



Australian Government  
Department of Industry,  
Innovation and Science

# National Radioactive Waste Management Facility

## Barndioota Consultative Committee

Meeting Notes

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2017

## Agenda

Item	Lead
Tea and coffee available from 10:00	
Welcome to country	Convener
General Update	
Community Benefit Programme	
BCC Members' visit to ANSTO	
Lunch Break	
Andra Delegation	Pierre Jobard Philippe Dellemagne Patrice Torres Jelena Bolia
Testimonies from French farmer and mayors	
ANSTO – what are radioactive materials and radioactive waste	Marian Jones Kapila Fernando
Afternoon Tea	
General Discussion	

### Attendees:

Paul Thomas (Convener)	John Rowe	Rachel Vella
Greg Flint (Deputy Convener)	Aaron Stuart	Julia Henderson
Susan Andersson	Philip Fels	Michael Anderson
Dianne Ashton	Cecilia Woolford	Jon Gill
Denise Carpenter	John Hennessy	
Ronald Daniel	Janice McInnis	

### Other Attendees:

Name	Organisation
Pierre Jobard	Mayor of Fresnay and French farmer
Philippe Dellemagne	Mayor of Soulaines-Dhys municipality
Patrice Torres	Andra's Industrial Director
Jelena Bolida	Andra's International Business Manager
Marian Jones	ANSTO – Education Officer
Kapila Fernando	ANSTO – Waste Projects and Strategic Planning Manager

## Action Items

Item	Status
1. At a future meeting, there will be a discussion on the Community Benefit Programme, and whether the criteria needs to be changed in more funding is available. Community Benefit Programme guidelines will be circulated prior to the meeting.	
2. Put a copy of Andra's slides on the website	
3. For inclusion on the future work plan – what are the guarantees that the intermediate level waste won't be kept here indefinitely?	
4. Committee members top advise what topics they want covered. The department will present a future work plan at the next meeting.	
5. Include the community support assessment in work plan.	
6. Committee members, particularly those linked to the Flinders Ranges Council and Outback Community Authoirty, will consider which areas are the highest priority to upgrade, and provide input into the next Committee meeting.	

Meeting opened 10:30am

## Welcome to Country

- Paul Thomas gave an Acknowledgement of Country.

## General update

Zaaheer McKenzie has joined the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science (Department) to engage full time with the community around Wallerberdina Station.

Zaaheer will be based out of Hawker and Quorn. His main responsibility will be to act as a conduit between the community and the Department.

## Community Benefit Programme

The Community Benefit Programme grants were announced in January 2017. Successful programme recipients are listed below. AusIndustry had scheduled to visit all project proponents from 9 – 10 February.

There was discussion around funding going to private organisations. It was noted that these organisations were eligible under the programme guidelines, and ranked highly in the Committee's scoring of producing a community benefit. It was agreed the guidelines need to be discussed further by the Committee, and the Department would take on board any feedback provided by the Committee.

**Action item:** *At a future meeting, there will be a discussion on the Community Benefit Programme, and whether the criteria needs to be changed if more funding is available. Community Benefit Programme guidelines will be circulated prior to the meeting.*

BCC suggested they be informed of successful recipients prior to/concurrently with the public announcement.

Project title	Organisation	Project summary	Grant total
Refurbishment of the Hawker Institute	The Flinders Ranges Council	Significant refurbishment of the Hawker Institute. Activities include: roof to be replaced or repaired; floor of the hall to be repaired; new floor in the kitchen and bar area; new stage curtains and tracks to be fitted; air conditioning to be installed to the whole of the building complex; and two stoves and two fridges purchased and installed.	\$75,000
Equipment for Hawker District Movie Events	Hawker Community Development Board Inc	Purchase of projection and sound equipment to allow the local community to hold regular movie nights within the town of Hawker.	\$6,000

