

Nuclear Test Monitoring History in the North-East of the USSR

In 1946 U.S. government invited Soviet scientists to nuclear test on the Bikini atoll. USSR sent nuclear physicist academician Skobelitsyn and director of Dalstroi Gold and Rare Metals Institute Aleksandrov, engineer colonel of NKVD. The institute focused on uranium deposits search and uranium ore mining and concentrating technologies development. Skobelitsyn's and Aleksandrov's trip report was never published. Presumably, one of the tasks assigned to them was detection of nuclear explosion site and its power estimation. By that time U.S. was already using seismographs for that purpose, this method was also obvious for Russian scientists. In order to hide seismic signs of nuclear explosions American scientists proposed performing the tests in Alaska, where seismicity was high enough for concealing nuclear explosions with energy lower than that of earthquakes. In the USSR it was decided to open a seismic station in a place with low seismicity closest to nuclear test sites on the Pacific. Considering secrecy, Aleksandrov proposed placing the station in Dalstroi territory, restricted even for Soviet people. Jan 1, 1952 Magadan seismic station with just two spouses seismologists started operating. Arrival times were sent to Moscow without processing. Sometimes seismograms were requested, mostly the days of nuclear-weapon testing.

Primary author: VEDERNIKOV, Evgeny (Geophysical Survey - Russian Academy of Sciences)

Presenter: VEDERNIKOV, Evgeny (Geophysical Survey - Russian Academy of Sciences)

Track Classification: Theme 2. Events and Nuclear Test Sites