

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2006-2007 ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: 3
Output Group: 3.2 – Assistance for collaboration and innovation

DEST Question No. E964_07

Senator Crossin asked on 14 February 2007, EWRE Hansard page 89.

Question:

Parsons Brinckerhoff

Senator CROSSIN— Can you take on notice for me, then, whether Parsons Brinckerhoff has actually had any discussions with the state and territory emergency services. If they have, when? Who might have been involved in that? I do not think you will know the answer to this. Can you also take on notice for me whether in actually making an assessment of the transport options Parsons Brinckerhoff have had a close look at the cyanide spill on the Stuart Highway in the last fortnight and whether that informs any of their assessment.

Mr Davoren—I am not sure that that spill is necessarily relevant to the transport of radioactive wastes, because the packaging requirements on radioactive waste are far more stringent than on chemical cargos.

Ms Paul—The regulation of transport of radioactive waste is of course a completely different matter. It is regulated heavily by the bodies that we have talked about before.

Senator CROSSIN—I suppose my question to you goes to whether Parsons Brinckerhoff actually look at that incident and make an assessment about that transport corridor in relation to the nuclear waste facility.

Ms Borthwick—We are happy to take it on notice.

Senator CROSSIN—If you could take it on notice about whether or not it factors into their assessment process.

Answer:

Parsons Brinckerhoff

The detailed consideration and assessment of the relative safety issues associated with any particular transport corridor will be undertaken as part of the environmental impact assessment process, which will form the next stage of the project. PB has focused on logistics strategies and indicative transport corridors.

As road transport will involve only national and state roads, it is unlikely that there will be significant differences in transport safety factors between potential routes.

An estimated 20 million packages containing radioactive materials are transported throughout the world each year, with an excellent safety record. There have been no serious consequences as a result of the radioactive nature of such material being transported or being involved in transport accidents.