

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry Portfolio
Budget Estimates 2014-15
2-3 June 2014

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY

TOPIC: International Hosting of Foreign Radioactive Waste

REFERENCE: Question on Notice (Hansard, 3 June 2014, page 45)

QUESTION No.: BI-71

Senator LUDLAM: A final question for you, Senator Ronaldson: there has been recent media reporting citing both Prime Minister Bob Hawke and current NT Chief Minister Adam Giles supporting the hosting of an international high-level radioactive waste dump in Australia. I presume the government is aware of those comments. What is the government's current policy on international hosting of foreign radioactive waste?

Senator Ronaldson: Well (a) I have not seen those comments and (b) I will take that question on notice.

ANSWER

The Australian Government is not considering importing and disposing of foreign generated radioactive waste. This position is enforced via the *Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulations 1956* under which radioactive substances are prohibited imports.

The *National Radioactive Waste Management Act 2012* also incorporates an amendment that expressly limits use of a national facility to waste arising from use of radioactive materials in Australia, waste generated by activities in Australia or waste that arises from overseas reprocessing of spent fuel from Australia's research reactor.