



**FRENCH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE DEFENSE OF ASBESTOS VICTIMS**

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**Project to merge the Compensation Fund for Asbestos Victims (FIVA) with  
the National Office for Compensation for Medical Accidents (ONIAM).  
The French government is backing down.**

In 2002, an Asbestos Compensation Fund (FIVA) was created in France to compensate all asbestos patients, both occupational and environmental, as well as the rights holders of those who died as a result of diseases caused by asbestos, from the most benign to the most serious.

In 2020, the French government mandated a mission of two bodies: the General Inspectorate of Social Affairs (IGAS) and the General Inspectorate of Finance (IGF) to draft a report on the proposed merger between FIVA and another body: ONIAM (National Office for Compensation for Medical Accidents).

From the beginning ANDEVA (Association for the Defense of Asbestos Victims) opposed this project which would have had the consequence of making FIVA disappear.

At the end of June 2021, the FIVA Board of Directors was informed of the conclusions of the IGAS/IGF mission. A 349-page report produced in February 2021 was released four months later, just before the summer break. This report called for the FIVA/ONIAM merger.

From then on, our representatives on the Board of Directors of FIVA worked to bring together the members of the Board of Directors opposed to this project: unions, victims' associations, technical experts. This mobilization ended with a unanimous vote, minus four abstentions, by the Board of Directors of a motion rejecting the proposed merger. Oddly enough, the government representatives who were supposed to defend the project did not vote for it but abstained.

Following the August 31st vote by the FIVA Board of Directors rejecting the FIVA/ONIAM merger, the question was raised as to whether the government would take this position into account or try to force the approval of the merger. ANDEVA contacted the Minister of Health, Mr Olivier Véran and asked to be received. We also sought the support of Martine Aubry, former Minister of Employment and Solidarity who had created FIVA. It was as a result of her direct intervention with Olivier Véran that we had a meeting on the afternoon of Friday, the 10<sup>th</sup> of September 2021 with the representatives of the two ministries.

The results of the meeting were unambiguous; there were no conditions for this merger.

The ministries acknowledged that:

- The FIVA/ONIAM merger project was abandoned;
- This merger would be included neither in the 2022 state budget, nor in the social security budget for 2022. In addition, it will not be the subject of amendments tabled by the Government or a deputy of the majority during the parliamentary debate.

The remarks of this meeting were confirmed by an email from the Director of Cabinet of Mr Olivier V éran to the administrators of FIVA who wrote:

“Following the discussions that took place of the respective Boards of Directors, we note that the conditions are not present today to consult further on the possible modalities of a merger of the two organizations. This project is therefore not on the agenda. However, we will remain attentive to all the proposals that could emanate from your bodies to strengthen synergies between the two structures, particularly in terms of sharing expertise and good business practices or developing professional careers links between organizations.”

We must all appreciate the importance of this victory, which was achieved at the end of a united struggle, in which Andeva and its local associations played an essential role.

We suggest the FIVA board members, with whom we led this battle against the FIVA/ONIAM merger, mark this victory with a joint press release.

Our results will give a new impetus to our calls on FIVA: the rights of all asbestos victims and their dependants must be recognized. There are about 1,100 mesotheliomas diagnosed every year in France; only half of these are compensated by FIVA.