

even register on modern radiation monitors with which all the ice-breakers are equipped. There is a special panel for controlling the monitoring system, which records a variety of factors: how is the reactor working, are there leaks in the reactor and is the equipment airtight. And also many sensors stand at the emission point located near the mainmast. I myself have looked at the readings of these sensors on the panel, and they do not indicate anything, even though they are extremely sensitive. Thus it is not necessary to speak about any kind of ecological contamination of the environment by nuclear powered ships.

"You talk about the environment. But how about the people working on these ships? Isn't there harm to their health? Have such investigations been carried out?"

"Yes, investigations have been conducted. The Institute of Hygiene of Maritime Transport in Leningrad exists especially for such purposes. Specialists frequently and for a long time have travelled on board ice-breakers during their operation and measured all the levels of radiation to which crew members are exposed. With respect to the radiation factors, no deviations from the norm have been found. At the Murmansk base of the ice-breaker fleet they have even set up a stationary radiation counter for personnel. They check crew members when fuel transfer operations are taking place. Medical officials allow, that with respect to radiation norms, certain nuclides may be found in the body. This is most likely to occur during fuel transfer operations, when the cover of the reactor is opened, and in principle the possibility of increased radiation exists - not from the reactor, but from aerosols. When the cover is opened and the hermetic