

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Minutes of the 1st meeting of the Radiological Protection Advisory Committee (RPAC)
held on 18th September 2015 at the Office of Radiological Protection, Clonskeagh, Dublin 14

Present: Dr Ann McGarry (Chair)
Mr Darren Arkins
Mr Anthony Bexon
Dr Sean Curran
Dr Paul Dorfman
Dr Fiona Lyng
Dr Mary O'Mahony
Dr Maurice Fitzgerald
Prof. Peter Mitchell
Mr Michael Rowan

In attendance: Ms Laura Burke (Director General)
Dr Jonathan Derham
Dr Ciara McMahan
Dr Barbara Rafferty
Ms Stephanie Long (Scientific Secretary)

Apologies: Mr Ray Ellard
Dr Jean-Luc Godet
Mr Michael Sadlier

1. Introductory remarks and welcome. Laura Burke. Director General, EPA

LB thanked the members for agreeing to sit on the Committee and explained that the EPA has a main Advisory Committee established under the EPA Act, 1992 and a number of other Advisory Committees established under Section 41 of the EPA Act including

- A GMO Advisory Committee
- A Dumping at Sea Advisory Committee
- A National Waste Prevention Advisory Committee and
- An Internal Audit Committee

She outlined the establishment of the Office of Radiological Protection within the EPA following the merger of the RPII with the EPA. LB emphasised the important role of this Committee in providing radiological expertise to the EPA Board, thus harnessing the expertise of the non-Executive RPII Board.

This introduction was followed by a *Tour de Table*.

2. An introduction to the Environmental Protection Agency. Dr Jonathan Derham. Programme Manager: Climate, Resource Use and Research

JD gave an overview of the foundation of the EPA, the legislation under which its powers are derived and the functions of the EPA. He then outlined the organisational structure, the broad staff skill set and the mission, vision and values of the merged organisation. The purpose of environmental protection, how work is achieved, the allocated budget and location of offices were also discussed. Areas for which the Committee's input will be sought include research needs in radiological protection and the new Strategic Plan. The full presentation will be made available on ShareFile.

PM queried whether light pollution falls within the remit of the EPA. JD responded that where the light comes from a regulated industry, then light pollution does fall within the EPA's remit, however light pollution from other sources such as urban lighting does not.

3. An introduction to the Office of Radiological Protection. Dr Barbara Rafferty. Programme Manager: Radon and Radiation Measurement Services

BR gave an overview of the work of the Office of Radiological Protection (ORP) including the origins of the office, the merger with the EPA, the structure of ORP and the main sources of radiation dose to the Irish population. The functions of ORP, specifically regulation, addressing radon, environmental monitoring, nuclear safety, emergency preparedness, the provision of radiation services and international collaborations were also discussed. The full presentation will be made available on ShareFile.

AB queried where responsibility for non-ionising radiation (NIR) falls. AMcG explained that the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG) has commissioned a report on the health implications of NIR that is due to be received shortly. Following receipt of the report and further discussion, it is expected that EPA will fulfil a role in providing technical advice and support in this area.

4. An overview of the draft Strategy for the Office of Radiological Protection. Dr Ciara McMahon. Programme Manager: Radiation Monitoring and Emergency Preparedness

CMcM gave an overview of the draft ORP Strategy which is currently being developed. This will include the implementation of the revised EU Basic Safety Standards, the move to graded authorisation of licensees and the management of radioactive waste. An overview of the recent IAEA Integrated Regulatory Review Service Mission, the implementation of the National Radon Control Strategy, preparation for nuclear emergencies and the likely future responsibility of the EPA regarding NIR. The full presentation will be made available on ShareFile.

MR queried whether this Committee will address the requirement of the revised BSS regarding reduced doses to the lens of the eye. AMcG replied that DECLG is the lead Department for transposition of the revised BSS and that this is the first time that the BSS will incorporate patient protection in a single directive. The DECLG will work with the EPA, HSE, and Department of Health on this legislation. At the next meeting of this Committee, some of the issues to be addressed through the transposition of the BSS will be highlighted.

MF asked for clarification regarding the role of the Committee and the decision making process within the EPA. AMcG responded that the role of the Committee is to advise the Board of the EPA, which is made up of the Director General and the 5 Directors. Certain decisions are made by the Board and others are delegated to the relevant Office. At present the delegation process within ORP is being developed and will be finalised by the end of the year. The next meeting of the Committee could include a short presentation on this process. AMcG also clarified that while the members of the Committee were nominated by individual organisations, they are not representing their organisations and EPA will not interpret the advice of individual members as the advice of the nominating organisation.

The intention for the next meeting would be to present:

- The IRRS Mission findings and proposals to address these
- The implementation of the revised BSS
- The delegation of decision making within ORP

5. Date of next meeting

This will be in February or March 2016 and proposed dates will be circulated. All presentations will be made available to the Committee through ShareFile.