



## Nuclear Safety Committee

### Meeting Minutes

- Date:** 1 November 2019
- Time:** 10:00 to 16:00
- Location:** Level 3, 38-40 Urunga Parade, Miranda
- Chair:** Dr Tamie Weaver
- Members:** Ms Fay Bellis, Mr Tony Irwin, Ms Kerrie-Ann Christian, Dr Carl-Magnus Larsson, Dr John Loy, Mr Stuart Parr, Mr Don Macnab, Dr Peta Miller, Dr Joanna Wriedt
- Apologies:** Mr Ian Drinnan, Mr Peter Wilkinson
- Secretariat:** Mr Chris Nickel, Mr John Ward
- Invitees:** Ms Francesca Wigney, Mr Vaz Mottl, Mr Robert Godfrey;  
Ms Rachael Ayong, Mr Hefin Griffiths (ANSTO)
- Observers:** None

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#### 1. Introduction

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##### Item 1.1 Attendance and Apologies

There were two apologies for this meeting, Mr Peter Wilkinson and Mr Ian Drinnan. All other members were present.

##### Item 1.2 Declaration of Potential Conflicts of Interests

The Nuclear Safety Committee (the Committee) noted Mr Irwin's' declaration of a potential conflict of interest due to his involvement in the Federal Parliamentary Committee Inquiry into the prerequisites for nuclear energy in Australia. This did not include a specific conflict with any particular item in the agenda, but was of a general nature.

Dr Miller reminded the Committee of her previously declared potential conflict of interest, due to her role in the preparation of the ANSTO Health external independent assessment report, which was discussed under item 4.1.

Previously declared potential conflicts of interest are maintained by the Secretariat.

### Item 1.3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Draft minutes of the previous meeting were circulated to members following the meeting. Member comments were addressed and the minutes have been agreed and published online.

### Item 1.4 Meeting Dates

The following meeting dates were reviewed and confirmed:

- 6 March 2020
- 26 June 2020
- 30 October 2020

### Item 1.5 Safety/Security Moment

A Committee member presented a safety moment related to the Boeing 737 MAX aircraft. This included considerations on the role of regulatory oversight, and the importance of safety assessments considering the effects of cumulative change.

## 2. Business Arising

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### Item 2.1 Outstanding Actions

The Committee noted that all outstanding actions were completed.

## 3. Correspondence

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### Item 3.1 Incoming Correspondence

None

### Item 3.2 Outgoing Correspondence

None

## 4. Main Items for Discussion

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### Item 4.1 ANSTO Safety Assurance Process Update

The Committee was provided with an overview of proposed updates to safety assurance processes at the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO), which included a presentation on the proposed processes by ANSTO staff. The proposed process is being considered by ARPANSA under a submission for a [change with significant implications for safety](#), under section 63 of the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Regulations 2018 (the Regulations). The Committee provided comments, which will be considered as part of ARPANSA's review and assessment of the submission.

The Committee highlighted the importance of:

- measures to ensure availability of suitably trained qualified and experienced staff in the process, for both technical expertise and for other safety considerations such as human factors
- clarity of how oversight is maintained by relevant staff, including the Chief Nuclear and Chief Executive Officers of ANSTO
- clarity and consistency of key terms, such as high hazard/risk/impact, particularly where these affect the level of approval required
- clarity of purpose and scope, for example whether environmental impacts are captured, and the scope of the exemptions listed in the document
- how operational oversight of the system is maintained, including at what level(s) approvals are required
- how the safety assurance process will be analysed and lessons learnt implemented, to drive continuous improvement of the process
- clear allocation of responsibility and accountability for safety, including that safety related function and responsibilities should be recognised and acknowledged in all key documentation such as position descriptions and performance appraisals
- how the described review mechanisms interface with assurance processes not part of this process, such as the monitoring of controls assessed to be critical to safety. For example, how feedback of the operational experience, of how the controls perform in the workplace, will be recorded and used.

**ACTION: Members were invited to submit any additional comments on the proposal to the Secretariat by 14 November 2019.**

#### **Item 4.2 Regulator Performance Framework (RPF)**

The Committee was provided with the self-assessment report required under the Australian Government's Regulator Performance Framework (RPF). The report measures performance against six key performance indicators to assess the efficiency of the entity's regulatory performance and engagement with stakeholders.

