 2012, 10 regional networks have been set up which cover nearly two thirds of the French territory and gather more than one thousand RPO's and Qualified Experts. All these networks have been set up on a totally voluntary basis.

A national coordination of all chairpersons of the networks has emerged at the end of 2010.



FOLLOWING AN ETHICAL PATH

All networks' representatives have signed an ethical chart during the first official meeting of the networks' national coordination in October 2011.



ETHICAL CHARTER OF THE RPO'S, QES NETWORKS

The RPO's, QEs networks commit themselves :

- To favouring feedback experience exchanges between their members, allowing them to update their knowledge in regulatory and technical matters in order to improve their legitimacy and therefore their contribution to a better radiological protection implementation.
- To being force of proposal and sharing, as feedback experience holders, through reports, standpoints towards the others radiological protection partners.
- To being stake holders as early as possible, within the decision processes in development by the regulatory institutions, favouring beforehand dialogue between the different networks.
- Not to let neither conflicts of interests, nor managerial pressures or personal or commercial interests from their members, to compromise the abovementioned objectives.
- To guaranteeing their independency towards institutions and firms that should provide them with resources both in forms of grants or supports, and to making their independency respected.
- To keeping their publications and advices - coherent with the regulations and the radiological protection principles - up to date with the actual state of knowledge - and spread in an appropriate manner.
- Not to carrying out a censure in the circulation of members opinions since there is no defamatory or illicit aspects in these opinions

1 Research and Security National Institute
2 Institute for Radiation protection and Nuclear Safety

INCREASING LEGITIMACY OF PARTICIPANTS

All the networks organise yearly meetings, where participants exchange experiences and listen to presentations by experts (from regulatory body, trade companies, scientists, lawyer...).

After a while, participants feel more legitimate within their own institutions. Therefore the numbers of participants, their origins, are increasing year after year as well as the activities of the networks : web sites, forum, electronic newsletters.

Most networks have become continuous training institutions.

Some national professional RPO's networks have joined the coordination for discussing common subjects of interests. These are Dental and Veterinary as well as Fireman and Nuclear Power Plants (utility and contractors) RPO's networks.



WITH SUPPORT FROM REGULATORY BODIES AND OTHER RADIOLOGICAL PROTECTION STAKEHOLDERS.

Since the beginning the French Nuclear Safety Authority (ASN) and the Ministry of labour (DGT) are strongly supporting these initiatives from individuals both in terms of advertisement and providing resources for the coordination itself.

ASN AND DGT STANDPOINT

ASN published the external audit report, ordered in 2008 for evaluating the RPO and qualified experts regional networks operation, and identifying difficulties encountered and needs for maintaining the level of activity, or even the resources needed for improving their efficiency. That audit provided recommendations from the author of the report for facilitating new networks setting up. In dialogue with DGT, ASN commits itself to support several actions such as the help to network's builders to obtain the commitment of the institution they belong to, or such as providing advisors for the setting up, the management and the animation of such networks.



Other national organisations such as the French Society of Radiation Protection (SFRP), the INRS¹, IRSN², provide different kinds of supports to the networks: advertisement on their websites; experts for presentations; ...

CONCLUSION

The coordination has become a new partner for many institutions, allowing the RPO's and Qualified Experts to provide input, through a bottom up approach, to future regulations dealing with all aspects of occupational exposure life in France or to facilitating organising the profession.

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