

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2004-2005 BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: 3

Output Group: 3.2 – Assistance for Science Collaboration and Innovation

DEST Question No. E134_06

Senator Carr provided in writing.

Question:

Given the licensing body, Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency's (ARPANSA) position of not issuing a license for the OPAL reactor until a national waste strategy was established, where is progress up to? How does the extension of the US option affect the license process? Is there now a waste strategy for the remaining 30 years of OPAL's life? How does this affect the licensing process?

Answer:

Licensing of the OPAL Reactor

The relevance to the OPAL reactor licensing process of progress with establishing a Commonwealth radioactive waste management facility and the US administration decision to extend its program for acceptance of spent fuel from foreign research reactors, including the OPAL reactor, for a further period of ten years until 2016, are matters for consideration by Dr Loy, the CEO of the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA).

Dr Loy discussed these matters at length during the 2 June 2005 Estimates Hearing of the Community Affairs Senate Legislation Committee.

Since the Prime Minister's announcement of 14 July 2004 outlining the Government's policy on establishing a Commonwealth radioactive waste management facility on Commonwealth land, work has progressed on providing Government with advice on how the policy could be progressed. The Government will make an announcement in due course.