



Terms of Reference for Review of Australian and New Zealand RTAC Code of Practice

Chris Copeland, Chair RTAC, 3 December 2019

Why review the Code now?

There is, under the RTAC Terms of Reference, a responsibility to “review the Code of Practice on a three yearly basis with recommendations for approval to the FSA Board”.

The most recent review of the Australian and New Zealand RTAC Code of Practice was conducted by the RTAC Chair Phill Matson in 2016-2017 and a revised Code issued in October 2017. This built upon the preceding 2013 Code of Practice. The RTAC Code of Practice is now a mature document and in 2019 some 97 ART units were accredited against the standard in Australia and New Zealand.

Circumstances within our profession change with time, and significant experience accumulates as to what works well and what could be improved in the way the Code are written for auditing.

Focus of the review

Although all suggestions for improvement are welcome, the FSA Board and RTAC believe the review should primarily focus on:

- What is difficult to understand in the Code
- What is difficult to audit against in the Code
- What is in and out of the Code
- Any significant areas left out or underdeveloped in the Code – these will probably be identified as much by auditors rather than units

What is in and out of the Code

The Code has evolved to be high-level documents that largely state what needs to be done, rather than how it is done. To this end, the Code is expressed in terms of outcomes to be achieved.

In only a few areas are inputs specified and these are expressed in attachments to the Code including requirements for key personnel and for gamete and embryo donation.



The Code is a set of 'minimum standards' to which all units must comply at all times. RTAC believes there is a place for aspirational or best practice standards, but these will be distinct from the Code. It is not RTAC's role to create or endorse aspirational standards – they will arise from those groups with particular expertise in their areas, such as SIRT, FNA, ANZICA, RANZCOG, ACCESS, the Fertility Preservation group, Healthy Male (Andrology Australia), and others operating in the area of fertility.

The removal of redundant requirements or the consolidation of existing ones, are options that can help keep the Code streamlined.

Making a submission or suggestions

Submission can be made via the link located in the RTAC section of the FSA Website (<http://www.fertilitysociety.com.au/rtac/>).

All queries regarding the submission process should be directed to FSA's secretariat:

Kim O'Dea
119 Buckhurst Street
South Melbourne
Victoria 3205

Telephone: +61 3 9645 6359
Email: kimo@wsm.com.au

The deadline for submissions and suggestions is **28 February 2020**.

The review process and timeframe

This initial invitation for suggested changes is going to primary stakeholders in the Code – FSA members, FSA subcommittees, the units both in Australia and New Zealand, consumers through Access and fertilityNZ, the Certifying Bodies (CBs) and JAS-ANZ.

RTAC plans to meet in June to collate responses, and to create a new draft of the Code of Practice. This will then be considered by a wide range of secondary stakeholders.

It is the responsibility of the FSA Board to accept changes to the Codes. It is anticipated that the revised Codes will be confirmed by August 2020, and will come into effect within six months.