



Summary of ANSTO-ARPANSA Liaison Forum (AALF) Meeting

3 March 2020, 9:00 am – 11.30 pm, ANSTO Building 1 Board Room

Participants:

ARPANSA	ANSTO
Dr Carl-Magnus Larsson, CEO	Dr Adi Paterson, CEO
Mr Jim Scott, Chief Regulatory Officer	Mr Hefin Griffiths, Chief Nuclear Officer
Mr John Ward, Director, Safety Systems	Ms Vanessa Sharp, Regulatory Affairs Manager
Ms Julie Murray, Project Manager NRWMF	Ms Paula Berghofer - General Manager, Waste Operations
Mr Robert Godfrey - Director, Facility Safety	
Dr Rick Tinker – Director Assessment & Advice (by video)	

The meeting began with the ANSTO CEO reporting on a case of potential COVID-19 exposure of a staff member to an infected person. As a precautionary measure, the staff member was self-isolating; thorough cleaning of the work area was performed, and the staff member and their colleagues were being monitored.

The ARPANSA CEO provided a letter regarding the ANSTO safety culture perception survey. Separately, he advised that the Statement of Reasons (SOR) and a Decision regarding the ANSTO request to lift the restrictions on Mo-99 production in the ANM Facility was being finalised. The ANSTO CEO indicated that he looked forward to receiving that decision and to addressing any actionable items in the Decision and SOR.

The ANSTO CEO briefed the ARPANSA CEO on recent reviews. In respect of the matters of joint interest, the future status of the National Radioactive Waste Management Facility, its jurisdiction and the legislative process was discussed.

The agenda included a number of waste-related topics elaborated below. The meeting was followed by a tour of the SyMo construction site on the Lucas Heights Campus.

Little Forest Legacy Site (LFLS) – medium & long-term management plan

ARPANSA acknowledged the significant progress made by ANSTO in better understanding the future LFLS management options identified in the Best Available Technique (BAT) assessment. There was consideration of the need for identification of the long-term residual risk, a focus on passive safety and identification of potential future impacts, based on modelling.

It was noted that the NRWMF is currently not intended to manage the LFLS waste. The approach adopted does not pre-empt how it may be managed in the context of the NRWMF. ARPANSA referred to the need for ANSTO to review and update its overarching waste management strategy for its waste holdings.

ANSTO noted the BAT assessment does not constitute a final decision, but identifies options to be adopted at this point in time. A deeper review of historical records is to be undertaken to gain greater confidence in the inventory. Investigation into potential technologies which could be applied including robotics for remote access is also under consideration subject to regulatory approval. The best management option in the short-term is applying a geo-membrane.

It was agreed that there was no urgency to find a solution, but that short-term measures could be taken to enhance safety and security. This will allow further research to be undertaken, the opportunity to learn from overseas experience to be pursued, and for the LFLS disposition pathway for final waste disposal and/or management to be identified.

National Radioactive Waste Management Facility (NRWMF) process & timeline

The ARPANSA CEO indicated that there needed to be engagement for ARPANSA to understand the quantities of waste generated, the waste capacities and timeline for reaching storage capacity for the respective waste streams. The ANSTO CEO highlighted the importance of identifying the final disposal pathways as part of the forward-look and developing a shared view of the possible scenarios by the Commonwealth leadership before entering into a dialogue with the States and Territories. He expressed the view that there would be merit in creating a working group to consider these issues with a focus on characterisation.

Interim Waste Store (IWS), TN-81 cask disposition and SyMo HIP can disposition

ANSTO advised that the TN81 cask recertification can take place on site and that a cask containing ILW was expected to be received from the UK before 2023. This, together with other ILW on site would need to be considered in regard to the reformulation of the waste strategy document. SyMo Hot Isostatic Press (HIP) cans are intended to be placed in pits or Building 27. ANSTO said it reviews the assumptions every four months and undertook to share the updated model with ARPANSA.

Safety culture perception survey of the ANSTO radiopharmaceutical supply chain

ANSTO's CEO said that the survey had been useful and thanked ARPANSA for its involvement. ANSTO was invited to report directly to the Nuclear Safety Committee established under the *Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Act 1998* on the survey results.

ANSTO advised that consideration was being given, in the context of recent reviews, that ANM transition into ANSTO. It is considered that this will have a further positive impact on safety culture. ANM would constitute a production facility in the Nuclear Precinct which will seek to develop a common safety culture.

Site-wide licence progress

It was agreed that an effective dialogue was in place on the options and that a framework document was in preparation identifying the proposed site-wide integration and corporate-level plans and arrangements. The next steps to finalise the scope and approach will result in an agreement. ANSTO indicated that its current Nuclear Safety Review would identify common elements that could be aggregated into a single document from the individual SARs – which would make them simpler.

In view of the IRRS suggestion, the ARPANSA CEO indicated that the transition to a Possess or Control licence could be included in the SyMo operating licence application to cover any extended shutdown of operation or of the licence being suspended or revoked. It was considered that the SyMo licence application would act as a test case for nuclear installations in this regard.

Next meeting

The next meeting will be held at ARPANSA's Miranda Office at a date to be determined.