



Radiation Health Committee

Meeting Minutes

- Date:** 22 July 2020
- Time:** 9:30 am to 1:30 pm
- Location:** Virtual
- Chair:** Dr Roslyn Drummond
- Members:** Dr Roslyn Drummond (Chair); Ms Fay Bellis (Public Representative); Mr Mark Carey (NSW); Mr Noel Cleaves (VIC); Mr Simon Critchley (QLD); Mr Bradley Feldtman (NT); Ms Penny Hill (ACT, partly attended); Dr Massey de los Reyes (SA); Dr Carl-Magnus Larsson (CEO of ARPANSA); Dr Stephen Newbery (TAS); Dr Joanna Wriedt (NSC Member)
- Secretariat:** Dr Samir Sarkar and Mr Selva Kumar, National Codes & Standards Section, ARPANSA
- Scribe:** -
- Apologies:** Dr Bruce Hocking (Member), Ms Hazel Upton (WA)
- Invitees:** Mr Ryan Hemsley (ARPANSA)
 Mr Glenn Riley (VIC)
 Dr Rick Tinker (ARPANSA, for items 3.1.1; 3.3)
 Dr Peter Thomas (ARPANSA, for item 3.2)
 Mr Nathan Wahl (ARPANSA, for item 4.1)
 Dr Ken Karipidis (ARPANSA, for item 3.3)
 Mr Loch Castle (for item 3.4)
- Observers:** Dr Gillian Hirth (Chief Radiation Health Scientist – ARPANSA); Dr Ivan Williams (Chief Medical Radiation Scientist – ARPANSA); Mr Jim Scott (Chief Regulatory Officer – ARPANSA), Ms Lara Purdy (Department of Health); Ms Maryka Gaudio (Department of Health); Mr Andreas Markwitz (New Zealand)

1. Introduction and Standing Items

Item 1.1 Welcome by the Chair

Chair

The Chair called the meeting to order. Committee Members were advised that Ms Lara Purdy replaced Ms Sarah Norris of the Department of Health as an observer. Members were also advised that this meeting was primarily intended to monitor progress on a number of projects at a time when many members and regulatory agencies are tasked with managing the societal impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. National Uniformity

Item 2.1 RHC/RHERP interface

Dr Larsson/Dr Newbery

Dr Newbery shared his thoughts about the governance arrangements for the Guidance and Expectations document, which is presented under Item 3.2. He stated that the governance arrangements could be facilitated by placing information on a number of Teams sites to test the process. Dr Newbery informed that Radiation Health Expert Reference Panel (RHERP) showed interest in this document. Dr Larsson referred to the action from the March 2020 meeting that had been assigned to him, related to a discussion paper on the responsibilities of the RHC, Radiation Protection Network (RPN) and the enHealth RHERP, and describing how they can work together in the future to improve efficiency and effectiveness by avoiding duplication of effort. He emphasised the need for using a top-down approach to the development of the Codes and Guides needed for Australia. Dr Larsson suggested to focus on 10-15 high level documents. He stated that the discussion paper, due at the next meeting, will include a systematic approach to defining the 'end state'. Dr Newbery and Ms Bellis indicated that they would assist in preparing the discussion paper.

Item 2.2 Competency requirements - non-medical

Dr Newbery

Dr Newbery presented the proposed competencies for users of fixed radiation gauges and mobile soil density and moisture gauges, which is a continuation of an earlier RHC project that had subsequently been paused. Dr Newbery suggested that if the RHC agree to the proposed competencies then a similar approach could be applied to other non-medical areas. Discussion took place on the competencies for user versus the competencies for Radiation Safety Officer (RSO), noting that the RSO is also a user. The Members noted that it took considerable time to formulate an agreed position on competency requirements. Dr Larsson suggested that members should consider the proposed competency requirements out of session. The Members agreed to develop competencies based on earlier RHC work for other non-medical users of radiation sources.

