

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee
Answers to questions on notice
Environment and Energy portfolio

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Hearing: Additional Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1
Program: Science
Topic: Ranger uranium mine: legal authorities post 2026
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Senator Ludlam asked:

Senator LUDLAM: That is valuable. Thank you. Further to this, what legal mechanism would you expect to be in place after the cessation of the current Atomic Energy Act section 41 authority to ensure that the company actually sticks around after that 2026 date?

Mr Tayler: I think that question would be better addressed to the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, because they administer the Atomic Energy Act. I believe it is something they are well aware of. In discussions with them, there are a variety of legal instruments in place to ensure that the ERA is not relinquished from their responsibility until such time as the rehabilitation process is satisfactorily completed. But they would be able to provide you with more information on that process than I can.

Senator LUDLAM: I can try, but we are stretched a little thin. So would you be able to take on notice your understanding of what relevant legal authorities there would be post 2026. I understand the distinction you draw between capital works and the slow healing of the environment over decades or longer. But if you can provide us with some direction on that I would greatly appreciate it....

Answer:

The Department of Industry, Innovation and Science has advised that it is considering a range of mechanisms to ensure Energy Resources of Australia Ltd retains responsibility for the Ranger mine site until such time as the Minister for Resources and Northern Australia determines that rehabilitation has been successful. As these matters are the responsibility of the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, further questions of this nature should be directed to that Department.