

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry and Science Portfolio
2015-16 Budget Estimates
3 and 4 June 2015

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY AND SCIENCE

TOPIC: National Radioactive Waste Management Facility

REFERENCE: Question on Notice (Hansard, 4 June 2015, page 16)

QUESTION No.: BI-30

Senator LUDLAM: Yes, if you could, and also just who the attendees were. I am presuming that is not a state secret either. My final question regards continuing levels of confusion, some of it at quite high levels, about the nature of the project. Premier of Western Australia Colin Barnett asserted that the wastes were not radioactive. I think he subsequently amended that to claim that they were only low level. The Premier is not the only one guilty of mischaracterising what this facility will be for. Have the government or the department corrected that issue with the Premier? It is kind of important that people understand what it is that is in play.

Mr B Wilson: Not that I know of, no.

Senator LUDLAM: I think that would probably assist if you are trying to get consent on something that has been—

CHAIR: Are you going to verbal the officers now about what they should and should not be doing in their department or are you going to ask a question?

Senator LUDLAM: I think it is not to anybody's benefit to have people at the level of a Premier of a state mischaracterising it.

CHAIR: Are you going to ask a question?

Senator Colbeck: I do not think it is necessarily the responsibility of a department to tell a Premier of a state what to do.

Ms Beauchamp: Chair, we will take it on notice.

ANSWER

The Department of Industry and Science has not contacted the Premier of Western Australia, The Honourable Colin Barnett M^{EC} MLA with regard to his waste comments. The department notes the Ministers media release, 2 March 2015 stated that, 'landholders in all states and territories can nominate land for a facility to safely store Australia's intermediate level waste and dispose of low level waste.' The description and classifications of radioactive waste can be found at www.radioactivewaste.gov.au.