

**N3431. FRENCH MINISTRIES ORDER NEW STUDY OF LEUKEMIA CASES  
NEAR LA HAGUE**

France's Ministries of Environment and of Health moved quickly late last month to commission a new epidemiological study of leukemia around the nuclear reprocessing and waste site at LaHague, as the doctors responsible for a recent statistical study there refuted criticism from the country's medical establishment.

The ministers had promised the new study following controversy over an article describing the study's results, published by the University of Besancon epidemiologists Jean-Francois Viel and Dominique Pobel in the British Medical Journal (BMJ) January 11. The Besancon doctors reported "convincing evidence" of a link between childhood leukemia in the north Cotentin area and frequent recreational activity on local beaches and consumption of local fish and shellfish (NW, 16 Jan., 4). They hypothesized exposure to radioactivity - notably strontium - through local marine ecosystems, with the implication that the radioactivity came from La Hague.

Others French epidemiologists roundly criticized the study, faulting the methodology as well as the conclusions.

*Taken from Nucleonics Week, February*