

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

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: AUSTRALIAN NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ORGANISATION (ANSTO)

TOPIC: Radioactive Waste

REFERENCE: Question on Notice (Hansard, 3 June 2014, page 80)

QUESTION No.: BI-4

Senator LUDLAM: Are there any plans for community consultation regarding the new facility—which you have said has received its licences for receiving the French waste—at least? Can you tell us what consultation there has been regarding operation of that facility and transport to and from that facility; at least in the immediate environment in Sutherland Shire?

Dr Paterson: There has been ongoing consultation with all of the stakeholders. ARPANSA has also conducted two requests for public engagement and consultation. The consultation has been extensive and we will continue to consult with all of the stakeholders.

Senator LUDLAM: Could you provide for us, on notice, details of what occurred and some sample copies of the materials that were distributed at those meetings? I appreciate that those have been done. I am sure they were valuable for residents. Finally, has ANSTO changed any security arrangements following the September 14 security incident where a number of—

Senator Ronaldson: Mr Paterson can take on notice material provided and distributed by them but not by others, clearly.

Senator LUDLAM: That is fine—material by either ANSTO or ARPANSA, if you have got copies.

Dr Paterson: We will consult with ARPANSA and, if they are happy for us to submit it, we will do that.

Senator LUDLAM: I am presuming that if it was distributed at a public meeting it is not going to be top-secret.

Dr Paterson: The difficulty would be that I do not want to act on behalf of the regulator, because—

Senator LUDLAM: I understand.

ANSWER

ANSTO has consulted widely with the community regarding the return of waste issue through a range of different channels. This consultation is described below. Additionally, as Dr Paterson noted, the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA) has undertaken its own community consultation processes regarding the licencing of the Interim Waste Store.

General Information Materials Available for the Public:

Information relating to the return of waste to ANSTO has been available to the general public and stakeholders via the ANSTO website and through printed flyers since 2012. This has included:

- **ANSTO website section on waste return established with dedicated FAQ section.** The site went live on 1 May 2012, and offers up to date information for the community: www.ansto.gov.au/NuclearFacts/Managingwaste/Returnofwaste/Frequentlyaskedquestions/index.htm

- **General flyer about returning waste to ANSTO** (see attached PDF labelled ‘Attachment One’). Over the last four years, ANSTO has ensured that the attached flyer has been available at a range of community events within the Sutherland Shire. Additionally the content of this flyer was used as a double page spread ‘advertorial’ in the Sutherland Shire Leader newspaper.
- **General ANSTO Information Flyer** (see attached PDF labelled ‘Attachment Two’). In 2014/15 ANSTO included information about the returning waste in a general flyer about ANSTO, which was distributed widely within the local Sutherland Shire community and surrounding communities. To date over 260,000 copies have been distributed in the following ways:
 - Campbelltown MacArthur newspaper
 - Southern Courier (Botany) newspaper
 - April Sutherland Shire rates notice
 - Letterbox drop to Illawarra
 - Letterbox drop to Sutherland Shire

Information Shared as Part of ANSTO Tours:

ANSTO’s Education Officers, who run tours of the facility for students and the general public, are able to answer any questions relating to the return of waste.. This content is incorporated into the information shared in the tours. At present, roughly 5 -10% of the information shared in the tour is related to radioactive waste. This can vary depending on the number of questions from the tour groups. Information is included in the following way:

- Types of radioactive waste are demonstrated using replica cutaway storage barrels and a display wall in the ANSTO Discovery Centre.
- Information is provided on Australian innovations, including Synroc technology, used to safely manage waste.
- Storage and transportation of waste that will be stored at ANSTO on an interim basis is discussed.

Briefing Local Community Leaders:

ANSTO has undertaken extensive outreach activities with a range of community leaders from Sutherland Shire and from areas along a range of potential transport routes for the return of waste. This has included meetings and briefings with Sutherland Shire Councillors and a range of Federal and State Government MPs. These activities remain ongoing.

Social Media Engagement:

ANSTO operates a range of social media channels designed to inform and educate the public regarding its activities, including the return of waste. All queries on the issue from members of the public made through ANSTO’s social media channels are answered promptly.

Traditional Media Outreach:

Local and metropolitan media outlets have covered the return of waste story several times since the initial announcement was made on 1 May 2012. ANSTO will continue to work with the media to ensure the broader community is informed.