

Dutch probe cross-border nuclear safety

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The Dutch safety board announced on Wednesday it is launching an investigation into how the Netherlands works with its neighbours to prevent and handle any cross-border nuclear power accidents.

The investigation by the board, known as the OVV, comes amid rising Dutch concerns over two ageing nuclear reactors in neighbouring Belgium.

The OVV will examine how The Netherlands works "to prevent and contain incidents with cross-border consequences at [nuclear power stations](#)."

"Border-region residents have been expressing concerns for some time now in the wake of several such incidents," it said in a statement.

Investigators will look at what information is shared between the countries, how they discuss the supervision of their [nuclear power plants](#) and what joint precautions are being prepared to deal with any accident.

The probe will focus on three nuclear power stations on the Dutch-Belgian border—Borssele in the Netherlands and Doel and Tihange in Belgium.

Belgium's ageing Tihange 2 [nuclear reactor](#) was automatically shut down on Friday following a motor failure in a non-nuclear part of the plant.

It was just the latest in a series of incidents—including cracks and unsolved sabotage—to hit Belgium's nuclear power stations, and which have led Dutch MPs to call on the government to push for the closure of the two Belgian plants.

"The Dutch Safety Board will be assessing whether the Netherlands is making all possible efforts in coordination with neighbouring countries to prevent and, if necessary, contain, incidents with cross-border consequences," the statement added.

It stressed however that the probe would not be examining the safety of Dutch and Belgian [nuclear power](#) stations, as that responsibility rests with other federal and international bodies.

Belgium's Doel and Tihange [power stations](#) have been in service since

1974-1975, and were scheduled to be closed in 2015.

But the Belgian government in December decided to extend their lives to 2025.

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