



## **SUMMARY OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3-4 APRIL 2014**

The Radiation Health and Safety Advisory Council (Council) met at ARPANSA's offices in Miranda, NSW. Apologies were received from Mr Simon Critchley.

### **Confirmation of Minutes of the 28-29 November 2013 Meeting**

The Minutes of the 28-29 November 2013 meeting were confirmed with minor amendment.

### **Business arising from the Minutes and Correspondence**

Members agreed items on the action list had either been resolved or would be covered on this agenda. Members noted the tabled correspondence.

### **Report from Council Member representing the Interests of the General Public**

Members received a report from the Council Member representing the interests of the general public. This outlined his role and what he worked to achieve. Members discussed a range of strategies for increasing the visibility of this important role.

### **Committee Reports**

Members noted and discussed the draft Minutes of the recent meetings of the Radiation Health and Nuclear Safety Committees.

### **Advisory Bodies – Roles and Expectations**

Members were advised that the discussion paper circulated to them for comment in November 2013 had now been reviewed by all of the advisory bodies and finalised to address all comments. The CEO requested Council's endorsement of the document and advised it would be incorporated into ARPANSA's Quality Management System. Council endorsed the document unanimously.

### **Working processes and support to Council**

Members were briefed by the Secretary on the new Council working procedures and were provided guidance on using the IT platform. Members provided feedback on some of the issues they had encountered during its first use.

### **UNSCEAR Fukushima Report**

Members were briefed on the UNSCEAR 2013 Report - *Annex A Levels and effects of radiation exposure due to the nuclear accident after the 2011 great east-Japan earthquake and tsunami* which had been launched by Dr Larsson as Chair of UNSCEAR on 2 April 2014. An overview of the Report and detailed discussion of the estimates of doses to members of the public, estimates of doses and effects to non-human biota and the health effects for workers and members of the public in Japan from the radiation exposures received as a result of the nuclear accident were presented.

The CEO reflected on the lessons learnt by ARPANSA as a result of the Fukushima nuclear accident and noted that Communication is one area of significant importance where there could be clear support from Council. The CEO also noted that ARPANSA had established closer working arrangements with a number of organisations, both nationally and internationally as a result of the accident.

Council formally expressed their gratitude to ARPANSA for taking such a leading role in this significant and important body of work. Members congratulated all the ARPANSA staff involved with this project and on the publication of the report.

### **Update on ARPANSA Activities**

Council was briefed on changes to ARPANSA's structure and other recommendations that have been proposed by the Strategic Management Committee to ensure a sustainable future for ARPANSA. Council welcomed the presentation from the CEO and expressed their support for the proactive approach being taken to address and manage a range of challenging issues.

Council was updated on progress with the revision of the ARPANS Act and the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for Medical Imaging with the Department of Health (DoH).

Council was briefed on the outcomes of the Australian Clinical Dosimetry Service (ACDS) Workshop that was held on 6 March 2014. The workshop was undertaken following recommendations made in a review by KPMG of the ACDS during 2013. The feedback from stakeholders indicated strong support for the continuation of the ACDS and for mandatory audits, however an improved cost/benefit analysis for each of the audit types would be beneficial, including a review of the history of outcomes from audits. The stakeholders advised that a nationally uniform system for incident reporting would be beneficial. Council noted the outcomes of the workshop and expressed their continued support for the ACDS as it moved forward.

Council received reports on a number of recent international visits and forums attended by ARPANSA staff and were advised of the nominations for the IAEA Safety Standards Committees for 2014 – 2017.

Council were briefed on the progress that had been made since November on mapping the Radiation Protection Series (RPS) documents (and RHC Statements and RHS documents) against relevant international publications, including IAEA safety series, ICRP publications, ICNIRP publications etc. and noted the RHC proposal to consider adoption of IAEA publications as RPS documents subject to legislative approvals and requirements. Council supported the review and reconfirmed their support for the consideration of the adoption of IAEA publications where appropriate. Council stressed the importance of obtaining Australian stakeholder input to these documents as early as possible in the drafting process.

### **Linear No-Threshold Model**

The Chair led a discussion on the linear no-threshold (LNT) hypothesis and model and referred to recent statements for and against the continued use of the LNT model as the basis for our radiation protection framework. These included a recent position statement by the Swiss radiation protection commission for the continued use of the LNT model and an open letter to regulatory authorities from the Scientists for Accurate Radiation Information requesting the discontinuation of the LNT model for radiation safety purposes and replacing it with a threshold model.

Members discussed the opposing statement points of view and agreed that whilst there is uncertainty with the LNT model in the low dose range it still offers the best approach from a regulatory perspective. Council agreed that a paper should be prepared for the next meeting outlining a statement that could be made by Council on the LNT model.

## **Bonn Call-for-Action on Radiation Protection in Medicine**

Dr Allison briefed Council on the *Bonn Call-for-Action - Joint Position Statement by the IAEA and WHO* which was developed as an outcome of the Bonn 2012 International Conference on Radiation Protection in Medicine: Setting the Scene for the Next Decade. Council noted the Bonn Call-for-Action against the background of work already done by ARPANSA; it encouraged ARPANSA to undertake further dialogue with relevant Australian stakeholders; and agreed that the RHC be requested to review the Bonn Call-for-Action in relation to their planned work activities.

## **ARPANSA's Strategic Directions and Council Strategic Plan**

Members were briefed on the proposed changes to ARPANSA's Strategic Directions for FY2014-17. Council expressed support for the new look of the Strategic Directions and made some minor editorial recommendations for consideration by ARPANSA.

Members then reviewed Council's Mission, Vision, Values, Strategic Goals and Strategic Directions and agreed:

- Council's Mission, Vision and Values should closely align with ARPANSA's Mission, Vision and Values.
- Proposed editorial changes to Council's Strategic Goals be accepted.
- The Strategic Directions should align with the ARPANSA Strategic Directions 2014-2017 document and be reviewed on an annual basis.
- The three priority areas where Council should consider and complete work are:
  - o *Medical radiation* - with a focus on paediatric doses, computed tomography, breast scanning and rationalisation of diagnostic imaging;
  - o *Ongoing and emerging issues in radiation protection and science* - with a focus on existing exposure situations (aircrew and legacy sites) and issues associated with non-ionising radiation exposure.
  - o *Effective communication and engagement on radiation management and nuclear safety*

## **Other Business**

Members were advised that expression of interests for the next triennium of Council would be called for around mid-2014. These were likely to be advertised in a National paper and through the ARPANSA website.

## **Meeting Close**

The meeting closed at 14:45pm on 4 April 2014. The next meeting was scheduled for 7-8 August 2014 and would be in either Canberra or Sydney.