



## Nuclear Safety Committee

### Meeting Minutes

<b>Date:</b>	13 August 2020
<b>Time:</b>	10:00 to 13:40
<b>Location:</b>	Microsoft Teams, hosted by ARPANSA
<b>Chair:</b>	Dr Tamie Weaver
<b>Members:</b>	Ms Fay Bellis, Mr Tony Irwin, Ms Kerrie-Ann Christian, Mr Ian Drinnan, Dr Carl-Magnus Larsson, Dr John Loy, Mr Stuart Parr, Mr Don Macnab, Dr Peta Miller, Mr Peter Wilkinson, Dr Joanna Wriedt
<b>Apologies:</b>	None
<b>Secretariat:</b>	Mr Chris Nickel, Mr John Ward
<b>Invitees:</b>	Mr James Scott, Mr Robert Godfrey, Ms Julie Murray, Ms Joy Ho, Ms Serene Mukattash (ARPANSA)
<b>Observers:</b>	None

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#### 1. Introduction

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Due to travel restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic this meeting was held using video conferencing methods and was shortened compared to the normal full-day meeting.

##### Item 1.1 Attendance and Apologies

There were no apologies for this meeting, all members were present.

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

One conflict of interest was declared out of session which was discussed at the meeting. Mr Wilkinson declared a potential conflict due to his organisation commencing work with a licence holder (ANSTO). Steps have been taken by Mr Wilkinson's employer to ensure that Mr Wilkinson is not directly involved in this work, and for him to recuse himself from the Committee's deliberations should matters that relate to his duties be raised. The arrangements had been reviewed by the Committee Chair and by ARPANSA's CEO and General Counsel. The Committee raised no objections.

No new conflicts were declared at the meeting, and previously declared potential conflicts of interest are maintained by the Secretariat.

### **Item 1.3 CEO of ARPANSA's overview**

The CEO of ARPANSA provided a brief overview of how arrangements at ARPANSA have changed during the COVID-19 pandemic, including changes impacting its advisory bodies (the Radiation Health and Safety Advisory Council, the Radiation Health Committee and the Nuclear Safety Committee).

The CEO also gave an overview of the COVID safe working arrangements across the ARPANSA offices. This included the importance of staying connected, and for obtaining valuable information and input via new means, which are necessary to accommodate for the changed circumstances. While there have been impacts, work is progressing generally well and critical services continue to be delivered. A fortnightly 'pulse check' survey is undertaken of all staff to gauge their general wellbeing and ability to satisfactorily carry out work under the new work arrangements. The majority of staff are coping well with the impacts. In the longer term, travel restrictions will make it difficult to ensure that some key services such as the Australian Clinical Dosimetry Service (ACDS) can be undertaken, and arrangements for these continue to evolve. Regulatory inspections are being undertaken largely remotely but with some physical presence on site. At this time this is not believed to have had a significant impact on ARPANSA's regulatory oversight. While so far no concerning impact on safety performance of the licence holders had been observed, these arrangements are not considered to be appropriate in the longer term. The Committee agreed that best practice was for regulators to have a strong on-site presence in the workplaces that they regulate.

The Committee was introduced to two new staff that recently joined ARPANSA's Regulatory Services Branch. Ms Joy Ho is a psychologist and will support ARPANSA's strategic development and review of human and organisational factors. Ms Serene Mukattash is an engineer with international experience of nuclear regulation, including research reactors and power reactors. These staff represent a strong addition to ARPANSA's regulatory team.

### **Item 1.4 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 1.5 Meeting Dates**

The following meeting dates were reviewed and confirmed:

- 13 November 2020

Additional provisional meeting dates for the upcoming triennium were reviewed, and it was noted that ARPANSA will confirm these dates once appointments have been finalised.

### **Item 1.6 Safety/Security Moment**

The Committee was presented a safety moment related to incidents from the latest Australian Radiation Incident register report, which is published on the [website](#). The moment focused on how systems design and technology had contributed to incidents. Some systems put in place as part of responses to COVID-19 may not have gone through as thorough a design and testing process as they would have under normal circumstances, and thus may not take into account the full range of uses to which they have been put. This highlights the importance of users recognising that systems were designed with a specific set of uses in mind, and a reliance on being used in a certain way.

## 2. Business Arising

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### Item 2.1 Outstanding Actions

The Committee noted that all outstanding actions were completed.

