



Radiation Health Committee

Meeting Minutes

Date	19 – 20 November 2024
Time	10:15 am – 4:30 pm (19 November), 9:00 am – 1:00 pm (20 November)
Location	ARPANSA, 619 Lower Plenty Road, Yallambie Victoria (19 November), DH Victoria, Level 9, 50 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne Victoria (20 November)
Members	Dr Joanna Wriedt (Chair), Dr Gillian Hirth (CEO of ARPANSA), Ms Fay Bellis, Mr Tom Sullivan, Mr Radomir Krsteski (Virtual, ACT), Ms Karen Marler (NSW), Mr Bradley Feldtman (NT), Mr Simon Critchley (QLD), Mr David Kruss (SA), Mr Nehal Ahmed (Virtual, Tas), Mr Glenn Riley (Vic), Ms Hazel Upton (WA)
Apologies	Mr Stuart Parr
Presenters and Observers	Ms Caitlin Waugh (ARPANSA) – Presenter (Virtual, Item 2.1), Mr Rohan Mate (ARPANSA) – Presenter (Item 2.2), Mr Erin McWilliams (ARPANSA) – Presenter (Items 3.2 – 3.3), Mr Alex Kalaiziovski (ARPANSA) – Presenter (Virtual, Item 3.4), Mr Ben Russell (Standards Australia) – Presenter (Virtual, Item 7), Mr Toby Beveridge (ARPANSA) – Presenter (Virtual, Items 9.4 – 10.1), Mr Jim Scott (ARPANSA) – Presenter (Virtual, Item 9.5), Mr Stuart Henderson (ARPANSA) – Presenter (Virtual, Item 11.1), Ms Zoe Thomas (Monash University) – Presenter (Item 12), Dr Rick Tinker (ARPANSA) – Observer (Day 1), Ms Christina Arthur (ARPANSA) – Observer, Ms Sjaan Kuiper (ARPANSA) – Observer, A/Prof Ken Karipidis (ARPANSA) – Observer (Item 12), Mr Selim Mahbub (ACT Health) – Observer (Virtual), Ms Tithi Patel (DH Vic) – Observer (Day 2), Ms Verity Haring (DH Vic) – Observer (Items 1 – 3.4), Mr Patrick Morris (DoHAC) – Observer (Virtual, Day 1), Ms Bronwen Adams (DoHAC) – Observer (Day 2), RADM Katherine Richards (NPSRD) – Observer (Day 1), LCDR Sean Dowling (NPSRD) – Observer (Day 1), Mr Brent Le Vert (NZ) – Observer (Virtual, Day 2)
Secretariat	Mr James Wheaton (Secretariat RHC), Dr Fiona Charalambous and Dr Arne Biesiekierski (Assistant secretariat RHC)

1. Meeting Open and Housekeeping

The Chair acknowledged the Wurundjeri People as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which the meeting was held, paying respects to their Elders past and present. The Chair welcomed Mr Radomir Krsteski and Mr David Kruss as the new members for the Australian Capital Territory and South Australia, respectively, and furthermore welcomed observers from Department

of Health Victoria, ACT Health, the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care, and the Nuclear-Powered Submarine Regulatory Design team.

Two additional late agenda items (medical radiation safety technology, and a Scope of Practice Review) were noted along with the prior meeting's minutes. The status of outstanding tasks from the previous meeting were covered, and two items of correspondence were noted: the first from a member of the public regarding Veterinary PET-CT, to be discussed later on the agenda; the second from the Australasian Radiation Protection Accreditation Board (ARPAB) regarding competencies for radiation protection professionals, to be discussed at the next meeting. No additional potential conflicts were declared at this meeting.

Decision: The RHC decided to discuss ARPAB correspondence at the next meeting.

2. ARPANSA CEO Update

The CEO of ARPANSA provided an update to the Radiation Health Committee (RHC) on recent ARPANSA activities. These included but were not limited to: ARPANSA's Reconciliation Action Plan; appearances of ARPANSA in Parliament, along with questions taken on notice; the activities of the Nuclear Safety Committee and Radiation Health and Safety Advisory Council; ARPANSA's International engagement; and the activities of ARPANSA's Regulatory Services, Medical Radiation Services, and Radiation Health Services Branches. Items relating to ARPANSA's Safety Culture Assessment and IAEA Safety Standards Committees were flagged for further discussion in the next meeting. There was additional discussion about the dual role of the primary standards that ARPANSA and the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) hold and operating of related services, and the RHC decided to also discuss this further at its next meeting.