Decision 2020-04: Members agreed to develop additional competencies for non-medical use of radiation sources.

Action 2020-25: Members to provide feedback on the proposed competencies out of session, and Dr Newbery to finalise the current project incorporating Members' feedback and report at the next RHC meeting in November 2020.

Item 2.3 RPN activity update

Dr Newbery

Dr Newbery provided an update on RPN activities. He stated that a considerable number of activities were occurring through Teams including discussion about 'workbook', shielding etc. He stated that the RPN platform was beneficial for sharing information as users could post issues and upload files for information and discussion. The Members noted the update on RPN activities.

Item 2.4 Proposed RHC Statement on personal dosimeters and CT-baggage scanners**Mr Carey**

Mr Carey presented the background and purpose of the proposed RHC Statement. He referred to investigations into several high dose reports that had been attributed to exposure of personal radiation monitoring devices (PRMDs) during CT-based carry-on baggage security scanning at airports. It was noted that false high doses might impact workers' ability to perform their duties. Further, investigation of these incidents generates additional work for both the employer and regulator. The Members agreed in principle with the proposed statement and advised it would be beneficial to discuss this matter with the Aviation Security of the Department of Home Affairs. Mr Castle advised that ARPANSA agreed to communicate with the Department of Home Affairs on this matter.

Action 2020-26: ARPANSA to communicate the draft Statement to Department of Home Affairs and report at the next RHC meeting in November 2020.

After-note: ARPANSA has initiated the communication with Department of Home Affairs and shared the draft RHC Statement.

3. RHC Work Program

Item 3.1 RHC projects update**Dr Sarkar**

Dr Sarkar presented an update on progress of the current RHC projects. A number of projects were discussed under agenda items 3.1.1 to 3.5.

Item 3.1.1 Revision of RPS and RHS documents**Dr Newbery**

Dr Newbery presented the status of the workbooks for the RPS and RHS documents under revision. He informed that discussions with content developers were held in early July 2020. The workbooks for a number of RPS and RHS documents have progressed to an advanced stage. These include RPS 5, RPS 9, RPS 10, RPS 13, RHS 9, RHS 21, RHS 22 and RHS 28. The guidance and agreed regulatory expectations could be progressed quickly as no Regulatory Impact Statement would be required. Based on the workbook of RHS 28, Dr Newbery advised that this document could be drafted into a practice specific code, and guidance and regulatory expectations.

Dr Sarkar stated that the workbook for RHS 24 was being further revised to progress the document to a final stage.

Mr Cleaves suggested that the end product of the workbook analysis would be a Code pending the authorisation model, which will take considerable time. It was noted that the PEC provided most of the requirements applicable to non-medical areas. The Members agreed to progress the development of guidance and agreed regulatory expectations documents for the RPS and RHS documents that have been reviewed.

RPS 20 update (RPS G-4)

Dr Larsson stated that he was reworking the revised RPS 20 for better clarity and flow of information without altering key aspects of the document. He would provide the updated RPS 20 (RPS G-4) out of session or at the next meeting in November 2020.

Action 2020-27: Tasmania to lead the development of RPS 10 and RHS 28; Victoria to lead the development of RPS 5, RPS 13, RHS 9, RHS 21 and RHS 22; ARPANSA to lead the development of RPS 9 and RHS 24; all to report at the next RHC meeting in November 2020.

Action 2020-28: Dr Larsson to present the revised RPS 20 (RPS G-4) out of session or at the next RHC meeting in November.

Item 3.2 Guidance for implementation of the Medical Exposure Code (MEC) Dr Newbery

Dr Newbery presented the Guidance and Regulatory Expectations for diagnostic and interventional radiology, supporting implementation of the Medical Exposure Code (MEC). He described the process of developing this document, primarily on the basis of the IAEA SSG-46 and RANZCR Standards of Practice and Diagnostic Imaging Accreditation Scheme. A 'workbook' method, similar to that being used for review of RPS and RHS documents, had been used to develop the document. Dr Newbery requested Members to provide comments through Teams. He stated that once the RHC is satisfied, RHERP can work towards implementation. The Members thanked Dr Newbery for his work. The document will be sent out for final comment out of session and all comments should be provided in a month's time. After receiving comments, the document will be finalised in two months' time.

