

Senate Economics Legislation Committee

Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearings February 2023

Opening Statement

ANSTO

as read by Shaun Jenkinson, Chief Executive Officer

Thank you Chair and Committee members.

It is my privilege to address you once again as the Chief Executive Officer of ANSTO, Australia's Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation. ANSTO owns and operates landmark national infrastructure that benefits Australia's scientific, business and broader community through the application of nuclear science and technology.

As we approach the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the Australian Atomic Energy Commission - the forerunner to ANSTO - we continue to play a key role in addressing challenges facing Australia today in health, the environment, advanced manufacturing, defence and national security, to name just a few of the areas we work across.

We are leading Australia in the development of a nuclear-capable workforce, and providing nuclear advice, expertise and services to Governments, academia, industry and community.

Our sovereign expertise was put on display only a few weeks ago when a dedicated team of radiation specialists from ANSTO, working together with ARPANSA, Defence and the Western Australia Department of Fire and Emergency Services, successfully detected and retrieved a missing radioactive source in outback Western Australia.

It took just 2 hours into a multiple day project to locate the missing radioactive source, smaller than a 10 cent piece, along a 1,400k stretch of highway in remote Western Australia. I am sure you all saw the media coverage.

The portable radiation detection technology used as an important component of the equipment used to locate the source was developed and commercialised at ANSTO. Known as CORIS360, ANSTO was able to detect gamma rays emitting from the tiny source while travelling in a vehicle at 70 km per hour.

ANSTO's capabilities in this area and many others are a result of our 70 years of experience in nuclear science and technology and it was a tremendous source of pride for me and everyone at ANSTO. It was a testament to our capacity to develop and commercialise world-class technologies.

This exercise also demonstrated the capacity and collaboration of ANSTO with agencies including ARPANSA and Defence.

Finally, I would like to reflect on the capability that exists across ANSTO, ARPANSA, ASNO and most recently ARWA and the Nuclear Powered Submarine Taskforce positioning Australia as an "advanced" nuclear nation with sophisticated nuclear science and technology expertise to provide benefits to Australia.

I am joined today by my colleagues, Mr John Edge, Chief Operating Officer and Dr Miles Apperley, Group Executive, Nuclear Safety, Security and Stewardship.

Thank you.