

**Economics Legislation Committee**  
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Industry, Innovation and Science Portfolio  
2016-17 Supplementary Budget Estimates  
20 October 2016

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**DEPARTMENT:** DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND SCIENCE

**TOPIC:** National Radioactive Waste Management Facility

**REFERENCE:** Written Question – Senator Ketter

**QUESTION No.:** SI-136

1. Why was the Barndioota nomination selected to proceed to the next phase?
2. Why were the five other nominated sites not progressed?
3. What consultation with the Adnyamathanha Traditional Owners has occurred to date? / What consultation is planned?
4. What issues/objections to the National Radioactive Waste Management Facility have been raised?
5. How are these objections being addressed?
6. What is involved in this next stage of assessment and how long will it take?
7. How many additional nominations have come forward to be considered and assessed?
8. If the Barndioota site is not progressed, what alternatives are there?
9. When will the Government finalise its decision to establish the National Radioactive Waste Management Facility?

**ANSWER**

1. The nomination at Barndioota in South Australia demonstrated strong overall community support (65 per cent of those surveyed) for moving ahead to phase two.

2. The then Minister for Resources, Energy and Northern Australia considered that there was insufficient community support for the other nominated sites at that time, taking into account the results of community surveys and other feedback. More information can be found at <http://www.radioactivewaste.gov.au>.

3. Since the beginning of Phase Two, which began on 29 April 2016, we have had 27 face to face engagements, attended an Adnyamathanha Traditional Lands Association board meeting in May 2016, and received an average of about 2 phone calls per week from an Adnyamathanha person.

In the future, we will engage through activities including cross cultural training, a cultural heritage assessment and through Adnyamathanha representation on the Barndioota Consultative Committee

4. Issues relating to the potential impact on tourism, property prices, health and safety, water quality and regional reputation have been raised with the Department through its ongoing consultation with the local community.

It is also worth noting that 59 per cent of respondents in the general community survey indicated they did not hold any serious concerns.

5. The Department has established a local office in Hawker at 2 Cradock Road, Hawker, South Australia, and engages regularly with community members to understand their concerns.

The Department has recently established the Barndioota Consultative Committee (BCC) as part of the Australian Government's commitment to ensuring the community plays a key role in identifying a site for the Facility. The BCC comprises of community members and stakeholders that will meet to provide advice on key aspects of the Facility. The first meeting occurred on Tuesday 13 December 2016.

In addition, the Department has consulted with a range of banking and financial institutions, along with key agriculture associations and traders. The Department has provided the community the opportunity to visit the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation and has made available experts from organisations such as Geoscience Australia in the community to answer questions.

6. The project to identify a national facility is comprised of the following phases:

<b>Technical</b>	<b>Indicative Timeline</b>	<b>Community Activity</b>
Phase One: Nominations, Site Assessment and Shortlist Identification	2015-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek voluntary nominations, provide communities project information, seek willingness to continue in the process.</li> </ul>
Phase Two: Site Characterisation Studies and Preferred Site Identification	2016-17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish Barndioota Consultative Committee with broad based local participation.</li> <li>Undertake an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment.</li> <li>Establish locally engaged officer.</li> <li>The community will provide input into design including infrastructure requirements, risk and safety cases, local business and employment opportunities and community benefits measures.</li> <li>The Committee will also assist in developing proposals to address short term disruption including through education and communication strategies.</li> <li>The Government will then seek broad community support for hosting facility.</li> </ul>
Phase Three: Site Selection, Facility Design and Licensing	2017-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of Government's Detailed Business Case with final engineering and other technical design and costings.</li> <li>The Government submit proposals for environmental and radiation regulatory approvals.</li> <li>Establishment of a Facility Management Committee with community representation.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-going community engagement on benefits measures and capacity building for businesses and employees.</li> </ul>
Phase 4: Construction	2018-20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction undertaken consistent with community requirements.</li> <li>• Local business and employment goals to be achieved.</li> </ul>
Operation	2020+ Operation for 100 years and monitoring for 200-300 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facility Management Committee with community representation to oversee facility.</li> <li>• Monitoring of facility published and provided publicly.</li> <li>• Facility and employees to be active members of community.</li> </ul>

A further assessment of community support will also be undertaken at the end of Phase Two. A decision to progress with the nominated site is likely to occur in late 2017.

7. No additional nominations have come forward to be considered or assessed.

8. The Minister will consider any nominations made in accordance with the requirements of the *National Radioactive Waste Management Act 2012*.

9. The Government will finalise its decision to establish a National Radioactive Waste Management Facility when the Minister declares a site as the site for a facility under Section 14 of the *National Radioactive Waste Management Act 2012*.

This will not occur until the Department undertakes the necessary technical and heritage assessments and an assessment of community views to determine if there is broad community support for hosting the facility.