

The Source

News from the Department of Health Radiation Team

October 2021, Edition 5

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Welcome

Welcome to the fifth edition of The Source, a newsletter from the Radiation Team of the Department of Health.

This edition of The Source contains important information about the release for comment of the first draft National Strategy for Radiation Safety and Implementation Plan.

Neil Wain

Team Leader, Radiation

The draft National Strategy for Radiation Safety and Implementation Plan

The Australian Government's Department of Health has released the draft [National Strategy for Radiation Safety and Implementation Plan](#) (the draft National Strategy) to seek feedback from stakeholders and users of radiation technologies.

A review of Australia's systems for radiation safety by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) identified opportunities for Australian governments to improve the consistency of regulation across the country. The draft National Strategy was developed in partnership with states and territories and was endorsed by the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC). The draft National Strategy aims to improve consistency in managing radiation safety across Australia and to reduce red tape.

The feedback received as part of the consultation process will contribute to finalisation of the National Strategy and Implementation Plan and support the establishment of an intergovernmental agreement between Commonwealth, state and territory governments for the regulation of radiation safety. It is anticipated that the National Strategy and Implementation Plan will be finalised by April 2022.

You can provide [feedback](#) on the draft National Strategy.

The closing date for this consultation is close of business 7 December 2021.

If you have questions or would like further information contact the Radiation Policy Team at the Australian Government's Department of Health at RadiationPolicy@health.gov.au.

Radiation Act 2005 Annual report

The *Radiation Act 2005* [Annual report](#) for the financial year ending 30 June 2021 has been published and is available to download from the radiation website.

The *Radiation Act 2005* requires the Secretary of the Department of Health (the department) to publish a report for each financial year that describes the regulatory activities of the department under the Act.

Some of the highlights discussed in the report included:

- The continued, steady growth in the numbers of both individual and corporate radiation licences
- The continued impacts of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic
- The allocation of additional resources to the regulation of radiation safety. It has enabled us to increase our specialist radiation safety team by 45%. As we move out of lockdown, the increased resources will enable us to increase the numbers of inspections and to boost our engagement with our stakeholders
- The commencement of automatic mutual recognition of individual licences
- The reporting of 213 radiation-related incidents, 208 of which were in the medical sector
- The continued rollout and development of our new licensing system.

Compliance and Enforcement Policy

Detecting non-compliance and solving compliance problems in the entities the department regulates are necessary components of the department's regulatory role. The effort spent on monitoring compliance with the law relating to radiation safety and security is a critical part of the department's activities.

Providing advice and education will always be the first step in seeking compliance with the *Radiation Act 2005* and the Regulations, however there may be instances where enforcement action is required.

The department has published a [Compliance and Enforcement Policy](#) to guide its work in the regulation of radiation safety and to describe its approach to:

- monitoring of a regulated entity's compliance with the Radiation Act 2005, and
- enforcing the ban on commercial tanning.

Department's policy regarding testing of radiation sources due to Coronavirus (COVID-19)

The department understands that a management licence holder's ability to comply with mandatory requirements under the *Radiation Act 2005* pertaining to testing of prescribed radiation sources by approved testers during coronavirus (COVID-19) arrangements might be difficult or limited.

If you have made all reasonable efforts but you are unable to arrange for compliance testing of a prescribed radiation source, then please [email](#) the Radiation Team and they will contact you to discuss the matter. The subject line of your email should read: "*Management licence [insert number] – Compliance Testing*".

Invitation to participate in research project – Paediatric Diagnostic Reference Levels

A call out to all medical imaging radiation practices that X-ray children to participate in a research project.

Monash University is leading a research project to investigate if radiation dose levels can be reduced without losing diagnostic capability by replacing the radiographic skeletal survey series with low-dose CT when investigating non-accidental injury in children.

This research requires Diagnostic Reference Levels (DRLs) for paediatric X-ray examinations to be established. The collection of de-identified data from radiation practices that undertake paediatric imaging is necessary to establish these paediatric DRLs. Ethical approval and Waiver of Consent have been granted by the Royal Children's Hospital human research ethics committee.

To participate in this research project or for further information, please contact Edel Doyle at edel.doyle@monash.edu

Email addresses

You will noticed that all our email addresses have changed to '@health.vic.gov.au'. Please amend your records to ensure we receive the emails you send us.

Phone hours

Our phone hours are from 9.00am to 1.00pm, Monday to Friday. This allows our Registration and Licensing Team dedicated time in the afternoons to process licence applications and respond to email enquiries.

Contact us

Direct all enquiries to the Radiation Team

Phone: 1300 767 469

Email: radiation.safety@health.vic.gov.au

Website: <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/radiation>

Further Information

For further information email radiation.safety@health.vic.gov.au or visit our website at <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/radiation>

Feedback

If you would like to provide any feedback on this newsletter or make any suggestions as to what you would like to see in future newsletters, feel free to contact us by email at radiation.safety@health.vic.gov.au

To receive this document in another format, phone [insert phone number](#), using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required, or [email the Radiation Team](#) <radiation.safety@health.vic.gov.au>.

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