### Item 2.2 Safety Assessment Guidance

ARPANSA has prepared a draft Guide to assist licence holders in preparing Safety Analysis Report (SAR). The NSC provided feedback on the draft guide. These comments focused on ways to enhance the readability and ensure content and requirements are clear to the reader. Aspects needing to be improved include:

- a section including a clear definition, context and objective of the SAR;
- practical advice on what needs to be submitted as part of the SAR and how a graded approach should be applied
- clarification on the supporting evidence that should be included or referenced.

ARPANSA thanked the Committee for their feedback, which together with other feedback received will help refine the document.

The Committee was also provided with a brief overview of a separate project which will review ARPANSA's guidance to licence holders. This review covers the content, style, presentation and utility of all ARPANSA guidance.

## 3. Correspondence

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### Item 3.1 Incoming Correspondence

One enquiry was received for the member representing the interest of the general public, see item 6.4.

### Item 3.2 Outgoing Correspondence

None

## 4. Main Items for Discussion

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### Item 4.1 Proposed National Waste Management Facility Update

The Committee was provided with an overview of progress including interactions with Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DAWE), the Barnagarla Determination Aboriginal Corporation (BDAC), and Senate Economic Legislative Committee. The Committee noted the National Radioactive Waste Management Amendment (Site Specification, Community Fund and Other Measures) Bill 2020 and the establishment of the Australian Radioactive Waste Agency (ARWA).

Feedback from the Committee included:

- The interaction with the newly formed ARWA is a complex matter. It is important to ensure that the new entity, and relevant decision makers, have the information and advice needed to facilitate the lodgement of a high-quality application. ARPANSA needs to make clear the expectations for

licencing whilst maintaining a clear delineation to ensure there is not any, real or perceived, loss of integrity of the regulatory process. The role of applicant and licence holder must be clearly defined and well implemented to maintain the fundamental principle that the applicant retains responsibility for safety.

- It is important for ARPANSA continue to engage with all key stakeholders, including community, industry and potential future applicants throughout the process.
- The ARWA resources and competencies will be one of the key considerations ARPANSA should assess. The human, financial, and technical capacity will have to be described within the application for each licence stage of the facility lifecycle. This could include competencies gained from international and national organisations, and is expected to be built up over time prior to an application for a licence to prepare a site being submitted and, provided a licence has been granted, then demonstrated throughout subsequent steps of the licensing process.
- The role of State and Territory regulatory bodies is important.
- It is positive to note that the site selection process for Intermediate Level Waste (ILW) disposal is part of the remit of the new agency.

## 5. Update on Major Controlled Facilities and Inspections

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### Item 5.1 ANSTO Nuclear Medicine Facility

The Committee was provided with an overview of regulatory performance of the ANSTO Nuclear Medicine Facility (ANM) since the last NSC meeting. This includes ARPANSA receiving submissions related to revised risk assessments, training of senior managers on dealing with conflicting production and safety imperatives, and waste across the life-cycle of the facility. The revised risk assessment has resulted in 20 recommendations being identified by ANSTO. The priority for implementation of the recommendations has been allocated based upon the residual risk.

The Committee noted the importance of ANSTO considering human and organisational factor and the importance of adequately considering inherent risk, rather than focusing on probabilistic assessments of residual risk.

### Item 5.2 Other Facilities

The Committee was provided with an overview of other relevant regulatory activities. This included the inspections, applications and evaluation of compliance, of regulated facilities. A progress overview was provided on the ANSTO Health Products self-assessment review's action plan. This also included an overview of COVID-19 preparedness and response initiatives undertaken by licence holders and inspection staff. No significant issues were raised.

## 6. Reports

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### Item 6.1 ARPANSA Significant Activities

See item 1.3

## **Item 6.2 Radiation Health and Safety Advisory Council**

The minutes of the meetings can be downloaded from the [ARPANSA website](#) once published.

*Note: this topic was not further discussed at the meeting.*

## **Item 6.3 Radiation Health Committee**

The minutes of the meetings can be downloaded from the [ARPANSA website](#) once published.

*Note: this topic was not further discussed at the meeting.*

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

One correspondence related to the radioactive waste repository, and the related senate inquiry, was forwarded to the member representing the interest of the general public. The topic was discussed in item 4.1, and the correspondence was noted. The correspondence had not yet been formally closed off, and the member representing the interests of the general public will respond to the inquiry.

## **7. Other Business**

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### **Item 7.1 NSC member Appointments**

The Committee noted that applications are due by 31 August 2020.

## **8. Information on Nuclear Safety Matters and Regulatory Activities**

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### **Item 8.1 Travel Reports**

The Committee noted the item.

### **Item 8.2 Public Consultations and Publications**

The Committee noted the item.

## **9. Closure and Next Meeting**

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The meeting closed at 13:40, the next meeting is scheduled for Friday, 13 November 2020.