

## Advice from the ARPANSA, Radiation Health – WA, BICON, ECU’s Biosafety and Radiation Safety Officer and the RBHSC during COVID-19

An important message from ECU’s Biosafety and Radiation Safety Officer – Doreen Mackie and the Radiation, Biosafety and Hazardous Substances Committee (RBHSC) following advice from the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA), Radiation Health WA and Australian Biosecurity Import Conditions (BICON).

ECU has been made aware of advice from Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA), Radiation Health WA and Australian Biosecurity Import Conditions (BICON) on managing certified facilities and licences during the COVID-19 restrictions.

**In summary the advice is as follows:**

### **Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency - ARPANSA**

Offices now closed, some critical staff working to maintain essential services. The majority of staff are working remotely. Some activities suspended or adjusted as follows:

- Onsite inspections postponed
- PRMS will continue although there will be some delays
- Radioanalytical and Radiofrequency labs temporarily closed
- Clothing and fabric testing service is currently the only UV service in operation in a limited capacity
- Australian Clinical Dosimetry Service (ACDS) has been suspended temporarily, although urgent need for audit of radiotherapy machines will be assessed.
- Hire of radiation meters has been suspended until further notice

You can visit <https://www.arpansa.gov.au/> for any further information and/or updates.

### **Government of WA Radiological Council and Radiation Health**

Radiation Health will continue to provide administrative, technical and scientific support to the Radiological Council. The standards and compliance requirements of our legislation are unchanged; however, we are cognisant of the situation that people are facing and we will endeavour to assist where and when we can. Radiation safety does and must remain a high priority.

In addition, it is advisable at this time to review your plans, procedures and protocols as relevant to your registration under the Radiation Safety Act, including;

- Availability of suitably trained and qualified personnel
- Emergency procedures – ensure they are up to date and address the likely emergencies that arise in the course of the activities. It is important to also consider how the COVID-19 restrictions potentially impact on your ability to respond in an emergency and adjust to ensure risks are addressed.
- Security and oversight of radioactive sources / irradiation apparatus / electronic products, particularly if activities have changed and staff numbers have been reduced. Consider how you will ensure that any remaining staff or members of the public are not adversely affected by the radioactive sources / irradiation apparatus / electronic products under your control.
- Personal Radiation Monitoring Services (PRMS) – there may be some delays in provisioning of monitoring devices – in the first instance, contact your provider to help resolve these issues.

## Advice from the ARPANSA, Radiation Health – WA, BICON, ECU’s Biosafety and Radiation Safety Officer and the RBHSC during COVID-19

You can visit <http://www.radiologicalcouncil.wa.gov.au/> for any further information and/or updates.

### **Australian Biosecurity Conditions - BICON**

The department is committed to facilitating trade during the current Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The Animal and Biological Imports Branch (ABIB) is focusing on measures to expedite the assessment and issuance of import permits for the range of goods including, but not limited to, food products, animal feeds, fertiliser and live laboratory animals. Import conditions must still be met to ensure biosecurity and to protect the animal industries, the economy and the environment from the impacts of exotic pests and diseases. Goods must still meet import conditions that mitigate biosecurity risk to a level that achieves Australia’s Appropriate Level of Protection as required by the Biosecurity Act 2015. The department is working with businesses that have been or are being impacted by the current pandemic to assist with continued to trade in these difficult times. Please note it takes at least 3 months to get a new import permit, if you need one in the future please always allow for this timeframe in your preparations.

You can visit <https://bicon.agriculture.gov.au/BiconWeb4.0/Home/News/> for any further information and/or updates.

We are happy to assist with specific queries via the [RBHSC@ads.ecu.edu.au](mailto:RBHSC@ads.ecu.edu.au). Please continue to be proactive in protection of human health and safety and the environment.