

## Summary of ANSTO-ARPANSA Liaison Forum (AALF) Meeting

13 November 2024, ANSTO Lucas Heights

### Participants:

ARPANSA	ANSTO
Dr Gillian Hirth, CEO	Mr Shaun Jenkinson, CEO
Mr Jim Scott, Chief Regulatory Officer	Mr John Edge, Chief Operating Officer
Dr Samir Sarkar, Principal Advisor Safety and Knowledge Management (Virtual)	Mr Heffin Griffiths, Chief Nuclear Officer
Mr Vaz Mottl, Director, Facility Safety	Mr Jakob Vujcic, General Manager, Regulatory & Governance
Ms Christina Arthur Director, Waste Transport and Decommissioning	Emily Hodgson, Group Chief Financial Officer
	Ms Pamela Naidoo-Ameglio, Group Executive Nuclear Operations and Nuclear Medicine
	Ms Jasmine Reay, GE Infrastructure and Engineering Services
	Ms Jade Greenhalgh, Senior Manager, Regulatory Affairs & Compliance
	Mr Andrew Arthur, Manager Regulatory and Compliance (Lifescience and Research)
	Mr Michael Baker (Virtual)

### Strategic Overview from ARPANSA

The Cold Neutron Source (CNS) and First Reactor Protection System (FRPS) submissions have now been finalised.

New staff have been recruited by ARPANSA Regulatory Services. However, training times and competency development for new regulatory staff takes significant time. Project leads should always factor in time slippage for both ANSTO and ARPANSA due to unexpected reactive work. Both organisations are exploring ways to help mitigate these issues.

ARPANSA conducted a Safety Culture Assessment last year. An overview of the findings and methodological changes will be provided in due course. The new methodology utilises a much more comprehensive and holistic approach. Due to the changes in methodology, the current safety culture assessment will not be directly comparable to the older assessments. Licensee self-assessments will be the focus going forward.

Workload management and support for staff is a key focus area for ARPANSA. This will be facilitated by good project planning by both organisations in the future. Facility inspections will now recommence in their normal schedule following the FRPS and CNS submissions.

The Regulatory Administration Database (RAD) continues to be rolled out. ARPANSA welcomes feedback to help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the system.

Nuclear Propulsion legislation with the Office of Nuclear-Powered Submarine Regulatory Design is expected to commence on 1 November 2025. The structure of the newly stood up regulatory body will be a key factor impacting ARPANSA. The commencement dates of this new legislation are contingent on the appointment of a Director General.

Currently there is no clear pathway on funding and whether this will lead to a lighter load for ARPANSA on AUKUS related regulatory matters. Alignment between regulatory processes and procedures will be an ongoing workstream to ensure consistency of approach across the industry.

## **Strategic Overview from ANSTO**

ANSTO highlighted the importance of prioritisation of activities to support its core mandate. This can be difficult with high demand from external applicants. ANSTO recognised ARPANSA's efforts to help facilitate workload arising from the long shutdown at OPAL.

ANSTO noted that it had conducted an Employee Feedback Survey. There was a high level of participation, with clear and honest feedback provided. ANSTO is continuing to work on key outcomes from the survey and a revised strategy with the goal of improving staff experiences.

ANSTO continues to focus on delivering key projects including the New Medical Manufacturing Facility, SyMo and ILWCI. ANSTO will provide regular updates to ARPANSA on the status of related submissions.

## **Current Key Regulatory Work**

### ***Submission assessment updates***

#### ***RAD System***

Due to the variety of facilities operated at ANSTO, ARPANSA is in the process of developing a system that uniquely suits both ANSTO's and ARPANSA's requirements. ARPANSA has requested users to continue to test the system, and is seeking continued feedback to improve and optimise usage of the database. Technical support is available to help streamline communications and resolve issues. It is expected that the new RAD system will make communication more effective and efficient. A joint project is underway to establish a RAD protocol between both organisations. During the transition period new and existing databases will be in operation simultaneously.

#### ***OPAL***

The regulatory review of the FRPS submission has been finalised. No commissioning or other issues were identified. Three additional licence conditions were imposed.

ARPANSA is currently assessing the impact on safety, based on observations made during the visual inspection of the riser. The visual inspection was conducted before the reactor restart following the extended shutdown. ARPANSA is awaiting further information from ANSTO to help support the application. It is expected that the regulatory assessment should be completed by the end of December 2024.

#### ***HIFAR update***

ARPANSA stated that the final assessment is expected to be completed by the end of November 2024.

## ***ILWCI***

ANSTO provided an update and noted the ILWCI schedule had been delayed by 6 months. The new target date for a combined siting & construction licence submission is November 2025.

## ***SyMo update***

ANSTO expects that the Flask transfer submissions will be completed in the next few weeks. ANSTO is prioritising resources in key areas to ensure high quality of submissions.

## ***ANSTO New Nuclear Manufacturing Facility (NMMF) licence application***

ANSTO is in the final stages of the application, and supporting documentation has been completed. Submission of the siting licence is expected to be submitted to ARPANSA by the end of November 2025.

## ***ANSTO Health (B23) Periodic Safety Review (PSR) and ANM (B88) Periodic Safety & Security Review (PSSR)***

A meeting is planned on the Building 23 Periodic Safety Review in the near future to establish the project timelines.

ARPANSA noted that until the NMMF is operational, the focus needs to be safe operation of the nuclear medicine production facilities.

## ***Other business***

### ***B2 automation project***

With the cold commissioning complete, ARPANSA noted removal of the licence condition to allow for routine operation. Further discussions will be held offline to verify details.

### ***Actinide Suite***

ARPANSA requested an update on the use of the mass spectrometer (ICPMS) in the Actinide Suite. ANSTO is currently preparing a submission but a discussion needs to be held around the risk assessment for use of room 13. The risk of a one-off use of the room versus continued use is being considered. ARPANSA is open to a “net benefit” argument and is looking forward to engaging further on this topic. The next required ANM waste analysis is due by the end of November 2024. Therefore, ARPANSA is considering granting an extension of time to ANSTO to undertake a risk assessment of using room 13 for the ICPMS.

### ***Next meeting***

The next meeting is scheduled to occur in late April 2025, with the final date to be confirmed.

The CEO of ARPANSA is on leave from the 9<sup>th</sup> of December until the 15<sup>th</sup> of January and Jim Scott will be the acting CEO during this time.

The ARPANSA shutdown is occurring from the 24<sup>th</sup> of December 2024, and will re-open on the 6<sup>th</sup> of January 2025.