

PRESS RELEASE

Maisons-Alfort, 3 September 2021

Eric Vial appointed Risk Assessment Director of ANSES

Éric Vial was appointed Risk Assessment Director of ANSES on 2 August 2021. He now coordinates the Agency's scientific expert appraisal activities on the health risks associated with food, the environment and work or affecting animal and plant health. Éric Vial is thus continuing a career committed to the public interest, safeguarding the health of populations and the environment.

Éric Vial trained as a nuclear engineer and has been working for more than 20 years in the field of technological and health risk assessment to support public decision- and policy-making. His background gives him a solid understanding of expert appraisals in this field. Throughout his career, he has been required to engage with many different players, including scientists, manufacturers, government officials and representatives of civil society, both in France and abroad. In his most recent position at the General Secretariat for Defence and National Security (SGDSN), he coordinated inter-ministerial planning for the response to a nuclear or radiological emergency.

"Provide a clear and transparent view of health risks"

As head of ANSES's Risk Assessment Department, Éric Vial now manages the scientific expert appraisal activity in response to the formal requests – external and internal – received by the Agency. He supervises the Department's scientific teams and coordinates the various groups of external experts. As such, he is committed to ensuring the quality and independence of the Agency's expert appraisals. The work he coordinates provides reference scientific data for shaping and implementing public policies to safeguard the health of populations, animals, plants and the environment.

Éric Vial also leads certain vigilance activities, as well as observatories and databases managed by the Agency. He monitors their consistency and makes sure they complement the research and surveillance work carried out elsewhere at ANSES, with the aim of supplementing the data needed to carry out health risk assessments.

In all of his activities, Éric Vial will continue efforts to integrate the human, economic and social sciences in the Agency's work and be attentive to society's expectations, which is one of ANSES's strategic priorities.

Éric Vial succeeds Matthieu Schuler, who was appointed Managing Director General of ANSES's Science for Expertise Division in February 2021.

"We face numerous health challenges of varying importance, both now and in the future. The teams of ANSES's Risk Assessment Department work tirelessly on a daily basis to provide reliable high-quality assessments based on transparent methodologies, in order to reinforce confidence in public decision-making in a challenging climate of opinion. I intend to continue these efforts.

ANSES also has a duty to provide a scientific appreciation of these risks by putting them into perspective, in order to offer guidance for public policy decisions, as well as to each citizen in his or her perception and daily behaviour. I will encourage the teams in my department to use their wide-ranging skills, working on a wide variety of health risks, to help provide scientific benchmarks that are useful to everyone."

Éric Vial's career history

An engineering graduate of the *École Centrale de Lille*, Éric Vial also obtained a degree in nuclear engineering from the National Institute for Nuclear Sciences and Technology (INSTN) in 1991. He initially worked at the French Radioprotection and Nuclear Safety Institute (IRSN), where he held several positions and responsibilities as Bureau Head, European Project Manager and then Department Manager. In 2012, he became Deputy Director for Health. He then led a project to develop an experimental platform to study the effects of radionuclide intake and inhalation. He also coordinated the IRSN's assessment of the French population's exposure to ionising radiation before leading the crisis management activities of the Institute's Environmental Health Division. In 2019, he joined the General Secretariat for Defence and National Security (SGDSN) as a nuclear and radiology advisor. In particular, he coordinated the planning of the State's response to a nuclear or radiological emergency. He was appointed Risk Assessment Director of ANSES on 2 August 2021.

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The French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health & Safety (ANSES)

provides public decision-makers with the scientific benchmarks needed to protect humans and the environment against health risks. It studies, assesses and monitors all the chemical, microbiological and physical risks to which humans, animals and plants are exposed, thereby helping the public authorities take the necessary measures, including in the event of a health crisis. A national agency working in the public interest, ANSES comes under the responsibility of the French Ministries of Health, the Environment, Agriculture, Labour and Consumer Affairs.