



Australian Government
**Australian Radiation Protection
and Nuclear Safety Agency**



3 August 2026

Ref: MS25-001330

The Hon. Rebecca White MP
Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care
Assistant Minister for Indigenous Health
Assistant Minister for Women
PO Box 61
Bridgewater TAS 7030

Dear Minister,

Re: Statement of Intent

Thank you for your letter dated 19 December 2025, outlining your Statement of Expectations to ensure the effective governance and performance of regulatory functions of the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA), guided by the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

I am pleased to provide you with my Statement of Intent, which sets out how I will meet the expectations you have outlined and carry out my functions under the *Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Act 1998* (ARPANS Act).

Overview

As the Australian Government's primary authority on radiation protection and nuclear safety, ARPANSA will continue to promote radiation protection and nuclear safety across the Commonwealth, the states and the territories.

As the regulator of Commonwealth entities using or producing radiation, we will continue to maintain a high standard of radiation protection and nuclear safety in Australia by continuing to provide advice, developing standards and regulating Commonwealth entities with transparency, collaboration and responsive engagement.

ARPANSA will demonstrate national leadership in engagement with jurisdictions on national uniformity issues, including safety standards and guidance, and explore opportunities for progressing greater consistency of radiation safety regulation in Australia. Specifically, we will seek to revise the National Directory for Radiation Protection, which will ensure the agreed framework continues to be a modern and streamlined approach to radiation safety across the Commonwealth, states and territories. We will also seek to produce a new National Strategy for Radiation Safety in 2027 to ensure it reflects Australia's evolving radiation and nuclear environment, and current national priorities.

As the Australian Government's primary authority on radiation protection and nuclear safety, ARPANSA will continue to maintain internal expertise and monitor domestic and international research and best practice, to ensure that we can fulfil this role.

As recognised under the Australian Government Crisis Management Framework, ARPANSA is the Australian Government's Coordinating Agency responsible for coordination response and crisis communications in the event of a radiological or nuclear emergency. Specifically, my agency is actively supporting national preparedness through publication and maintenance of the Australian Government Radiation and Nuclear Events Plan (AUSRNEPLAN).

A significant priority for ARPANSA will continue to be supporting the delivery of nuclear-powered submarine capability. This has been reflected in a memorandum of understanding and service level agreement with the Australian Naval Nuclear Power Safety Regulator (ANNPSR) which formally facilitates continued cooperation and support. Specific activities my agency is undertaking include;

- Working with the Australian Naval Nuclear Power Safety Regulator (ANNPSR) to establish and uplift their nuclear baseline competencies and their capability to regulate
- Ensuring there is a national framework for radiation and nuclear safety standards, and guidance that is suitable for nuclear-powered submarines, and
- Providing best-practice guidance on designing and implementing environmental monitoring and assessment programs for radiation protection – particularly in Australia's urban environments – to support visiting nuclear powered warship port visits.

These actions, in accordance with your Statement of Expectations, contribute to ARPANSA's mission to protect Australians – including the public, workers, patients undergoing medical procedures using radiation – and the environment from the harmful effects of radiation.

Regulatory Reform Agenda and Principles of Regulator Best Practice

In addition to ARPANSA's aforementioned efforts to promote greater national uniformity through consistency in radiation safety regulation – supporting efficiency and productivity – my agency remains committed to leading by example through adherence to regulatory best practice, maximising transparency and minimising compliance costs.

The principles of regulator best practice are embedded across my agency's activities, and I – together with ARPANSA's Executive Group – am committed to adopting a whole-of-system perspective and fostering a culture of continuous improvement in our performance, capability and culture to build further trust and confidence in our actions.

On cost recovery arrangements, ARPANSA remains committed to full cost recovery of the regulatory service it provides to other Commonwealth agencies, seeking annual amendments to our ARPANS Regulations 2018 and ARPANS (Licence Charges) Regulations 2018 to ensure the coverage of actual costs. The purpose of annual changes is to decrease certain licence charges where possible – as well as increase other licence charges as required – ensuring fairness to licence holders and, ultimately, taxpayers. This ensures the least burden on those that are regulated while maintaining essential safeguards.

ARPANSA gives further effect to the recommendations in *Regulator Performance (RMG 128)*, including by incorporating and reporting on their implementation through a dedicated performance measure in our Corporate Plan.

Innovation and Regulatory Change

My agency remains steadfast in its commitment to fostering continued scope for innovation. For example, ARPANSA is further investigating, applying and strengthening innovative practices in our regulatory processes which will increase efficiency for not only the agency, but also our licensees. Specifically, ARPANSA is expanding its regulatory approach to assess how licence holders integrate technical, human and organisational factors – the interconnected drivers of human performance in safety-critical systems – into their risk management frameworks. More broadly, ARPANSA will take a strategic approach to navigating an evolving technological landscape, recognising the need to continually review and refine our policies and practices. This allows us – as regulators – to leverage data and digital technology to support those we regulate to comply and improve. This will also ensure we remain responsive to current and future operating conditions and are well positioned to realise the benefits of emerging technologies, including AI, while ensuring we meet community expectations.

Relationship with the Minister and Portfolio

I acknowledge the role ARPANSA has in assisting yourself – as responsible Minister – and the Government to respond promptly to issues that may arise in radiation protection and nuclear safety. I undertake to continue to provide accurate and timely advice on any significant issues that may arise.

Additionally, ARPANSA will continue to work collaboratively with the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, particularly on contributing to ongoing policy advice and ideas to strengthen radiation protection and nuclear safety.

I thank you for your continued support of ARPANSA, and my independence as CEO. Please accept this Statement of Intent as a demonstration my enduring commitment to exercising my functions and powers in good faith, and to the best of my ability.

Yours sincerely



Dr Gillian Hirth AO
CEO of ARPANSA

Cc: The Hon Mark Butler MP, Minister for Health and Ageing