



Radiation Health & Safety Advisory Council (RHSAC)

Meeting Minutes

- Date:** 16-17 November 2017
- Time:** 12.00pm-5.00pm (day 1) and 9.00am-4.00pm (day 2)
- Location:** 38-40 Urunga Parade, Miranda NSW 2228
- Chair:** Dr Roger Allison
- Members:** Mr Keith Baldry, Dr Jane Canestra, Ms Melissa Holzberger, Dr Carl Magnus Larsson, Mr Niall Byrne, Prof Pamela Sykes, Dr Melanie Taylor, Mr Simon Critchley, Ms Geraldine Robertson, Mr Frank Harris, Dr Hugh Heggie
- Apologies:** Melissa Holzberger (day 1), Prof Adele Green (both days)
- Secretariat:** Mr James Wheaton, Mr Ben Paritsky
- Invitees:** Dr Gillian Hirth, Dr Rick Tinker, Dr Ivan Williams, Mr Jim Scott, Mr Ryan Hemsley, Dr Marcus Grzechnik, Ms Kathryn Green, Ms Tone Doyle
- Observers:** None

1. Standing items

Item 1.1 Meeting opening and confirmation of minutes

The chair welcomed all attendees and noted the apologies listed above. The minutes of the June 2017 meeting were noted as having been agreed out-of-session. The outcomes of the June 2017 meeting action items were reviewed.

Item 1.2 Update from RHC and NSC

The CEO of ARPANSA provided an update on the Radiation Health Committee (RHC) meeting on 15 November 2017, noting key discussions on the Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) mission, national uniformity, and a number of draft codes and guides progressing towards public consultation.

The CEO also provided an update on the Nuclear Safety Committee (NSC) meeting on 20 October 2017, noting it approved ARPANSA's Regulatory Performance Framework (RPF) self-assessment report for 2016-17, and discussed the application from the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) for a licence to operate the ANSTO Nuclear Medicine (ANM) Facility.

Action: Circulate the RPF self-assessment report when published.

Item 1.3 CEO update on the activities of ARPANSA

The CEO noted proposed re-alignments within ARPANSA's Regulatory Services Branch (RSB), with national uniformity efforts and promotion of holistic safety (the organisation-technology-people interface) as major drivers for the changes.

Item 1.3.1 National Radioactive Waste Management Facility (NRWMF) update

It was noted that ARPANSA would soon visit Kimba and Hawker, SA to explain ARPANSA's regulatory role and other functions of the agency. The Department of Industry Innovation and Science (DIIS) is considering sites near these towns for the proposed NRWMF.

Item 1.4 International engagement update

ARPANSA's role in the Australian delegation at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) General Conference (Sept 2017) was highlighted. ARPANSA held a range of bilateral meetings with safety agencies (mainly those with whom ARPANSA has memoranda of understanding) and with IAEA counterparts. Discussions included preparations for the Integrated Regulatory Review Service Mission to Australia in November 2018, emergency preparedness and response media communications, and waste management. ARPANSA had key input to the Safety Resolution, including on safety of transportable nuclear power plants.

Council noted a number of other activities of international engagement, including regional outreach missions to Malaysia, the Philippines and China, ARPANSA's signing of a bilateral agreement with Singapore's National Environment Agency, and a recent visit to ARPANSA from the Secretary General of Thailand's Office of Atoms for Peace. It was also noted that ARPANSA has had input to two United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR) white papers, with one now published.

Action: Circulate the published UNSCEAR Fukushima 2017 White Paper into which ARPANSA had input.

Item 1.4.1 Upcoming international meetings or events

Council noted an upcoming visit to ARPANSA from the Norwegian Radiation Protection Authority to discuss issues related to radioactive waste and visiting nuclear-powered warships, and from the Indonesian Nuclear Energy Regulatory Agency with the intention to reconfirm the existing Memorandum of Understanding.

Item 1.5 Report from the member representing the interest of the general public

An update was provided on the issue of diagnostic imaging referrals and inappropriate requesting, a topic of discussion at recent meetings. A review of the Medicare Benefits Schedule by the Diagnostic Medicine Clinical Committee concluded, in its second Report (approved by the Review's Taskforce but awaiting release for public comment), that clinical decision support tools should be used for diagnostic imaging referrals. It was recommended that ARPANSA should comment on the report and discuss this issue further with the Department of Health, adding its support for this recommendation. It was suggested an ARPANSA working group could liaise with the Department.

