



ARPANSA-ARWA Liaison Forum

Executive summary

17 November 2025

Terms of Reference

The meeting was held in accordance with the Terms of Reference for the ARWA-ARPANSA Liaison Forum (LFAA), dated 16 October 2024.

Outcomes of previous LFAA

The Executive Summary from the previous LFAA, dated 6 May 2025, was accepted by both parties, with copies to be made available on the ARPANSA website.

Strategic overview from ARWA

- ARWA's CEO outlined the organisation's future priorities and confirmed that the Government had reaffirmed ARWA's work program.
- ARWA advised that they have published an updated national inventory for Australia.
- ARWA are continuing to progress work on disposal pathways and are preparing advice and recommendations to government. This includes considering the suitability of a range of operating models.
- ARWA is in the process of updating the Australian Radioactive Waste Management Framework.

Strategic overview from ARPANSA

- ARPANSA provided an update on work with State and Territory regulators to advance uniformity in relation to regulation of waste and other activities as part of the broader national uniformity program.
- ARPANSA outlined recent meetings of the Radiation Health Committee, Radiation Health and Safety Advisory Council and the Nuclear Safety Committee.
- ARPANSA noted the transfer of regulatory responsibility for nuclear-powered, conventionally armed submarine to the new Australian Naval Nuclear Power Safety Regulator (ANNPSR) on 1 November 2025. ARPANSA will continue to work closely with ANNPSR to provide ongoing advice and support.

ARPANSA regulatory matters

- ARPANSA provided an update on work underway to review and potentially modify section 65 of the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety (ARPANS) Regulations to ensure clarity in how it applies to interim storage and disposal of radioactive waste.
- ARPANSA provided updates on development of a new Radioactive Waste Management Code, noting the need for dialogue between ARPANSA and ARWA. This is particularly important as the Code is being developed in parallel with ARWA's updated Australian Radioactive Waste Management Framework.
- ARPANSA noted updated international regulatory guidance on transport of radioactive material is expected to be published soon. The updated guidance is expected to have implications for Australia and ARPANSA will update the Transport Code as needed.
- ARPANSA has received enquiries from international stakeholders in relation to Australia's radioactive waste management and recycling programs and will engage with ARWA to ensure comprehensive and consistent advice is provided as appropriate.

ARWA matters

- ARWA provided updates on its disposal and waste management programs and upcoming workshop.
- ARWA provided an update on the recent IAEA expert mission, providing peer review of Australia's radioactive waste management practices and frameworks, noting the valuable advice and feedback provided by the expert panel.
- ARWA provided an overview of the development of the updated Australian Radioactive Waste Management Framework.

Mutual areas of interest

- ARPANSA and ARWA discussed the radioactive waste inventories prepared for various purposes and considered opportunities to consolidate into a single source inventory under ARWA's management.
- ARPANSA will prepare an updated communications protocol for discussion at the next meeting. The current communications protocol is out of date and is needed to support effective, consistent and appropriate engagement between the 2 agencies.
- ARWA confirmed they are taking carriage of work to investigate national opportunities to reprocess or recycle radium and mining by-products.
- ARPANSA and ARWA discussed the need for a national decommissioning policy to address gaps identified as part of the 2018 International Atomic Energy Agency Integrated Regulatory Review Service. Preliminary work is underway to develop principles to support future national guidance with ARPANSA to host a roundtable discussion with ARWA and Commonwealth waste holders in early 2026 to support comprehensive information gathering and alignment to progress this work.

Next meeting

It is proposed that the next meeting is held in person or online, as appropriate for the agenda, in mid-May 2026.