

## Arrangements

*to facilitate our efforts towards nationally consistent radiation safety regulatory frameworks and radiation health outcomes*

### Parties

The **parties** agreeing to these arrangements are:

- the **Environmental Health Standing Committee (enHealth)**<sup>1</sup>, which provides advice and makes recommendations to the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) and through it, to Health Ministers on environmental health matters.
- the **CEO of the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA)**, established under the *Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Act 1998* (the ARPANS Act) with the function as relevant to enHealth including the promotion of uniformity of radiation protection and nuclear safety policy and practices across jurisdictions of the Commonwealth, the States and the Territories and provision of advice and research on radiation protection, nuclear safety, medical exposures to radiation and related issues.

### Relevant Bodies

The **relevant bodies** that have specific roles under these arrangements are:

#### ***Radiation Health Experts Reference Panel (RHERP)***

- Working under the guidance of enHealth and with reference to the enHealth Work Plan and Strategic Plan, acts to fulfil its terms of reference of providing expert advice on radiation protection and nuclear safety issues as directed by enHealth and developing the *National Strategy for Radiation Safety* for uniformity of radiation protection and nuclear safety regulation in Australia.
- Membership comprises nominated jurisdictional representatives from the relevant regulators, ARPANSA, the Australian Government Department of Health and external experts as appropriate.

#### ***Radiation Health and Safety Advisory Council (Council)***

- Established under the ARPANS Act, the Council's functions in relation to radiation protection and nuclear safety are outlined in Annex 1.
- Membership of the Council is appointed by the Minister responsible for ARPANSA, with representation including a person nominated by the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory and two radiation control officers (RCO)<sup>2</sup>;

<sup>1</sup> <https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ohp-enviro-enhealth-committee.htm>

<sup>2</sup> The ARPANS Act defines a radiation control officer as a person who: (a) holds a senior position in a regulatory body of a State or Territory; and (b) is responsible for matters relating to radiation protection or nuclear safety.

### **Radiation Health Committee (RHC)**

- Established under the ARPANS Act, the RHC's functions in relation to radiation protection are outlined in Annex 1.
- The membership of the RHC is appointed by the CEO of ARPANSA, with RCO positions appointed in consultation with the States and Territories.

### **Background and purpose of these Arrangements**

The report (2019) of the Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) mission to Australia in 2018, coordinated by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), provided *recommendations* and *suggestions* aimed at improving consistency in Australia's radiation safety regulatory frameworks, achieving equitable radiation health outcomes across the jurisdictions of the states, territories, and the Commonwealth. The mission report commended all Australian jurisdictions for taking part in the IRRS mission, which at the time was a unique undertaking for an IAEA Member State. The IAEA noted this approach in the report as a *good practice*.

The **parties** and **relevant bodies** to this arrangement have agreed since the IRRS mission to prioritise promoting consistency of regulatory frameworks for radiation safety and radiation health outcomes. This document outlines revised governance arrangements designed clarify communication lines and workflow to help achieve this objective.

Building on the roles and responsibilities already given to enHealth and the CEO of ARPANSA, the **parties** agree that:

#### **National Policy**

- enHealth is responsible for coordinating policy advice to the Australian Health Protection Principle Committee (AHPPC), and through it to Health Ministers, and ensuring a nationally consistent approach to the implementation and compliance of radiation safety codes and standards.
- enHealth, with the support of RHERP, will advise ARPANSA of any policy and implementation implications that arise from changes to the *Radiation Protection Series* (RPS) suite of publications (produced by RHC and ARPANSA) and will promote their implementation through national adoption mechanisms under AHPPC.
- The RHC, in line with its legislative powers, is responsible for preparing draft national policies, for the consideration of the states and territories via enHealth. In doing so, RHC commits to consolidating and representing the views of each jurisdiction's RHC radiation control officers, to enable an informed decision by enHealth.