Due to the mounting tensions between North Korea and the United States and the risk of nuclear force, the provision of advice to the public was raised and discussion deferred to agenda Item 9.1 at this meeting.

Action: Circulate Diagnostic Imaging Clinical Committee report.

Item 1.5.1 ARPANSA public enquiries dashboard

Statistics on recent enquiries to ARPANSA were discussed, noting that the issues of '5G communications' and nuclear weapons have been added as categories, given a recent increase in enquiries received on these topics, particularly from media and government sources.

Action: Include media enquiry statistics for this item at future meetings.

2. Quick reviews

Item 2.1 Precautionary approach to IR, UVR and EMR (working group 3)

A paper was presented on the current state of progress towards guidance around the low dose effects of ultraviolet and electromagnetic radiation (UVR/EMR). It was noted that ARPANSA can bring further developments on UVR/EMR advice to Council for consideration at the relevant time in the future.

Action: Working group 3 is closed with further issues to be brought to Council in the future as separate items.

Item 2.2 Emergency Exposure Situations

Council was provided with an update on the progress of emergency preparedness and response activities within ARPANSA. It was noted that the IAEA's draft publication *DS475 - Arrangements for Public Communication in Preparedness and Response for a Nuclear or Radiological Emergency* was circulated to Council for input. Council were also updated on a nearly-completed draft emergency radiation exposure guide, Radiation Protection Series (G-3), that will be in three parts relevant to the different phases of an emergency and target user groups. Issues related to first-responders in a radiological emergency and the treatment of different hazards were flagged as potential matters to be brought to Council in the future.

Action: The previous action item for Council to develop a communications strategy is removed, with further issues to be brought to the next meeting.

Item 2.3 Data use and digital strategy (working group)

An update on ARPANSA's approach to data use and its digital strategy was provided, following the establishment of a 'data use and digital strategy' working group at the June 2017 meeting. ARPANSA presented a proposal for Council to have input on an element of its digital strategy implementation.

Action: Consider the draft objectives of the ARPANSA digital strategy Focus Areas and provide comments in response to the paper at the next Council meeting.

Item 2.4 Medical radiation update

Council was updated on the review of ARPANSA's Radiation Protection of the Patient (RPOP) and Radiation Protection of the Medical Practitioner (RPOMP) advisory material. It was noted that the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) has started using RPOP and ARPANSA has engaged AHPRA on the future development of the RPOMP publication.

Action: The re-designed RPOP product is to be circulated for Council members' input when available.

3. Action item outcomes for endorsement

Item 3.1 National uniformity – letter of support

A draft letter to the CEO of ARPANSA tabled for consideration was discussed and minor amendments made.

Action: Council agreed that the Chair would sign the letter to the CEO of ARPANSA strongly endorsing pursuit of the RHC proposal for, and prioritising work on, the issue of national uniformity.

Item 3.2 NORM radiation protection (working group) – terms of reference

Council discussed the proposed terms of reference for the Naturally Occurring Radioactive Material (NORM) working group established at the previous meeting. It was noted that it would be interesting to hear how other jurisdictions are dealing with NORM issues. It was also noted that ARPANSA has increasingly been asked to provide expert opinion on NORM issues, and has worked with the Department of Environment (*Commonwealth*) and the National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA) on these issues. Following in-session amendments, the Council agreed to the proposed NORM working group terms of reference.

Action: A paper is to be presented at next Council meeting in accordance with agreed terms of reference.

4. Deep dive

Item 4.1 UV Radiation

Council heard a presentation on ARPANSA's current activities and areas of opportunity in relation to ultraviolet (UV) radiation exposure. Council discussed ARPANSA's role as a regulator versus service provider in influencing behavioural change, and the benefits of 'co-branding' for effective public health messaging. ARPANSA's role in early prevention, and the challenges of influencing all levels of government to provide funding for UV initiatives was discussed. Council members strongly supported the initiative of introducing 'pop-up' UV monitoring stations with real-time UV readings at major public events.

Action: Draft a letter for Council's consideration recommending 2-4 target priority areas for ARPANSA.