As the ministerially-approved external validator, the Committee was requested to review and validate the report using a format provided by the Commonwealth Department of Health. The Committee completed this review, and requested that minor changes be made by ARPANSA to more clearly communicate to the public the considerations and evidence used in the report.

**ACTION: The secretariat to circulate an updated RPF Report to members by 5 November 2019.**

**ACTION: Unless objections had been raised in relation to the previous action item, the Chair of the NSC to complete and sign the validation by Friday 8 November 2019.**

## 5. Update on Major Controlled Facilities and Inspections

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### Item 5.1 OPAL

The Committee was provided with an overview of the ANSTO Open Pool Australian Lightwater (OPAL) reactor regulatory performance, including the consideration of recent applications for approval to make a [change with significant implications for safety](#) under section 63 of the Regulations. These changes were related to the design basis accidents analysis and the associated operating limits and conditions.

### Item 5.2 ANSTO Health Independent Review

*Dr Miller declared a potential conflict of interest with this item due to her role as part of the Independent Review Team. The Committee determined that Dr Miller should take part in the discussion.*

The Committee was provided with version four of the ANSTO corrective action plan to address the recommendations of the independent review of safety practices at ANSTO, which was submitted to ARPANSA for approval on 30 August 2019. The submission was undertaken in conformance with a direction issued by the CEO of ARPANSA on 29 June 2018.

The Committee noted ARPANSA's review of the revised action plan, and the preliminary intention to approve the plan, accompanied by a targeted monitoring and inspection program to ensure that the issues identified in the review are adequately addressed and the desired improvements are achieved and sustained. This includes areas such as dealing with allegations of poor behaviour in the workplace, and the systems to ensure safety oversight at an executive level. These activities will be co-ordinated with COMCARE, the federal workplace health and safety regulator, where appropriate.

The Committee noted the information provided, and endorsed ARPANSA's approach.

### Item 5.3 The Molybdenum-99 Production Facility

The Committee was provided with an overview of regulatory performance of the Molybdenum-99 Production Facility (MPF; formerly known as the ANSTO Nuclear Medicine Facility, or ANM) since the last NSC meeting.

This included an update on the accident involving exposure to the hands of workers above statutory limits of 21 June 2019, and the failure of a valve in a hot cell, which resulted in a disruption to nuclear medicine production. The valve failure resulted in the temporary reduction of Defence in Depth, though there was no breach of licence conditions or operational limits and conditions of the facility. The remedial actions associated with replacement of the valve were subject to regulatory approval under section 63 of the Regulations.

### Item 5.4 Other Facilities

The Committee was provided with an overview of other relevant regulatory activities. This including inspections, applications and evaluation of compliance, of regulated facilities.

### Item 5.5 Discussion on Safety at Controlled Facilities

The Committee did not raise any significant concerns or issues with the safety considerations presented.

## 6. Reports

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### Item 6.1 ARPANSA Significant Activities

The CEO provided an update on significant ARPANSA activities. This included ARPANSA's submission to the House of Representatives Parliamentary Committee inquiry into the prerequisites for nuclear energy in Australia. Submissions are available [online](#).

### Item 6.2 Radiation Health and Safety Advisory Council

No Radiation Health and Safety Advisory Council meetings have been held since the previous NSC meeting. Minutes of the previous meetings can be downloaded from the [ARPANSA website](#).

### Item 6.3 Radiation Health Committee

No Radiation Health Committee meetings have been held since the previous NSC meeting. The minutes of the previous meetings can be downloaded from the [ARPANSA website](#).

### Item 6.4 Member Representing the Interest of the General Public Update

No submissions to the member representing the interest of the general public were received.

## Other Business

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### Item 6.5 Safety Culture Assessment

The Committee was provided with a brief overview of the safety culture self-assessment currently being undertaken of ARPANSA. This assessment will help the Agency to better evaluate and understand its safety culture and to develop Action Plans to help build an enhanced culture. This assessment is the follow-on from the pilot assessment of the Regulatory Services Branch, which successfully delivered a report and action plan.

## 7. Information on Nuclear Safety Matters and Regulatory Activities

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### Item 7.1 Travel Reports

The Committee noted the item.

### Item 7.2 Public Consultations and Publications

The Committee noted the item.

## 8. Closure and Next Meeting

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The meeting closed at 16:00, the next meeting is scheduled for Friday, 6 March 2020.