#### **National Agreements**

- As the primary forum for establishing nationally consistent policy on radiation matters, enHealth is responsible for developing and implementing the National Strategy for Radiation Safety and any subsequent national agreements.
- In line with the Governance arrangements of the National Directory for Radiation Protection (2nd Edition) (NDRP2):
  - ARPANSA will maintain and publish NDRP2.
  - enHealth will provide oversight of NDRP2 adoption, including managing any revisions through Health Ministers, and will facilitate discussions of issues related to implementation by all States and Territories.

- ARPANSA, with advice from the RHC, provides advice to enHealth on proposed amendments to NDRP2 for its consideration.

### National Codes and Standards

- ARPANSA and RHC, in maintaining the RPS, will seek the endorsement of enHealth of any proposed changes to RPS codes, guides or standards prior to publication.
- In considering these proposed changes to RPS codes, guides or standards, enHealth will consult AHPPC and Health Ministers as it considers appropriate.
- ARPANSA with the advice of RHC will maintain and approve any relevant technical standards and advisory notes under the RPS to support national regulatory arrangements.

### Correspondence and exchange of work

- With the support of the Secretariats, correspondence or requests for advice between **relevant bodies** in this arrangement will normally be directed via **parties** to this arrangement.
- the RHC and RHERP secretariats (in ARPANSA and the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care, respectively) will work closely together to ensure that RHC and RHERP work plans are, where possible, complementary and avoid duplication of effort.
- ARPANSA will extend a standing invitation to the Chair of RHERP to observe RHC meetings to provide visibility of the work of RHC.
- The CEO of ARPANSA will advise enHealth of emerging or existing radiation risks, based on national or international risk assessments or advice received from Council and RHC.
- enHealth on identification of any emerging or existing issues, can seek the advice of the CEO of ARPANSA and the RHC including in the preparation of any documents for consideration by enHealth.

### Review

These arrangements will be reviewed biennially, or on request by one of the **parties**.

### Signed

On behalf of enHealth

Date: 26/10/22



Dr Chris Lease

enHealth Chair

On behalf of ARPANSA

Date: 17/11/2022



Dr Gillian Hirth

CEO of ARPANSA



## **Annex 1: Roles and responsibilities of ARPANSA advisory bodies**

### **Radiation Health and Safety Advisory Council (the Council)**

Established by the ARPANS Act, the Council consists of the following members: the CEO; 2 radiation control officers; a person to represent the interests of the general public; a person nominated by the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory and up to 8 other members.

In practice the CEO of ARPANSA seeks to ensure that one RCO member is nominated from the membership of enHealth and a senior executive selected from either South Australia or New South Wales Environment Protection Authorities to represent those two jurisdictions that have non-Health portfolio entities responsible for radiation safety regulation.

Its functions, as established under section 20 of the ARPANS Act are:

- a) to identify emerging issues relating to radiation protection and nuclear safety and to advise the CEO on them;
- b) to examine matters of major concern to the community in relation to radiation protection and nuclear safety and to advise the CEO on them;
- c) to advise the CEO on the adoption of recommendations, policies, codes and standards in relation to radiation protection and nuclear safety;
- d) to advise the CEO, at the CEO's request, on other matters relating to radiation protection and nuclear safety;
- e) to advise the CEO on such other matters relating to radiation protection and nuclear safety as the Council considers appropriate;
- f) to report to the CEO on matters relating to radiation protection and nuclear safety.

### **Radiation Health Committee (RHC)**

Established by the ARPANS Act, the RHC consists of the following members: a representative of each State and Territory, each of whom must be a radiation control officer; the CEO; a representative of the Nuclear Safety Committee; a person to represent the interests of the general public; and up to 2 other members.

Its functions as established under section 23 of the ARPANS Act are:

- a) to advise the CEO and the Council on matters relating to radiation protection;
- b) to develop policies and to prepare draft publications for the promotion of uniform national standards of radiation protection;
- c) to formulate draft national policies, codes and standards in relation to radiation protection for consideration by the Commonwealth, the States and the Territories;
- d) from time to time, to review national policies, codes and standards in relation to radiation protection to ensure that they continue to substantially reflect world best practice;
- e) to consult publicly in the development and review of policies, codes and standards in relation to radiation protection.

The Committee's functions are to be performed only on the request of the CEO.