Project title	Organisation	Project summary	Grant total
Building of new disabled ablution block at Hawker racetrack	Hawker Racing Club Inc	Build and install new separate male and female toilets with showers and disabled access at the Hawker racetrack.	\$76,844
Camel Treks Australia Pty Ltd Tourism Expansion Project	Camel Treks Australia Pty Ltd	Development of a unique visitor attraction involving a boutique camel dairy and Afghan themed café with a gallery. Activities include: erecting the infrastructure and equipment for the dairy and café; setting up the gallery; and constructing a car park.	\$315,000
Colebrook Aquaponics Expansion	Yartawarli Aboriginal Corporation Resource Agency	Provision of a dedicated undercover fish growing facility, expanded outside plant growing area and undercover processing facility. Activities involve: site preparation; laying the slab; shed construction; installing fish infrastructure and constructing the plant growing area.	\$149,600
SMART board for Hawker Childhood Services Centre	Hawker Community Development Board Inc	Purchase and installation of a SMART IFP 4065 Interactive Flat Panel at the Hawker Childhood Services Centre.	\$11,468
Hawker Pool	The Flinders Ranges Council	Purchase and installation of transportable buildings to create male and female changing rooms at the existing Hawker Pool.	\$40,000
All weather access to Heysen & Mawson Trails near Mayo Hut	Friends of the Heysen Trail & Other Walking Trails Inc	Upgrade a portion of the current tracks that form the Heysen Trail. This will involve the trail via Wonoka Station. This trail leads to Mayo Hut and Mawson Trail.	\$5,800
Hawker General Store Renovation and Development	Journeystone Pty Ltd	Renovation and redevelopment of both the interior and exterior of the Hawker General Store including: upgrade to garden dining area; upgrade to toilets; sandblasting of period building stonework and re-pointing; and kitchen upgrade including new hot water system, new flooring, enclosure of cold room, plumbing and electrics.	\$296,357
Independent living accommodation in Hawker	Wirreanda Cottages Inc	Purchase, delivery and installation of two purpose-built aged care independent living units adjacent to the existing four cottages at the Wirreanda Cottages site, together with the establishment of the site.	\$515,950
Viliwarinha Yura Housing Upgrade	Viliwarinha Yura Aboriginal Corporation	Upgrade existing housing on Yappala Station including: utilities and structural safety repair; improvements to kitchen; air conditioning installation; improvements to security and privacy; installation of renewable energy system; and external improvements.	\$502,797

## Barndioota Consultative Committee members' visit to ANSTO

Some Committee members visited the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) in January 2017. They said the visit was an informative experience, addressing some 'myths' about the ANSTO and the National Radioactive Waste Management Facility (facility). They noted a longer visit would be beneficial, and encouraged other Committee members to visit.

## Andra delegation

A delegation from France who have experience working and living around their radioactive waste management agency, Andra, addressed the Committee. The delegation included:

- Pierre Jobard, a local farmer and Champagne producer, and Mayor of Fresnay;
- Philippe Dellemagne, Mayor of Soulaines-Dhys municipality, which hosts Andra's disposal facilities;
- Patrice Torres, Andra's Industrial Director and Director of the Aube Industrial Facilities; and
- Jelena Bolia, Andra's international business manager.

Jelena provided an overview of Andra, its waste, environmental monitoring, the benefits of Andra to the local community, and communication with the local community.

Andra's presentation is available at <http://radioactivewaste.gov.au/news/french-delegation-meets-community>.

## Testimonies from French farmer and mayors

### Pierre Jobard, local farmer and champagne producer and Mayor of Fresnay

Pierre lives and works in the vicinity of the disposal facility, and runs a farm with his three children. He grows wheat, canola and Champagne grapes and has 120 cows, whose milk is used to produce cheese. The cows are kept in the town that hosts the disposal facility.

The price of his agricultural produce has remained strong, and Andra has had no impact on these activities in any way. The price for land is very high.

Pierre supports the facility, and says it has not had an impact on his farming.

### Philippe Dellemagne, Mayor of Soulaines-Dhyus (host municipality for Andra)

When the facility was first proposed, Philippe was sceptical because he didn't understand the facility and was concerned about contaminating the area's prime agricultural land. The community was also worried about using agricultural land to site the facility. However,

Andra's facilities were constructed by clearing woods, rather than on the agricultural land, which was a good result.

Andra has built trust with the community by publishing regular test results. Environmental monitoring is also conducted independently from Andra to maintain the trust amongst the community.

