

Compromise found in EU nuclear safety testing row

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EU energy commissioner Guenther Oettinger gives a press conference in 2010. European nations split over whether to include the threat of terror attacks in stress tests to be carried out on the continent's reactors have reached a key compromise, diplomats said Friday.

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Tests will be divided into two categories -- safety tests to see whether plants can survive ageing and [natural disasters](#), and security tests that will include terror attacks and other man-made disasters, sources told AFP.

The solution was found by national [nuclear safety](#) regulators but has yet to be agreed by Austria, Germany and the European Union executive arm, the European Commission. The three hold-outs will decide whether to sign on by Wednesday.

The compromise follows a breakdown in talks in Brussels the previous day among the European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group (ENSREG), which is to reconvene May 19 and 20 in Prague to find a joint response to safety fears in the wake of Japan's [nuclear disaster](#).

EU energy commissioner Guenther Oettinger wanted stringent and exhaustive checks to take into account human factors, cyber attacks and plane crashes.

"The public expects credible [stress tests](#) covering a wide range of risks and safety issues," he said on Thursday. "This is what we are working on."

But he faced the all-powerful nuclear lobby in France and Britain, with London in particular resisting pressure to design far-reaching simulations including terror attacks, sources said.

Paris and London between them control more than half the 143 [nuclear power plants](#) in service in the EU, where 14 of the 27 nuclear states have nuclear generators.

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