

SUMMARY OF MEETING OF 12 APRIL 2002

- Council met on 12 April 2002 at the Stamford Hotel, Sydney Airport and discussed a range of radiation protection and nuclear safety issues as follows:
- **Precautionary Principle** : Council considered a short paper on precautionary approaches in radiation protection, which had been prepared as advice to the CEO. Some further drafting suggestions will be considered before finalising the paper at the next meeting. Council also noted that a longer version of the paper had been circulated to The Australian & New Zealand Food Authority, the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator, and the Therapeutic Goods Administration for comment. The longer paper would be published in appropriate journal after consideration of the comment received.
- **Radiofrequency (RF) Standard** : Council discussed the final version of the RF Standard, and noted the completion of the Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) process, and the development of a plain language question and answer guide (Q & A Guide) to be published at the same time as the Standard. Council discussed the statement on precaution in the Q & A Guide, and made recommendations for some further editing. Comment from one member that the RIS did not meet NSW requirements was noted. Council was also provided with a copy of the Australian Communications Industry Forum Code of Practice. Council advised the CEO to consider adoption of the Standard.
- **Radioactive Waste** : Council discussed a draft report developed to respond to a request from the CEO for advice on radioactive waste issues, and considered a range of options for completing the task. Council decided that the report needed to give an overview of existing waste, how it should be handled in future to ensure safety, what codes of practice should be used, how to measure against world's best practice, and what needed to be better managed. Members would provide comment on the structure and scope of the report to be prepared, and then a small group would complete the drafting.
- **National ELF Survey** : Council noted the proposed national survey on residential ELF levels in Australian homes, and supported the concept that a study of this type was of national importance.
- **Council Future Directions and Agenda** : Council discussed a short paper that identified possible future agenda items. It was agreed that a position paper be developed for the next meeting to cover Council Operational Issues and Future Directions.
- **Replacement Reactor Construction Licence** : The CEO briefed Council on the construction licence issued to ANSTO for the replacement research reactor, which had been announced on 5 April 2002. A Media Release, the Licence, and the CEO's Statement of Reasons were provided to Council and were now available on the web site, however the Regulatory Assessment Report (RAR) was not available at the time of the meeting. The CEO described in detail the conditions that had been applied to the licence. Council noted that the wording of the licence conditions could serve as a model set of conditions for other projects. Council also discussed the importance of having supporting documentation on a decision available and requested that the RAR be made available as soon as possible.

- **CEO Report :** The CEO reported that in relation to the Strontium-90 testing issue, the matter had been referred to the Australian Health Ethics Committee, and it was understood that their advice had gone to the Minister. An announcement was expected soon. In relation to Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty radionuclide monitoring stations, ARPANSA now managed operating stations in Perth, Melbourne, Darwin and Townsville. Stations were being planned or constructed in Macquarie Island, Cocos Islands, Papua-New Guinea and Antarctica. The CEO also advised that ARPANSA's Personal Radiation Monitoring Service had recently received NATA accreditation, and that he would be involved in an IAEA project developing a Code of Conduct for Research Reactors.

- **Committee Reports :**

RHC : Dr Barbara Shields, who had chaired the recent RHC meeting on 20-21 March 2002 in Mr Critchley's absence, joined the meeting by phone to provide the RHC report. Dr Shields advised of RHC's approval of the RF Standard, recommendations to the Mining Code working group, and a recommendation to the Intervention Levels working group to include additional justification for the levels chosen for iodine prophylaxis. Options, including a national register of major radioactive sources, will be considered in response to an IAEA initiative on safety and security of sources. Several other draft codes are nearing public comment stage. There might be opportunity for Council input into RHC priorities later this year, when some of the current tasks are completed.

NSC : Ms Kidziak reported that NSC had completed its report to the CEO on the three key issues on which he had requested advice. These were:

1. Seismic design as related to safety systems
2. Accident analyses in the Preliminary Safety Analysis Report
3. Spent fuel management and radioactive waste disposal.

Ms Kidziak informed Council of the working group process that had led to the final report. Council congratulated the NSC on the huge amount of work involved and the professional result. Ms Kidziak will also discuss priorities for NSC, including input into safety critical projects, with the CEO.

- **Other Business :** Council was advised of progress in all jurisdictions on adoption of the 2001 Transport Code. The Code has been adopted by ARPANSA and 3 jurisdictions already, and is progressing in other jurisdictions. Council was advised that letters, co-signed with the Cardiac Society, had been sent to all cardiology centres informing them of radiation protection issues. A teleconference would be held with the Cardiac Society representative to ascertain details of responses and to develop a questionnaire to seek additional information.
- **Post-meeting Briefing :** Councillor Ken McDonnell of Sutherland Shire attended. He was interested in the agenda item on the research reactor. He was advised that the CEO had given a summary of the conditions applied to the construction licence issued to ANSTO. He then gave a summary of his concerns about the reactor project, and issues arising from the media release on the granting of the licence. He had not seen the licence, licence conditions or the Statement of Reasons at that time. He was opposed to the construction of the reactor in Sutherland Shire, but mentioned the following issues in particular: Earthquake risk, sabotage, radioactive waste, fuel type, liquid discharges, long term storage on site, the reference accident, INVAP viability, and community consultation.
- **Next Meeting :** Council will meet again on 9 August at Miranda.