

COMARE Code of Conduct for Chair, Secretariat, Members, Assessors and Observers

This Code of Conduct is based on the Code of Practice for Scientific Advisory Committees 2011¹.

The Committee

The Committee takes account of the full range of relevant factors to reach a collective conclusion on the subject. The Committee's discussions represent the development of its view and any comments made during this process should not be attributed to individuals. Where a subject will be considered over several meetings, members, assessors and observers may be asked to maintain the confidentiality of the discussion until an agreed Committee opinion is finalised. The Committee's conclusions are not finalised until the publication of a statement or report.

Role of the Chair

The Chair has overall responsibility for the conduct of committee business, providing leadership with regard to members' responsibilities, public service values, and the roles of observers and assessors. The Chair is the nominated spokesperson for the public or the media regarding all of the work of the committee.

Role of Committee members

Both expert members and lay members have a collective responsibility for the operation of the Committee. The Committee takes account of the full range of relevant factors to reach a collective conclusion on the subject. Members are expected to abide by the 'Seven Principles of Public Life'². Members should not respond individually to queries for the Committee. Any queries received on COMARE work and publications should be directed to the Chair and secretariat for appropriate action.

Role of the Secretariat

The primary function of the secretariat is to impartially support the Committee by assembling and analysing information and recording conclusions of meetings. It should advise members on relevant Committee process and procedure.

Role of Assessors

Officials from Government departments and agencies attend committee meetings as assessors or policy advisors. Officials may also bring particular technical expertise, which may be requested by the committee on some occasions.

Assessors for COMARE are divided into two distinct groups. Tier 1 assessors comprise of officials responsible for government radiation policy and representatives from radiation regulators and other agencies. Tier 1 assessors are expected to attend every meeting, where possible. Tier 2 assessors are only expected to attend when the agenda requires them to, and they may send written comments, where appropriate, if not attending. All assessors receive all meeting papers.

Tier 1 assessors: DH, PHE, DH (Northern Ireland), Scottish Government, Welsh Government, BEIS, HSE, FSA, EA, SEPA, NDA.

Tier 2 assessors: DCLG, MoD, DfE, FSS, MRC, ONS, ISD (NHS Scotland).

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/scientific-advisory-committees-code-of-practice>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life>

Role of Observers

Observers may not participate in the Committee's discussions, and should not attempt to influence individual members' views during the meeting, breaks or outside the meeting on topics that are under discussion. The Chairman may invite observers to contribute to the meeting. Observers are subject to the same level of confidentiality on meeting matters as members and assessors. Observers and/or organisations are required to respect the work of the Committee. Failure to observe this code of conduct may lead to exclusion of observers and/or organisations from meetings of the Committee.