5. Deep dive (continued)

Item 5.1 Radiation risk management

Council was provided with a proposed approach to the management and communication of health and environmental risk, including a visual tool to improve public messaging about the risks of different types of radiation. The proposal was endorsed as a significant improvement over existing messaging, and Council strongly endorsed the proposal for further exploration and development.

6. New items to consider

Item 6.1 Members' suggestions

It was proposed that ARPANSA considers developing guidance on the closure, handover and monitoring or surveillance for existing exposure sites. The Ranger Mine in the NT was discussed as an example of such sites, although any guidance would apply to other sites including those subject to ARPANSA regulatory decisions and surveillance.

Members suggested that Council could have input to ARPANSA's revised incident management plan for organisational emergency arrangements, and have a role advising the CEO of ARPANSA with regard to national uniformity efforts (such as that to be provided by the IRRS mission).

Item 6.2 Items flagged for next meeting

The Chair provided a summary of agenda items flagged for the next Council meeting.

Item 6.3 Future topics ARPANSA may bring to Council

The CEO of ARPANSA provided a summary of topics that ARPANSA may bring to Council to consider.

Action: Circulate excerpt from the 2017 UNSCEAR General Assembly Report ('Chapter III – Scientific report: B. Radiation exposures from electricity generation') for Council members' consideration.

7. Quick reviews

Item 7.1 Draft disposal code

Council was given an overview of ARPANSA's draft *Code for Disposal of Radioactive Waste (Radiation Protection Series C-3)*, which was approved by RHC for public consultation. A number of comments were provided in-session, particularly a recommendation to include an executive summary for context.

Action: Include an accompanying executive summary and circulate the draft disposal code to members and stakeholders for comments.

Item 7.2 ARPANSA scientific and technical knowledge and skills framework

Council was given an overview of a concept to create a framework of scientific and technical knowledge and skills for ARPANSA. It was proposed that Council members could contribute their expertise to reviewing the framework and suggesting appropriate learning materials.

Action: Circulate the draft framework to Council members when a final draft is available.

Item 7.3 ARPANSA media strategy

An overview of ARPANSA's media strategy was given to members for their input. Council members commented that ARPANSA has an important role to play both as a source of information and in educating the public, which is different to achieving brand recognition. As such, they emphasised the importance of

fostering trusting relationships with people who have access to the public in ways that ARPANSA does not, so that they can carry the message on ARPANSA's behalf when appropriate.

Action: Circulate the draft media strategy for further comments out-of-session.

Item 7.4 Radiation Health Committee (RHC) nominees

Council was consulted in accordance with section 24(3) of the *Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Act 1998* (the Act) on the CEO's proposal for membership of the Radiation Health Committee for the 2018-2020 triennium. Council endorsed the CEO's proposal.

Note added to the minutes: Council had been consulted out-of-session during October 2017, in accordance with section 27(3) of the Act, on the CEO's proposal for membership of the Nuclear Safety Committee for the 2018-2020 triennium. Council had endorsed the CEO's proposal.

8. Action item outcome for endorsement

Item 8.1 Public enquires – operational roadmap

Members considered a draft operational flowchart of the situations where public enquiries to Council will be referred to ARPANSA for reply. It was noted that the role of the member representing the public is to bring issues of public concern to Council, rather than respond to enquiries from the public on ARPANSA's behalf.

Action: Re-draft the flowchart with small amendments, including 'email and social media', for consideration out-of-session and endorsement at the next meeting in early 2018.

9. Deep dive

Item 9.1 Emergency Preparedness and Response

Council discussed ARPANSA's role in providing advice on radiological emergencies. Members commented that ARPANSA should have an ongoing role to educate and build trust with the public prior to any event. It was noted that information developed for this purpose can be general in nature and separate to messaging during an emergency event, where other jurisdictional agencies may lead a coordinated response. Information may also not be accessible to affected persons during an emergency, highlighting the importance of appropriate prior education.

Action: Draft a letter for Council to endorse advising the CEO on emergency preparedness considerations including for nuclear events.

10. New items to consider

Item 10.1 Review action items from this meeting

The action items from this meeting were reviewed.

Item 10.2 Review schedule items for next meeting

Items for the next meeting were taken as read at agenda item 6.2.

Item 10.3 Upcoming meetings – locations and dates

The date for the next meeting was set at 7-8 March 2018. The dates for remaining meetings in 2018 were tentatively set for 19-20 July 2018 and 18-19 October 2018 as previously circulated via email out-of-session.