



Radiation Health and Safety Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes

Date: 16-17 March 2017

Location: **Day 1:** State Control Centre, Emergency Management Victoria, 8 Nicholson St East Melbourne. **Day 2:** Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre ('Peter Mac'), 305 Grattan Street, Melbourne.

Chair: Dr Roger Allison

Members: Mr Keith Baldry, Dr Jane Canestra, Ms Melissa Holzberger, Dr Carl Magnus Larsson, Ms Geraldine Robertson, Mr Niall Byrne (day 1), Prof Pamela Sykes, Dr Melanie Taylor, Mr Simon Critchley, Prof Adele Green, Mr Frank Harris

Secretariat: Mr James Wheaton & Mr Ben Paritsky

Invitees: Assistant Minister for Health (Cwlth) The Hon Dr David Gillespie MP (day 1), Ms Beth Jackson-Hope (adviser to Minister Gillespie; day 1), Mr Robert Nardella (Chief of Staff in the Minister's Office; day 1). Commissioner Craig Lapsley (Emergency Management Victoria – day 1), Dr Roslyn Drummond (Peter Mac), Dr Greg Slater (RANZCR – day 2)

Apologies: Dr Hugh Heggie (attended introduction only by telephone)

Observers: Ms Tone Doyle, Dr Rick Tinker, Dr Gillian Hirth, Dr Ivan Williams, Dr Marcus Grzechnik, Dr Stephen

Solomon

1. Meeting open and Ministerial address (Day 1)

Item 1.1 Welcome from the Chair and confirmation of minutes

Chair

Emergency Management Commissioner for Victoria, Craig Lapsley, welcomed the Council to the meeting venue at the State Control Centre (SCC) and gave an introduction to the SCC's history and his role. The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed the Assistant Minister for Health (Cwlth), The Hon Dr David Gillespie MP, Council Members, Guests and observers. Attendees introduced themselves including the new member nominated by the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory who spoke briefly by phone. The November 2016 meeting minutes were endorsed.

Item 1.2 Address from Assistant Minister for Health, The Hon Dr David Gillespie MP

Minister

The Assistant Minister for Health and portfolio Minister for ARPANSA addressed Council. The Minister stated that the topic of radiation requires a rational assessment and Council is in a key position to set its own agenda and make independent recommendations to the CEO of ARPANSA, including on ARPANSA's emergency preparedness and response capability, which was the topic for day 1 on the meeting.

2. Standing Council Items

Item 2.1 Update on Council Appointments

Minister

The Minister announced that he had reappointed Mr Frank Harris and Ms Melissa Holzberger as members of the Council and congratulated the reappointed members.

Item 2.2 CEO update on ARPANSA activities

Dr Larsson / Dr Tinker

ARPANSA's CEO welcomed Minister Gillespie and his staff, noting that Council members are ministerial appointments.

ARPANSA's CEO updated council on the re-branding of ARPANSA, underlining that the brand is more than a logo and addresses the question of how we perceive ourselves, and noted ARPANSA's brand story, underlining that a strong brand will help identify ARPANSA's role and contribution to the Australian Community.

In other ARPANSA activities, the CEO of ARPANSA noted that work is progressing on the Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) mission, noting that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) will look further and deeper than to just the federal level of Australia, i.e. include some states and territories in the review.

Other updates were provided on media attention about 'rusting waste drums' at a CSIRO site in Woomera, SA; the National Radioactive Waste Management Facility project; the assignment of the role of Deputy CEO to Dr Gillian Hirth; the ARPANSA-led delegation attending the Convention on Nuclear Safety; and ARPANSA's preparation for Joint Convention (on safety of radioactive waste and spent fuel management).

An update was also provided on public enquiries received by ARPANSA noting that the proportion of enquiries relating to Fukushima has decreased indicating that there is now less public concern.

3. Emergency Preparedness & Response

Item 3.1 ARPANSA's EPR roles & capabilities to a radiological or nuclear event

Dr Hirth

A presentation was given on ARPANSA's capabilities and roles in emergency preparedness and response to a nuclear or radiological event in Australia. ARPANSA is the national competent authority for reporting to the IAEA under the terms of the early notification and assistance conventions, with a domestic role to promote international best practice, national uniformity, national safety guides and to maintain a radiation incident register.

It was suggested that there needs to be a more consolidated approach to national planning for a response to a nuclear or radiological event. ARPANSA would focus on modelling, assessment and advice, aligning domestic intergovernmental cooperation to strengthen the effectiveness of emergency management frameworks, and continue to build networks with international organisations.

A survey of state and territory jurisdictions about their expectations of ARPANSA was considered. The Council also noted two upcoming events, the IAEA General Safety Requirement GSR Part 7 workshop and the National Workshop in Melbourne, both on emergency management and planned for October 2017.

Item 3.2 REMPAN**Dr Tinker**

A presentation was delivered on the role and function of the IAEA's Radiological Emergency Medical Preparedness and Assistance Network (REMPAN).

Item 3.3 Peter Mac role in a radiological medical emergency**Dr Drummond**

A presentation was delivered on the role of the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre to provide medical advice and assistance in a radiological emergency.

