

30 June 2020

Secretariat
Senate Economics Legislation Committee
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Email: economics.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Sir / Madam

AECOM opening statement given in evidence for 30 June 2020 public hearing for Senate Economics Legislation Committee Inquiry into National Radioactive Waste Management Amendment (Site Specification, Community Fund and Other Measures) Bill 2020

AECOM Australia Pty Ltd (AECOM) was invited by the Senate Economics Legislation Committee to give evidence at a public hearing on 30 June 2020 relating to its Inquiry into the National Radioactive Waste Management Amendment (Site Specification, Community Fund and Other Measures) Bill 2020 [Provisions].

AECOM staff that have managed and directed the delivery of its works on the National Radioactive Waste Management Facility Project, James Rusk and Kylie Schmidt, attended the public hearing as witnesses to provide evidence.

A copy of the opening statement provided by AECOM at the public hearing is provided below for the Hansard editor.

AECOM Opening Statement

I want to thank the committee for inviting AECOM to appear at this inquiry. As AECOM's witnesses appearing before you today, Kylie Schmidt and I have been coordinating and managing AECOM's works on the project since our commission in 2018.

AECOM was contracted by the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources to assess the technical suitability of three shortlisted sites in South Australia being considered for potential siting of the National Radioactive Waste Management Facility.

The shortlisted sites were characterised for the purpose of a technical assessment to determine whether there were any significant environmental values, hazards, or infrastructure constraints that would preclude a site from further consideration for siting of the facility.

The characteristics of the shortlisted sites were assessed according to criteria referenced from ARPANSA's Regulatory Guide for Siting of Controlled Facilities, and the International Atomic Energy Agency guidelines on the selection and evaluation of sites being considered for siting of radioactive waste facilities.

AECOM undertook desktop reviews of published information and carried out field investigations to characterise the above ground and below ground environments within and surrounding the shortlisted sites. A preliminary assessment of constraints and options for the enabling infrastructure required to develop and operate the facility was also undertaken, which was subsequently used to prepare a concept design and cost estimate for various options for this infrastructure.

AECOM's project team comprises subject matter specialists for various technical disciplines which have been drawn from AECOM's Australian and international operations. One such example of a subject matter specialist that has brought relevant expertise to the project is Dr Paul Somerville, a seismologist who has co-authored International Atomic Energy Agency safety reports on seismic hazard assessment for the site evaluation of nuclear installations.

No significant environmental or design constraints have been identified to date in AECOM's technical assessments which would preclude siting of the facility at Napandee. AECOM is confident that adequate mitigations can be employed to address constraints in order to meet regulatory siting criteria and requirements for the proposed facility.

The site characterisation, enabling infrastructure design, facility design and safety case processes have and will continue to be run in parallel, with each informing the other. Our work to date plus additional future works will form part of the applications for licenses and approvals for the facility.

The Department prepared reports to assist the responsible Ministers consideration of a suitable site for the facility. AECOM provided technical inputs to the Department for its use in their preparation of these reports.

A second stage of more detailed Site Characterisation will be undertaken on the Napandee site and its surrounds for the purpose of:

- obtaining supplementary data to further demonstrate the technical suitability of the site to support the siting license application, and for use in the environmental impact assessment for EPBC approval;
- obtaining supplementary data for input into the facility and enabling infrastructure design, and the safety case; and
- obtaining supplementary data to establish baseline conditions that will enable future monitoring and surveillance to occur in subsequent project phases

We welcome any questions that the committee have in relation to the Inquiry.

END.

Please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned directly should you require any further information relating to the Inquiry.

Yours sincerely



James Rusk
Team Leader Environment South Australia



Kylie Schmidt
Team Leader - Civil Infrastructure



encl: Invitation to give evidence at public hearing