



# Meeting Summary—28 February 2014

Miranda Campus, ARPANSA

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## Opening of Meeting

All members were in attendance, aside of Mr Ian Drinnan who tendered his apologies.

## Confirmation of the Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting, held on 1 November 2013, were confirmed.

## Correspondence

There were no items of correspondence in addition to those letters discussed under *Business Arising* below.

## Business Arising

### Advice to the CEO regarding the Interim Waste Store

In a letter dated 18 November 2013, the CEO requested the Committee provide advice on waste stored in interim storage. The Committee provided this advice on 22 November 2013 which outlined key considerations including the safety of interim storage versus final disposal. The CEO thanked the Committee for this advice which was taken into consideration when making a decision whether or not to grant a licence for the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) to site and construct an Interim Waste Store. The Committee was informed that ARPANSA granted a siting and construction licence to ANSTO on 29 November 2013 (see the [ARPANSA website](#)).

### Advice to the CEO regarding the Synroc Facility and Calibration at the Synchrotron

In a letter dated 23 January 2014, the CEO requested the Committee provide advice on two aspects: (1) best practice approaches to applying licence conditions to facilities such as the proposed Synroc Facility—a facility ANSTO proposes to use to condition intermediate level liquid waste arising from the production of Molybdenum-99; and (2) beam calibration work that ARPANSA's Medical Radiation Branch currently performs at the Australian Synchrotron. A draft response letter was discussed at the meeting. The Committee agreed to finalise the response out-of-session after which it will be sent as formal advice to the CEO.

## Main Items for Discussion

### Inspections of ANSTO's Supporting Services

ARPANSA is conducting a series of thematic inspections to examine the internal supporting services to licence holders within ANSTO, which are provided to the multiple facilities and operations that fall under ARPANSA licensing. The first of these inspections took place on 27 February 2014; examining the radiation protection services ANSTO provides to the OPAL reactor, the Bragg Institute and the Camperdown Cyclotron Facility. The Committee provided a number of suggestions and

recommendations on additional aspects that might be included and questions that might be asked relating to nuclear safety and radiation protection issues during these inspections. Members highlighted important safety themes such as the difference between “lessons to be learned” and “lessons learned” and examining how different parts of an organisation are run and interrelate. ARPANSA will request the Committee provide further advice on these types of inspections, and will present a summary of the results, at the June 2014 meeting.

### **Assessment of OPAL Fuel Plates**

ARPANSA has required ANSTO to undertake an assessment of the 2007 OPAL Reactor fuel fault event and in particular describe the range of potential consequences and recovery options had fuel plate(s) been lost from any of the affected fuel assemblies. This scenario had not occurred during the actual incident but ARPANSA considered that it was important for ANSTO to fully evaluate the range of potential consequences and review recovery options so as to improve organisational resilience. The Committee was asked to comment on the adequacy of this assessment. Members considered that the possibility of this event occurring is extremely low given the design modification made to the fuel after the event. The Committee considered the assessment useful to help ANSTO understand and continuously improve its response capability. The Committee discussed the following: the design of the fuel plate and the fuel plates’ physical characteristics; how a dislodged plate or other item dislodged could be stored; and the adequacy of the assumptions of operator performance during such an event.

### **Operation of OPAL Fuel Assembly Clamps**

ANSTO had been using a tool not specified in the fuel assembly clamping/unclamping work instruction to load and unload fuel in the OPAL reactor. ANSTO submitted a report to ARPANSA outlining why this had been occurring. ARPANSA requested the Committee review the adequacy of the nuclear safety issues ANSTO identified in this report. The Committee discussed the following: the thoroughness and breadth of the report in examining more systemic factors; whether the report analysed the processes and practices used by both management and operational staff; how well the report identified the risks; and the overall processes and practices for updating and modifying OPAL procedures. ARPANSA thanked the Committee for the advice which would be taken into consideration for future inspections and regulatory oversight of the OPAL licence.

### **ARPANSA’s Advisory Bodies - Roles and Expectations**

ARPANSA provided Members with a discussion paper which outlines the roles and expectations of the NSC, the Radiation Health Committee (RHC) and the Radiation Health and Safety Advisory Council (RHSAC). The Committee considered that the document was useful in spelling out the key responsibilities of the NSC. Members also discussed: the importance of meeting minutes; the potential for increased interactions with the RHC and RHSAC; how the functions of the Committee could be made more open to the public; and how the functions of the Committee could be better organised to provide advice to the CEO. ARPANSA would take Members’ comments into account before finalising the document.

## Update on Controlled Facilities

ARPANSA provided the Committee with a brief overview of ARPANSA's licensing activities of controlled facilities. This included a brief outline of the inspections undertaken, and applications received, assessed and approved since the November 2013 meeting.

## Reports

### ARPANSA's activities

The CEO provided a brief report on ARPANSA's activities. This included an outline of proposed efficiency measures and cost savings ARPANSA would consider to ensure sustainable operation of the agency.

### Radiation Health and Safety Advisory Council and Radiation Health Committee

The new Chair of the Radiation Health and Advisory Council (RHSAC), Prof Ray Kemp (appointed 1 January 2014), briefly joined the meeting via teleconference. Prof Kemp introduced himself to the NSC and outlined the key areas the Council will be involved in and where the expertise of the NSC would be drawn upon. Regarding the Radiation Health Committee, Members' were informed that [Amendment 6 to the National Directory for Radiation Protection](#) had been approved as well as the recently published [Fundamentals for Protection Against Ionising Radiation \(2014\)](#).

## Nuclear Safety Matters

The Committee was provided with reports for information on recent meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) including: the Waste Safety Standards Committee (WASSC); Commission on Safety Standards (CSS); Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management; and Fukushima Comprehensive Report Drafting Group Meetings. The Committee discussed aspects regarding Fukushima including: how information is disseminated to the public; when finalised IAEA investigation reports will be released; and how risk is assessed.

## Other Business

There was no other business.

## Closure of Meeting

The NSC will next convene on 20 June 2014.