Decision: The RHC decided to discuss the potential conflict of interest in holding a primary standard and operating a related service at the next meeting.

2.1. Media Enquiries Dashboard

ARPANSA presented on recent media enquiries received, noting a sharp increase in the number of enquiries and media mentions in the recent quarter, which was driven by ARPANSA's adoption of a proactive media engagement approach. The most frequent topic of enquiry related to a study showing no link between mobile phone use and brain cancer. Other key topics of enquiry included occupational radiation exposure of medical workers, the update of Australian sunscreen standards, the release of ARPANSA's radio wave exposure study in Melbourne, and the announcement of the Federal Opposition's nuclear power policy.

2.2. Public Enquiries Dashboard

ARPANSA presented on recent public enquiries received through ARPANSA's Talk to a Scientist program. Enquiries received in 2024 were comparable in number to those received by equivalent timeframes in 2022 and 2023. The greatest number of enquiries were received for telecommunications and power infrastructure, followed by personal and occupational exposure to ionising radiation.

3. Updates to the Radiation Protection Series (RPS)

3.1. Draft Code for Radiation Protection in Dental Exposure

The working group reported on the results of the public consultation on the draft Code, and changes made in response. Only minor changes were noted, which the RHC accepted. The RHC requested one further reference and recommended the Code's publication pending this inclusion. Discussion also touched on the need for and pathway towards guidance material, including the need by some jurisdictions for regulatory guidance documents before adoption of the Code.

Decision: The RHC recommends the publication of the revised draft Code, pending minor changes.

Task: Working Group to update the draft Code to include additional references.

3.2. Draft Code on Practice-Specific Requirements for Fixed and Portable Radiation Gauges

ARPANSA presented on the updated draft of the practice-specific code for the use of fixed and portable radiation gauges and detailed changes made in response to feedback received from RHC members. Discussion also covered the status of a planned Equipment Standard intended to accompany this Code, noting that it was not yet ready for circulation. The suitability of the document for public consultation was discussed.

Decision: RHC endorsed proceeding the draft Code to public consultation, separately to the Equipment Standard.

3.3. Draft Exemption and Clearance RPS Safety Guide

ARPANSA presented a draft Guide for Exemption and Clearance of Radioactive Material. RHC feedback was sought on content and structure, with some suggestions provided by the members present. Timelines, related international work, and potential targeted consultation were also discussed. Further comment from members was invited out of session.

Task: RHC members to provide out-of-session feedback by 16 December 2024.

3.4. Human Imaging for Non-Medical Purposes

ARPANSA presented a draft project plan for the development of RPS guidance materials relating to human imaging for non-medical purposes, and sought feedback on scope and content. The RHC discussed and agreed that the document should be prepared as a Code, and established a new working group with several jurisdictions to contribute.

Decision: The RHC endorsed the drafting of a Code for non-medical human imaging.

Task: Victoria, Western Australia, New South Wales, and South Australia to confirm staff who will contribute to working group by 16 December 2024.

4. Regulatory Knowledge Exchange

The Victorian RHC member presented on their regulatory structure and activities. Topics of note included the management of the Victorian radiation store, and source recovery activities. Discussion also included compliance and training for use-license holders, radiation source operators, and radiation safety officers.

The WA RHC member presented on radiation incident experiences. Subsequent discussion covered radiation training and safety culture, and comparisons to other incidents nationally.

The head of Defence Nuclear Powered Submarine Regulatory Design presented on the new *Australian Naval Nuclear Power Safety Act 2024*, and the expected timeline to establish the ANNPS Regulator. The RHC discussed the intersection of issues between multiple regulators.

5. Integrated Regulatory Review Service (2023) Findings

The RHC discussed the status of efforts to address the findings from the 2023 follow-up to 2018 International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) IRRS review of Australia's framework for radiation safety regulation. It was identified that these are being addressed through the actions of the RHC and individual jurisdictions, but that there is a need for more clearly defined closure criteria. ARPANSA noted that it will look to produce a summary report of actions which address findings.

