

Senate Inquiry Public Submission

## **Selection process for a national radioactive waste management facility in South Australia**

- b) how the need for ‘broad community support’ has played and will continue to play a part in the process, including:**
- i) the definition of ‘broad community support’, and**
  - ii) how ‘broad community support’ has been or will be determined for each process advancement stage;**

‘Broad community support’ should reflect a large majority, both across the community and within stakeholder groups (including the indigenous community) in favour of moving to the next process advancement stage.

- c) how any need for Indigenous support has played and will continue to play a part in the process, including how Indigenous support has been or will be determined for each process advancement stage;**

It is not simply enough to say that consultation with indigenous stakeholders and neighbours has occurred, without elaborating on the results.

The ‘Community sentiment survey’ conducted by DISI in April 2016 recorded 3% support from the indigenous community for the Barndioota site to proceed to the next stage. (p10 sec C)

*source:*

<http://www.radioactivewaste.gov.au/site-selection-process/key-documents-and-faqs> -Community Sentiment Survey (3.05MB)

A copy of this report has been attached to this emailed submission.

Given the presumably low sample size I would suggest that this likely represents support of one or perhaps two individuals. It is vital that the sample size of this survey is published.

Additionally, the process behind the decision to disregard the significantly low support in the indigenous community from this survey and to progress the Barndioota site to the next stage should be discussed publicly as a matter of importance.

**d) whether and/or how the Government's 'community benefit program' payments affect broad community and Indigenous community sentiment;**

Although making funds available for 'community benefit' is clearly welcomed for any reason, the inclusion of offers of money as a part of the consultation process has created a few potential problems with regard to whether support from the community can be measured as broad support for the actual proposal or as support for the community benefit money being offered. This could also create a disparity when trying to effectively gauge 'broad support' in the community when some may be receiving significant amounts of money while others may not.

There also could exist a perceived conflict of interest when bodies such as the Flinders Ranges Council are a recipient of this funding, when the Council may in future be required to make impartial planning decisions on, for example, infrastructure or local environmental policy that is related to any future facility in the area.

**e) whether wider (Eyre Peninsular or state-wide) community views should be taken into consideration and, if so, how this is occurring or should be occurring; and**

Although local community support is vital, in a proposal such as a National Radioactive Waste Management Facility a broader consent should be sought from across the country.

As the NRWMF is a part of national plan of radioactive waste management any proposed site should require a 'broad support' nationally as well as locally.

The current proposal involves the storage of radioactive waste from sites across the country as well as the interim storage of waste returning to Australia from overseas. Federal, state and international governments have a responsibility to ensure that their involvement in the movement of radioactive waste complies with all national, state and international laws, regulations and best practise meaning that these governments and their constituents have a stake in ensuring that the site selection meets their own requirements in terms of legislation and broader social values.

Limiting the consultation to a small local community area inhibits the ability of these stakeholders to have a voice in the process.

Author: Gary Cushway  
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