Dr Newbery also suggested to develop additional documents covering radiation therapy and nuclear medicine. The Members agreed.

Action 2020-29: Members to provide comment Guidance and Regulatory Expectations document in one month; Dr Newbery to address the comments and send the document out of session in two months for approval.

Action 2020-30: Tasmania to lead the development of a similar document for Nuclear Medicine and ARPANSA to lead the development of a document for Radiation Therapy.

Item 3.3 Revised RPS 3 (RPS S-1) Dr Karipidis

Dr Karipidis provided an overview of RPS S-1, intended to supersede RPS 3. The document had been circulated out of session for comment, closing 31 July 2020. He presented a summary of the changes in the RPS S-1, compared to RPS 3. The Members acknowledged the quality of the document and thanked the working group for their work. The document was endorsed to go out for public consultation.

Decision 2020-05: Endorsed RPS S-1 to go out for public consultation.

Item 3.4 Sealed source register and security background checking network Mr Carey/Mr Castle

Mr Carey provided an update on sealed source register, security background checking and financial provision for disused sources, which are IRRS recommendations. Draft plans for these projects were also presented. Mr Carey indicated that he aimed to present this work to RHERP by November and to enHealth by March 2021. Regarding resourcing of these projects Mr Carey stated that he would expect that enHealth/RHERP would provide resources under the COAG model. Dr Larsson suggested that ARPANSA monitor these projects closely, considering their coupling to the recommendations from the WHO Joint Expert Evaluation. The Members noted the update on these projects and agreed to include these projects as a standing RHC agenda item.

Action 2020-31: Mr Carey to keep the RHC informed on the progress of these projects.

4. General Information Items

Item 4.1 COAG update

Mr Wahl

Mr Wahl provided an update on the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). He informed that the newly formed National Federation Reform Council had replaced the COAG. Details of the review of the former COAG Councils and Ministerial Forums are available at the following link

<https://www.pmc.gov.au/domestic-policy/effective-commonwealth-state-relations>

Regarding NDRP 2, Mr Wahl indicated that the document appeared to have been put on hold until the National Cabinet review of COAG Councils and Ministerial Forums is finalised.

Action 2020-32: The Members noted the update on COAG and the National Federation Reform Council.

5. Closing

Item 5.1 Any other business

Chair

Item 5.1.1 Email from a licenced operator

Members

An email from a licenced operator regarding establishing a national register of radiation apparatus use licence holders with a view to promote national uniformity in licence recognition was discussed. The email stated that SA operated a national register, which permits an interstate licence holder to conduct work in SA for a period of up to six weeks per calendar year without a SA licence. Dr de los Reyes clarified that while SA does not operate a national register of this nature, an exemption provision is in place in the SA legislation to assess each request to work in SA on a case by case basis. Considering that there are no uniform exemption provisions across the jurisdictions it was agreed to verbally advise the operator and explain the jurisdictional position on exemptions.

Action 2020-33: Mr Scott to contact the licenced operator explaining jurisdictional position related to provisions of exemption.

After-note: On 30 July 2020, Mr Scott sent an email advising of the summary of discussion at the RHC meeting held on 22 July 2020.

Item 5.1.2 Engagement with MRPB

Dr Newbery

Dr Newbery informed that he had a discussion with the CEO of MRPB as part of ongoing engagement with MRPB. The discussion on competency and user licence was very constructive and useful.

Item 5.2 Next Meeting –18 -19 November 2020

Chair

The next RHC meeting will be held on 18 -19 November 2020. Details of the meeting will be circulated in due course and may be subject to changes due to the ongoing pandemic.