6. Proposed 2025 RHC Workplan

ARPANSA presented on a recently undertaken gap analysis of the Radiation Protection Series (RPS) against Australia's radiation safety operating landscape and proposed a 2025 RHC workplan based on priorities identified. RHC Members gave further feedback on the priorities, also discussing resource constraints. Need for a National Glossary and updated Waste, X-ray, and Security codes were noted by several members, and the ACT also noted the need for a national standard for shielding design. The RHC agreed to the priorities proposed in the 2025 RHC Workplan. The RHC discussed avenues for further resourcing, including national cost-sharing arrangements, and ARPANSA noted it would draft a letter to jurisdictions on this matter. The RHC also discussed the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) internationally to draft and revise standards and agreed to maintain a watching brief on AI.

Decision: The RHC agreed to the priorities identified in the proposed RHC 2025 Workplan.

Decision: The RHC to maintain a watching brief on the use of AI to draft radiation safety standards.

7. Standards Australia TC-85

The RHC noted a presentation from Mr Ben Russell of Standards Australia, regarding Australian input to International Standard Organization (ISO) and International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) standards, and the process to establish Australian involvement in the ISO Technical Committee 85 (TC-85) on nuclear energy, nuclear technologies, and radiological protection.

8. Transfer of Material and Equipment Between Jurisdictions

ARPANSA spoke to current challenges and issues relating to the transfer of material or equipment between jurisdictions, including information sharing and due diligence in relation to the transfer of regulatory control, and how effective regulatory decisions and oversight can be maintained. The RHC discussed current mechanisms for transfer of regulatory control, the challenges and limitations jurisdictions face with these transfers, and a need for greater clarity in terminology. The RHC agreed to an ARPANSA proposal to draft regulatory and technical assessment plans to align regulatory approaches including criteria and requirements on the transfer of material and equipment between jurisdictions.

Task: ARPANSA to draft a regulatory assessment plan and a technical assessment plan for future consideration.

9. Other ongoing issues

9.1. Urgent Care Clinics

ARPANSA tabled survey responses from jurisdictions on regulatory practices for licencing of urgent care clinics, with most noting no or minimal regulatory arrangements around use of ionising radiation that is specific to urgent care clinics. The RHC focused on matters relating to competencies, and some jurisdictions noted a desire for further work in this space. Significant overlap was noted with the Scope of Practice Review agenda item (10.6), and further actions were agreed to be discussed under that item.

9.2. Remote Servicing of radiation equipment

ARPANSA presented the outcomes of a questionnaire circulated via the state and territory representative members to operators and manufacturers within their jurisdictions. Survey results received indicated remote activation of equipment was uncommon and presented limited risk of accidental exposures. The RHC agreed to consider this issue in future code development, with no further action needed at this time.

Decision: The RHC agreed remote servicing of radiation apparatus should be considered when drafting relevant codes, with no further action required at this time.

9.3. Mobile CT

The RHC briefly discussed the use of mobile computed tomography (CT) devices, where it was noted that relatively few of these devices exist in the marketplace. It was agreed that licensing of currently available devices could be addressed on a case-by-case basis without the need for dedicated RPS guidance, but this should be revisited if prevalence of these devices increased.

Decision: The RHC agreed no further action is required on Mobile CT equipment at this time.

9.4. Theranostics

ARPANSA presented on the results of a recent survey of jurisdictional approaches to licencing and operational requirements for radionuclide therapy, which was undertaken to clarify the Australian regulatory landscape with regards to the combined therapeutic and diagnostic use of nuclear medicine (theranostics). The RHC discussed the results but did not identify any further action at this time, and ARPANSA agreed to maintain a watching brief on this topic noting the evolving situation in this field.

Decision: ARPANSA will maintain a watching brief on the use of radionuclides in theranostic applications.

10. New Issues to Consider

10.1. Medical Import Permits

ARPANSA presented on the current process for issuing medical import permits for unsealed sources of radioactivity. ARPANSA sought to update the medical import permit form and affirm the circumstances in which jurisdictional regulators are notified of requests to import radioisotopes for medical uses. The RHC identified that additional information was needed before further decisions could be made and agreed to circulate a questionnaire among regulators, to then discuss the results at its next meeting.