4. Facility Tour – Emergency Management Victoria

Item 4.1 Tour of State Control Centre (SCC)**Mr Trist**

The Assistant Minister for Health with his staff and meeting attendees were taken on a tour of the facility, and were given an overview of the functions and responsibilities of the SCC for Victoria.

Item 4.2 Emergency management discussion**Chair**

The Council further discussed ARPANSA's role in emergency management. The key 'first-responder' role of state and territory jurisdictions in Australia was noted and ARPANSA's role in coordination, communication and advice was discussed. It was proposed that the Council hold an information session at the next meeting to be informed of options for ARPANSA to promote national uniformity in this area.

5. Standing Council Items (Day 2)

Item 5.1 Update from RHC & NSC**Dr Larsson**

ARPANSA's CEO provided an update on recent activities of the Radiation Health Committee (RHC) and the Nuclear Safety Committee (NSC). Topics included ARPANSA's next self-assessment against key performance indicators in the Regulatory Performance Framework including revision of the indicators, and undertakings to move towards an improved system of national uniformity.

Item 5.2 Business arising and review of action list**Chair**

All items on the action list were noted as either in progress or completed. It was noted that the Council's letter of advice about ARPANSA's role in the National Radioactive Waste Management Facility (NRWMF) has been provided to the CEO of ARPANSA.

The CEO of ARPANSA gave an update on a draft ARPANSA document outlining the Roles and Expectations of Advisory Bodies. The Council considered the draft, suggesting minor amendments. It was agreed to include an additional paragraph to explain how conflicts are managed and addressed within the Council. A final version is to be circulated to the RHC and NSC to endorse.

Item 5.3 Report from member representing the interests of the general public**Ms Robertson**

The Member representing the interests of the general public noted that no correspondence from the public had been received since the November 2016 meeting. The Member was also very pleased to have the issue of appropriate referrals for diagnostic imaging on the agenda, noting that the Medicare Benefits Scheme

review has recently established a committee to also review this public interest issue. It was noted that the Diagnostic Imaging Accreditation Scheme (DIAS) had recently met without an ARPANSA representative.

Item 5.4 International update

Dr Larsson

The CEO of ARPANSA updated the Council on Agency international travel. It was noted that a summary of travel reports will be tabled at each future meeting, however full travel reports will be made available beforehand separate to the agenda papers. The Council requested that a summary of upcoming international meetings or events to be attended by ARPANSA is tabled at each Council meeting in future.

6. Working Groups

Item 6.1 Working Group 4 – Emergency reference levels

Dr Grzechnik

The Council discussed the options to change or keep the existing emergency reference level. The Council was presented with a case study of Fukushima and a best practice approach to establishing reference levels for a radiological emergency with consideration to its transition to an existing exposure situation. It was noted that ARPANSA has had an Existing Exposure Guide (RPS G-2) on its website for public comment. The Council agreed that there was no justification to change the current emergency reference level, and endorsed advice to be provided in a letter to the CEO of ARPANSA in due course.

Item 6.2 Working Group 4 – Future scope

Dr Hirth

The Council heard a range of potential items for future discussion in order to make recommendations to the CEO on key priorities for emergency preparedness and response in Australia, and agreed the working group would refine a list for consideration at its next meeting.

Item 6.3 Working Group 6 – Ultraviolet (UV) radiation

Dr Hirth

The Council was provided with an update on work undertaken to build and strengthen relationships in UV monitoring research, including an engagement proposal for monitoring in cooperation with the Commonwealth Games. Key strategy areas where the Council can provide input and advice to ARPANSA's UV strategy were identified. The possible contributions of ARPANSA to provide advice on consumer products and to undertake population surveys to gain data on skin cancer rates were discussed. Terms of reference for the working group are to be developed for Council to consider, and help identify ARPANSA's niche role in this space, at its next meeting.

Item 6.4 Working Group 3 – Advice to the CEO of ARPANSA on Linear No Threshold (LNT) Mr Harris

An ARPANSA position statement on the appropriate use of the Linear No Threshold (LNT) model was reviewed. Following discussion and amendments, a final version was endorsed to be provided to the CEO of ARPANSA in due course.

Item 6.5 Working Group 2 – Guidelines and decision support tools for requestors of imaging Chair

The Council considered the issue of inappropriate referrals for diagnostic imaging and the steady increase in exposure to medical radiations. The Council heard a presentation via video-link from the President of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists (RANZCR), Dr Greg Slater, about their review of options for guidelines and decision support tools for those who request imaging.

Item 6.6 Working Group 2 – Next steps

Chair

The Council agreed to obtain the publicly available guides “Imaging Gently” and “Imaging Wisely” from the United States of America on the appropriate requesting of imaging to consider, at its next meeting, for their adaption and use more widely in an Australian context. It also agreed to consider at its next meeting the role of ARPANSA in promoting education and training in appropriate requesting of imaging.

7. Other business

Item 7.1 Review of Action List

Chair

Members agreed the actions arising from the meeting.

Item 7.2 Upcoming meetings – locations and dates

Chair

The dates of upcoming meetings in 2017 remain unchanged:

- 5-6 June
- 16-17 November

Item 7.3 Close of meeting

Chair

The Chair closed the meeting.