Australian Government
Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency

arpansa

23 November 2026 Ref: D2632494

Dr Jane Canestra
Chair
Radiation Health and Safety Advisory Council

Dear Dr Canestra

Re: Sustainability and Radiation Protection in Australia

Thank you for your letter addressing radiation protection and nuclear safety in relation to sustainability, including the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs). I appreciate Council's commitment to providing me with advice on ARPANSA's role in leading the radiation protection and nuclear safety sector's engagement in environmental and public health regulation aligned with the UN SDGs.

The Australian Government is committed to the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade leading Australia's international reporting on the UN SDGs. ARPANSA contributes to broader Australian Government reporting and in 2025, provided input with examples of its regional monitoring, training, transport safety, nuclear security, and regulatory capacity building activities.

ARPANSA's Corporate Plan and Annual Report are prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*. Within this framework, I acknowledge the opportunity for ARPANSA to demonstrate visible leadership in relation to the UN SDGs, particularly as many of our existing activities already contribute to the outcomes they seek to achieve.

ARPANSA contributes to multiple UN SDGs through its core functions in radiation protection, environmental protection and regulatory oversight. ARPANSA also engages with state and territory regulators and industry through multiple forums, and we continue to explore sustainability initiatives in the Australian community. I will ask the Radiation Health Committee (RHC) to consider how sustainability and the UN SDGs might appropriately be reflected in future radiation protection guidance including through Radiation Protection Series F-1 and other relevant national guidance.

The RHC discussed developing a national code or guide related to environmental impact assessment and monitoring in November 2025, drawing on ARPANSA's recent work to incorporate relevant UN SDGs in a new Environmental Framework. I will ask the RHC to consider this work as part of future workplans once the International Commission for Radiological Protection (ICRP) publishes updates which may incorporate

UN SDGs into its recommendations. ARPANSA also continues to engage directly with the ICRP and the IAEA on work items including those relating to the UN SDGs.

ARPANSA's co-hosting of the seventh International Conference on Radioecology and Environmental Radioactivity in Melbourne in February 2027 will further support this work. The conference will bring together researchers, regulators, practitioners, and students to strengthen environmental research, regulation, emergency response, and radioactive waste management. It is a practical example of ARPANSA using international cooperation to improve environmental protection.

I welcome Council's encouragement for ARPANSA to continue to strengthen action towards achieving the radiation protection aspects of the UN SDGs. Thank you for your advice and for drawing attention to the important area.

Yours sincerely



Dr Gillian Hirth AO
CEO of ARPANSA

619 Lower Plenty Road, Yallambie VIC 3085
PO Box 655, Miranda NSW 1490
info@arpansa.gov.au
+61 3 9433 2211
arpansa.gov.au