

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee**

Answers to questions on notice
Environment and Energy portfolio

Question No: 127
Hearing: Budget Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1
Program: Environment Standards Division (ESD)
Topic: Ranger Uranium Mine
Hansard Page: 96
Question Date: 23 May 2017
Question Type: Spoken

Senator Ludlam asked:

Senator LUDLAM: Is the decommissioning of the mine being treated as a nuclear action under the EPBC Act?

Mr Tayler: No.

Senator LUDLAM: Can you describe for us why not?

Mr Tayler: I would prefer that questions specific to the EPBC Act were directed to the Environmental Standards Division, or we could take it on notice if that is okay.

Senator LUDLAM: I think that is fair enough. If you can take it on notice, but I guess the answer is not going to come from you, is it? I think we have already let these people go.

Answer:

Is the decommissioning of the mine being treated as a nuclear action under the EPBC Act?

Decommissioning of the existing Ranger Uranium Mine has not been referred under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, and on that basis has not been determined to be a nuclear action.

Can you describe for us why not?

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* exempts certain actions that started prior to 16 July 2000 from the assessment and approval provisions of national environmental law. Mining has been underway at Ranger since 1980.

If the owner of the mine proposes decommissioning beyond the scope of work covered by approvals granted prior to 16 July 2000, they may need to consider referring the proposal under national environment law.