**Experts agree. We have to be prepared for the worst situations.**

**Every event, even tragic, is a great source of lessons learned. Said the Chairwoman of State Office for Nuclear Safety (SÚJB) Dana Drábová during the working meeting of SÚJB representatives, the Integrated Rescue System, regional administration and government and of the Nuclear Power Plant Temelín. In the presence of a representative of the European Commission, the lessons learned from the events at Fukushima NPP have been discussed.**

As Dana Drábová, the nuclear power industry is a specific branch, but as any industrial branch, it cannot completely avoid accidents. The accidents in Chernobyl, Fukushima and Three Mile Island made a significant hit into the further development of nuclear energy. **"All of them are a great sources lessons learned. Each of them had both different causes and consequences. The Three Mile Island accident is important for us since it was a power plant comparable to our nuclear power plants. It has shown that a well built and operated plant could master even a very serious accident, because the damage of the reactor core was comparable with both Chernobyl and Fukushima,"** explained Drábová.

According to the President of the Czech nuclear surveillance, natural threats have been underestimated in the case of Fukushima. It would have been sufficient to build important systems a few yards away from the sea. **"Units 5 and 6, which were about twenty feet higher than the others, have not been damaged. They could be started now,"** stated Dana Drábová. Three other power plants, which were located in the area, turned out well.

As a result of the Fukushima power plant accident, 150 thousand inhabitants have been evacuated. **"It appeared that it is necessary to have well-prepared evacuation plans. It was not the case, which led to the result that a part of people has been unnecessarily irradiated, for example because they were evacuated more than once. Even so, the vast majority of the population has received acceptable doses,"** highlighted the President the importance of emergency planning.

Today, people return in the places, which they had left some time ago, they come back again. But still, there is a zone, where decontamination works are under way. Its size is approximately 1800 km2 and the radiation is there around two times higher than the natural background in the Czech Republic.

**The stress tests have yielded additional security backup**

The European Union has responded to the Japanese power plant accident by adopting stress tests. These have been carried out at all 143 European nuclear units. According to the Director of Temelín Nuclear Power Plant, Miloš Štěpanovský, more pressure was put on enhancing safety after the events in Japan. **"Fukushima accelerated something permanently existing at both Czech nuclear power plants. I also meant looking back, whether there was anything missed. We have not addressed tsunami, but we looked at areas that are real for our latitude. In the field of emergency planning, for example, we addressed the issue how the connection to other components of the Integrated rescue system will work,"** said Director of Temelín.

Experts agree that an accident cannot be completely excluded. Should it, however, happen, there is a need to manage it as well as Americans did in 1979 at the Three Mile Island plant. And that's why the operators strengthen the so-called "defense in depth", creating additional barriers to prevent release of radioactive substances into the environment. "**Fukushima increased the importance of backup safety systems. We extended the water makeup options in the process, we reinforced the ways of backup power supply or completed fire department equipment. For the event of site damage, we have prepared backup centers for crisis crews of the power plant as well as security guards and firefighters. We completed the equipment of personnel protection shelters,"** said ČEZ Power Plants Safety Director Bohdan Zronek giving examples of certain implemented measures.

**Without communication there is no command**

For those situations that both fixed and mobile telecommunications networks collapse, the power plant acquired satellite telephones. **"In order not to be dependent on modern technology, we went back to the history and purchased field military phones,"** adds Zronek.

Marta Spálenková, Head of the Crisis Management Department of the South Bohemian Region emphasized the importance of communication not only within the intervening components, but also towards the population. **"Currently, we are preparing an integrated press center in the building of the Regional Office, from which information will be transmitted over the media to the population. For example, the place will be equipped with technology for video conferences.**

**The fire department as well as the police are ready to evacuate people from the surroundings of Temelín.**

At evacuation, up to 26 thousand people could leave the emergency planning zone. In this case, the fire department would build reception centers, in which people would be registered and distributed to receiving municipalities. **"Setting up the reception centers is a new idea. It is based on the update of the external emergency plan, which has been operational since the beginning of the year. In this way, we will be able to record the inhabitants better and, subsequently, bring the members of families together, which has not been possible yet,"** introduced Milan Brabec, Deputy Director of Fire Rescue Corps of South Bohemia Region, the major change in external emergency plan, adding that the municipalities with enlarged scope of responsibilities are also prepared for evacuation.

The police would be also involved into activities related to moving people away from the power plant. **"In co-operation with the Fire Department and the Army, we would supervise the evacuation safety, control the traffic and provide for protection of property against looting,"** added Milos Trojánek, Director of South Bohemian Police Department.

In the discussion, mayors of the involved municipalities touched both training exercises, which affect them directly and the notification system using SMS messages. Together with the SÚJB representatives, they agreed that the biggest concern is a small event, to which the residents may respond in an inadequate way. Even in this context, Region representatives invited them to participate in the communication exercise Zone Media 2014.