



Watchdog wants extra 70,000 moved from nuke zone

By North Asia correspondent [Mark Willacy](#), wires

Updated 7 hours 49 minutes ago

A nuclear watchdog group says tens of thousands of people living outside the no-go zone around the Fukushima power plant in Japan should be evacuated.

France's Institute for Radiological Protection and Nuclear Safety says about 70,000 people living outside the zone should be moved.

The institute's warning is based on radioactivity data collected by Japanese authorities and from US monitoring flights over the area.

The French watchdog says among those who should be evacuated are nearly 10,000 children.

Japan has already begun moving more than 5,000 people who live in villages well outside the 20-kilometre evacuation zone.

The plant's operator, Tokyo Electric Power Co (TEPCO), says the density of radioactive material above the No. 1 reactor is 18-times the legal limit.

In a report submitted to the Japanese government, the company says there is a seven-centimetre breach in the containment vessel in the No. 1 reactor, and a 10-centimetre hole in the No. 2 containment vessel.

Nuclear experts warned weeks ago of such breaches, saying the holes would allow radioactive gases into the atmosphere.

Meanwhile, the Japanese government has vowed to give all available information on the disaster-stricken Fukushima plant to a visiting fact-finding team from the UN atomic watchdog.

The team, including six officials from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), arrived in Tokyo on Monday on an 11-day visit to investigate the world's worst nuclear accident since Chernobyl in 1986.

"We will make available all information we have," Banri Kaieda, the minister of economy, trade and industry, told the 18-member delegation.

The team is led by Mike Weightman, chief inspector of nuclear installations in Britain, and made up of experts from 12 countries including the US, China, Russia and South Korea.



The Japanese government has vowed to give all available information on the Fukushima plant to the UN atomic watchdog. (TEPCO)

- [Related Story: Outrage as Japan lifts radiation limit for kids](#)
- [Related Story: TEPCO admits new reactor meltdowns](#)

The team is scheduled to inspect the Fukushima plant on Friday, which was crippled by an earthquake and tsunami on March 11 and has leaked high levels of radiation into the environment with meltdowns reported in three reactors.

While the team is in Japan it will also tour a nearby nuclear power plant, Fukushima Daini, and meet officials from various branches of government as well as TEPCO.

On June 1 the team will outline a report on the accident to the Japanese government before it is presented to an IAEA ministerial-level conference in Vienna in late June.

- ABC/AFP

Tags: [disasters-and-accidents](#), [nuclear-accidents](#), [japan](#)

First posted 8 hours 59 minutes ago



© 2011 ABC