

ANSTO-ARPANSA Liaison Forum

Meeting minutes

29 May 2026 1:00pm – 3:pm ANSTO Lucas Heights

Participants:

ARPANSA	ANSTO
Dr Gillian Hirth, CEO	Mr Shaun Jenkinson, CEO
Mr Jim Scott, Chief Regulatory Officer	Mr Aaron Flett, Chief Nuclear Officer
Mr Vaz Mottl, Director, Facility Safety	Ms Marianne Morton, Caretaker - Group Executive Assurance, Risk and Compliance
Ms Christina Arthur, Director Waste, Decommissioning and Transport	Mr Jakob Vujcic, General Manager, Regulatory & Governance
Ms Bronwyn Carr (note taker)	Mr Miles Apperley, Group Executive Nuclear Operations, Safety and Security
	Mr Michael Baker (online), Manager Regulatory Affairs and Compliance – Environment and Sustainability

Strategic Overview from ARPANSA

Ageing infrastructure

ARPANSA highlighted that ageing facilities remain a regulatory concern as a number of ANSTO assets will require upgrading or plant life extension. This includes both physical facilities and broader systems and infrastructure.

ARPANSA requested that ANSTO has effective asset management plans and that arrangements align with the Safety Analysis Reports (SAR). ANSTO acknowledged the issue and confirmed ongoing work to update organisational strategies, including improvements to systems and processes within facilities.

ANSTO is actively seeking funding to address safety concerns and support long-term facility sustainability. ARPANSA confirmed that ageing infrastructure will be a regulatory priority moving forward.

Radioactive Waste Management Code Development:

The ARPANSA Radiation Health Committee (RHC) is developing a Radioactive Waste Management Code to consolidate existing requirements into a single national framework for safe and secure radioactive waste management.

An RHC working group has been established to progress the development of the Code, with Dr Gillian Hirth AO as the RHC project sponsor, and includes RHC representatives from Western Australia, South Australia, Victoria and the Northern Territory, with participation from ANSTO, ARPANSA, ARWA, CSIRO and ANNPSR. ARPANSA may also involve ASNO.

The Code will refer to decommissioning at a high level, with detailed guidance to be developed separately. It will focus on predisposal waste management, waste classification and national alignment, supported by an RHC glossary drawing on IAEA terminology.

Decommissioning and Asset Management Plans

Decommissioning and asset management plans should be developed to support long-term infrastructure and effective radioactive waste management.

ANSTO plans to engage its Board on longer-term strategic planning, particularly given the National Radioactive Waste Management Facility is not expected in the near term. Planning is being considered over a 10–20-year horizon through a Deputy Secretary-level Interdepartmental Committee, with possible regulatory participation.

ANSTO is progressing a new nuclear medicine manufacturing facility project to replace Building 23.

ARPANSA requested that ANSTO maintain current, fit-for-purpose decommissioning plans for relevant facilities. This will include new facilities as part of design and approval.

Strategic Overview from ANSTO

Camperdown Decommissioning

ARPANSA noted pressure to release the Camperdown site and emphasised the need to meet decommissioning milestones. ANSTO advised the project remains on schedule, with lease extension options if needed. The site will be maintained as green space in the short term, with a future-use policy proposal expected within 12 months.

ARPANSA Licence Holder Forum

ANSTO thanked ARPANSA for the Licence Holder Forum and noted its value in encouraging licence nominees to engage with inspectors. ANSTO also emphasised the importance of strengthening training and competency across its licence holder community. ARPANSA thanked ANSTO for the keynote presentation.

Licensing Approval Timeframes

ANSTO is improving licence application quality and completeness to support more efficient approvals. ARPANSA is reviewing its assessment methodology to improve consistency, support licence holders, and consider broader regulatory implications.

ARPANSA also noted the potential benefits of a graded approach to licensing and assessment, while recognising implementation challenges, including current resource constraints. ARPANSA will examine opportunities to improve review and assessment processes.

Compliance matters

Actinide Suite – Improvement Notice

The Improvement Notice was issued by an inspector on 23 September. ANSTO reports on progress on the rectification plan monthly.

A Section 63 application requesting to resume Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometer operation has been under review with ARPANSA. Regulatory options arising from the assessment include changing the licence to a Possess or Control or amending the existing licence for conditions to restrict the scope of operation.

Building 57 Breaches – direction progress and breach corrective action plans

The Direction issued by ARPANSA will be tabled in the Parliament within the next 3 months. Information about the Direction is currently available on the ARPANSA website, but the full document including statement of reasons will not be published until it is tabled in Parliament.

Joint Matters

ARPANSA and ANSTO recognised that outdated SARs and risk assessments are significant issues affecting upcoming licence applications, including Intermediate Level Waste Capacity Increase project (ILWCI+).

ARPANSA and ANSTO have agreed regulatory priorities, but ANSTO is yet to provide a detailed delivery plan to return the safety documents to compliance.

ARPANSA will maintain focus on compliance monitoring.

ARPANSA raised concerns about the time taken to address overdue SARs and risk assessments. ARPANSA indicated it will review its approach to compliance in this area in future. ANSTO has implemented a safety review panel to assess safe operations of facilities and are addressing safety concerns raised, ceasing operations when needed and identifying what recovery work is needed and what risk assessment updates are needed. The immediate priority is the Building 57 Direction, followed by Waste Management Services.

Prioritisation of ANSTO applications

ANSTO's strategy update on critical projects:

Nuclear Medicine Manufacturing Facility (NMMF) project – ANSTO will need to make a decision on applying for relocation of the Interbuilding Pneumatic Transfer System before the next stage of the NMMF project.

ANSTO advised their intention to submit the ILWCI+ combined siting and construction application to ARPANSA by the end of August 2026.

ANSTO spent fuel – future strategy

The next fuel shipment may not be reprocessed in France. ANSTO is assessing options in advance of the next shipment for 2032. Some of the solutions will require significant planning stages. ARPANSA will be informed about the work progress.

National and International Engagement

An ARPANSA representative attended the 10th Review Meeting of the Convention on Nuclear Safety in Vienna followed by the International Conference on Effective Nuclear and Radiation Regulatory Systems.

Another ARPANSA representative participated virtually in the NEA/OECD Regulators Forum in March 2026.

Next meeting

The next meeting will be held at ANSTO in November 2026.