

# France's Orange hit by 10 suicides since start of 2014: watchdog

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Ten employees of French telecoms giant Orange have committed suicide since the beginning of the year, nearly as many as the whole of 2013, an organisation that monitors work conditions said Tuesday.

Labelling it a "serious alert", the Observatory for Stress and Forced Mobility said the majority of these [suicides](#) were "explicitly related to work."

Orange is now the name for what used to be known as France Telecom, a huge telecommunications firm that was hit by a wave of suicides.

The wave was at its strongest between 2008 and 2009, when 35 employees took their lives, prompting then boss Didier Lombard to step down.

The deaths triggered questions about [stress](#) and management.

The company had also been privatised in 2004, leading to major restructuring and the loss of scores of jobs.

According to the observatory, there were 11 suicides in the group—which changed its name to Orange two years ago—in 2013.

Management at Orange, which employs around 100,000 people, acknowledged Tuesday that there had been "several suicides" since the beginning of the year.

"Each of these acts... involves different contexts. But these situations remind us to be vigilant," the company told AFP.

The group's mediator is due to meet employee representatives on Friday over the issue.

Orange's unions had already raised the alert last month.

"Within one year, the situation has deteriorated," they had said in a statement, pointing to planned [job losses](#) and inadequate recruitment.

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