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22 juin 2014

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Source : National Journal

<https://www.nationaljournal.com/global-security-newswire/france-says-cooperation-with-china-on-nuclear-safety-is-lacking-20140620>

France Says Cooperation with China on Nuclear Safety is Lacking

By Global Security Newswire Staff

June 20, 2014

France's atomic regulator is troubled about the lack of communication with its Chinese opposite on projects to construct powerful, new nuclear reactors.

The state-controlled French atomic energy firm Areva is the developer behind two European Pressurized Reactors under construction in the Chinese coastal city of Taishan. Once operational, the reactors are expected to generate roughly double the amount of power as typical reactors in service today, [Bloomberg](#) reported on Thursday.

"It's not always easy to know what is happening at the Taishan site," Stephane Pailler, chief of international relations at the French Nuclear Safety Authority, told the news agency. "We don't have a regular relationship with the Chinese on [European Pressurized Reactor] control."

In February, Philippe Jamet, a French nuclear safety commissioner, told parliament that "unfortunately, collaboration isn't at a level we would wish it to be" with Beijing. "One of the explanations for the difficulties in our relations is that the Chinese safety authorities lack means. They are overwhelmed."

China's National Nuclear Safety Administration did not return requests for comment from Bloomberg.

During a 2013 visit to the Taishan construction site, one French safety inspector reported seeing that big machinery such as steam generators and pumps were not being maintained "at an adequate level" of conservation.

However, Areva Chief Operating Officer Philippe Knoche said the Chinese atomic regulator "is extremely demanding."

There are 28 [nuclear plants](#) presently being built in China — more than in any other single country.

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