

COMARE – Annual Report 2017

1. Membership

Professor Mark Pearce and Professor Richard Wakeford completed their terms of office. No new members joined the committee in 2017.

2. COMARE Meetings

Main committee:

- 116th meeting – 16th March
- 117th meeting – 18th July
- 118th meeting – 21st November

Subcommittees and working groups:

- 9th Contaminations Working Group – 15th March
- 10th Contaminations Working Group – 20th November
- 2nd MPS(DXA) Subcommittee – 2nd March
- 3rd MPS(DXA) Subcommittee – 22nd June
- 4th MPS(DXA) Subcommittee – 22nd August
- 3rd MPS(IR) Subcommittee – 10th April

ADDITIONAL MEETINGS ATTENDED BY COMARE REPRESENTATIVES:

BEIS NGO forum – 12th September

BEIS consultation event on proposed amendments to the regulation of radioactive substances and the regulation of radioactive contaminated land as part of the UK transposition programme for the 2013 Euratom Basic Safety Standards Directive – 2nd November

3. Progress on work programme

SUBCOMMITTEES:

Interventional Radiology Issues

COMARE was asked by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) to produce advice on issues concerning radiation doses from interventional radiology in the UK. A subcommittee has been established to respond to this request. The subcommittee requested information from various sources and is in the processing of reviewing the results.

DXA Scanning Issues

COMARE was asked by the Department of Health and Social Care to produce advice on issues on medical radiation dose issues associated with DXA scans for sports performance assessments and other non-medical practices. A subcommittee was established to respond to this request and

held three meetings during 2017. Their findings were presented to the main committee for review at the 118th meeting. Once approved by the main committee, a report will be submitted to DHSC and it is anticipated that this report will then be published by COMARE.

WORKING GROUPS:

Contaminations

The Contaminations Working Group (CWG) met twice in 2017 and considered updates on the respective beach monitoring programmes submitted from Dounreay and Sellafield, noting the particles detected at each site. The working group also followed the monitoring work and remediation programme being undertaken at Dalgety Bay.

Authorisations

In 2017 the Authorisations Working Group (AWG) responded to one consultation from the Environment Agency on an application for a permit variation made by Sellafield Limited.

4. Requests for advice

In November 2017, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) formally requested that COMARE update the analysis of cancer incidence around Dalgety Bay, which formed part of the 15th COMARE report. COMARE is working with the Information Services Division of NHS National Services Scotland on progressing with this request.

5. Additional items under consideration by the committee

- COMARE receives annual updates from Public Health England on electromagnetic fields and radon issues. The last update was given on 21st November 2017.
- COMARE kept a watching brief on the progress of commissioning an epidemiological study to investigate any association of thyroid cancer incidence with Sellafield discharges, in particular associated with the Windscale nuclear reactor fire in 1957, using the Cumbrian birth cohort. This study was proposed in recommendation 3 of the 17th COMARE report.
- COMARE instigated the surveillance of childhood cancer incidence around nuclear installations in Great Britain by the Small Area Health Statistics Unit (SAHSU).
- COMARE responded to the BEIS consultation on transposing the public exposures and justification aspects of the 2013 Euratom Basic Safety Standards Directive (2013/59/EURATOM).