Decision: The RHC agreed to revisit this item at the next meeting.

Task: ARPANSA to circulate a questionnaire to jurisdictional regulators relating to the medical import process before the end of the year.

10.2. Regulatory application of safety technology - lead aprons

ARPANSA sought to identify if jurisdictions mandate the use of specific personal protective equipment (PPE) for radiation such as lead aprons as applied safety measures. Responses varied in mandating technological solutions or not, with some jurisdictions to confirm out of session.

Task: Jurisdictions to confirm their policy around requirements for lead aprons or other radiation PPE as a form of personal protective equipment out of session.

10.3. WA Workcover

The RHC discussed issues relating to recent changes to WorkCover noted in a letter tabled as late correspondence from WA at the July 2024 RHC meeting, regarding presumptive diseases for radiation exposure and the lack of appropriate reference frequencies or minimum exposure thresholds and durations. The letter was tabled for the awareness of jurisdictional regulators, and to seek confirmation if similar provisions had been enacted in other jurisdictions. ARPANSA agreed to take this item on notice and raise it with the Radiation Health and Safety Advisory Council (the Council). The RHC will discuss this further at its next meeting.

Task: Jurisdictions to confirm approaches to WorkCover ahead of March 2025 meeting.

Task: ARPANSA to confer with the Council ahead of the RHC's March 2025 meeting.

10.4. Veterinary Positron Emission Tomography (PET) / CT

The RHC considered an issue raised by a member of the public in WA regarding potential risks from the rise of PET-CT in the veterinary industry. A meeting paper was noted as still under drafting, and it was agreed to revisit this item in the March meeting.

10.5. Defence Medical Personnel on Non-Defence Equipment

ARPANSA presented on a Defence request for clarification on the need for Defence medical personnel to hold jurisdictional licenses to operate in a Defence capacity when using non-Defence radiation apparatus, such as in situations of Defence support to a State or Territory during a natural disaster. ARPANSA clarified that existing Defence licensing through ARPANSA remains sufficient, and no separate licensing is needed.

10.6. Professor McCormack Scope of Practice Review

The RHC discussed the recent publication of the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care's Scope of Practice Review report. This review seeks to update existing practices, programs and legislation that relate to the Australian health workforce, including radiation safety legislation, to enable greater efficiency and capability in this workforce. Noting both the size of the review and its recent publication, the RHC agreed further time was needed to consider the review report and agreed to discuss this within individual jurisdictions ahead of revisiting any identified issues at its next meeting.

Decision: The RHC agreed to revisit the Scope of Practice Review at the March meeting.

Task: The RHC jurisdictional members to consider the Scope of Practice Review, including how it impacts circumstances based on competencies where other professions can operate on a restricted basis in terms of training.

11. Member representing the interests of the general public

The Member talked to their tabled paper relating to the use and impact of generative AI within a radiation regulatory environment. Noting the RHC's earlier agreed watching brief on this topic, flagged under the Workplan item, no further action was taken on this item.

11.1. Collarium Fact Sheet

ARPANSA presented on the recent website publication of a factsheet on the use of collariums. The RHC discussion focused on whether the existing ban on commercial solariums also applied to these Collariums or similar items, and it was noted there remained some uncertainty due to differing definitions of tanning units across jurisdictions. The RHC discussed an approach to defining such equipment based on technical specifications rather than name, to ensure safety.

Task: Jurisdictions to provide their definitions for tanning units to the Secretariat.

12. Injury Due to Cosmetic Applications of NIR PhD

Ms Zoe Thomas, an ARPANSA-supported PhD student at the Monash University Accident Research Centre, presented on the progress of her doctoral research investigating injuries arising from Non-Ionising Radiation (NIR) used in cosmetic procedures. This presentation outlined the motivation, existing work, and structure of the investigation, as well as its progress across reviews of literature, regulation, and consumer experiences. Noting the relevance of this topic to the earlier discussion around ongoing regulatory challenges for tanning units, the RHC requested an annual update on this research.

Decision: The RHC agreed to revisit this item annually.

13. Meeting Close and Housekeeping

Final matters were discussed and the proposed meeting details for 2025 were outlined, with the first meeting in the window of 4-6 March, second in 3-5 June, and third in 25-27 November and joint with Council. The Chair then closed the meeting.