Every two years, the food chain is checked for contaminants. This includes testing cattle, grapes, water and other things. These tests were done before the facility was constructed, which are used to compare with the current results. The tests have confirmed the facility has had no impact.

Bee hives have been placed right next to the facility, and the honey is regularly tested for contaminants. As the bees fly around the facility, any contamination would quickly come up through testing the honey.

Andra also has close engagement with the local community, and today, Philippe and the community trust Andra.

## **Discussion**

*How close to the facility are nearby farms and residences and have you noticed over the years any changes in birth rates or similar issues to stock?*

Some farms operate right up to the boundary of the facility. Pierre Jobard, Champagne and cattle farmer who is part of the delegation, said he had a farm 8km away and that stock in the area had not been affected. "I have not had any problems like this on my farm," Mr Jobard said. "However I think it is very important to ensure you fully inform yourself of proposals, like a facility. We have built a good trusting relationship with the facility operators over the years." ANDRA and the community worked together continually to maintain trust.

*What economic benefit is there for the community?*

Andra is required to pay taxes through the course of its normal operation. However, the delegation said the most important benefit seen by local politicians was that new people moved to the area. This ensured the ongoing provision of services and a better quality of life. The population has increased since the construction of the Aube facility, after a long term decline typical in many rural areas.

*Would you build a facility in a flood prone area?*

Director of the Aube Disposal Facility, Patrice Torres, said the facility he managed was in an area that can experience flooding. The constraints of a particular site needed to be taken

into account and the facility designed accordingly within those so the facility was constructed appropriately. This was achievable with modern construction methods.

*What's the geology like where Andra has been constructed?*

The geology is very suitable. There is a river, which is dammed upstream and downstream, so it is well controlled. There is also a natural 35 metre clay barrier.

*How big is the host town?*

When the Andra facilities were constructed, the town of Soulaines-Dhuys, had a population of 250 people. This has grown to 430 people.

*Would Andra accept the intermediate level waste that Australia wants to store in our national facility? What is the longest lived waste stored at Andra?*

Andra would have to consider the waste before making a decision about storing the waste. Andra does dispose of short lived intermediate level waste in their above ground facilities.

Andra receives a very small amount of intermediate level long-lived and some of low-level long-lived waste for storage. This is to relieve small waste producers that are not equipped to ensure safety during storage. This is a temporary measure pending an operational repository for this type of waste.

An overwhelming majority of intermediate level long lived waste is stored at the reprocessing plant that belongs to Areva, not Andra, and will be disposed of in the geological repository.

*France has had nuclear power since 1969. What was France's opinion on nuclear then?*

There was some apprehension. However, the decision to go nuclear has been accepted by the community, and most people can't imagine living without nuclear now.

**Action item:** *put a copy of Andra's slides on the website*

ANSTO – what are radioactive materials and radioactive waste

Two representatives from ANSTO presented to the committee.

Marian Jones, Education Officer at ANSTO explained what radioactive materials and waste are.

Kapila Fernando, Waste Projects and Strategic Planning Manager at ANSTO provided more detail about radioactive waste.

Marian and Kapila's powerpoint slides are available at:

<http://radioactivewaste.gov.au/community-engagement/get-involved/consultative-committee/barndioota-consultative-committee>

## **Questions to Kapila and Marian about radioactive waste**

*How long is the half life of the intermediate level waste?*

Half-life depends on the nuclide and the activity. Half-life becomes a complex issue when there are multiple nuclides. The spent fuel reprocessing waste has long lived nuclides (such as Am-241/243 and other alpha emitters). This type of waste will take a very long time to decay, and therefore will require deep geological disposal.

*Why move the intermediate level waste from ANSTO?*

ANSTO does not have the license to store intermediate level waste indefinitely, and is legally prevented from becoming the national waste store.

*What percentage of Australia's radioactive waste is related to medicine?*

ANSTO holds about 50 per cent of the radioactive waste in Australia, and 85 per cent of the waste 'stream' is directly associated with this nuclear medicine manufacturing program – including the fuel used to power the reactor, the machines used in medicine production, and the gloves and gowns used in the manufacture or administration processes – the cycle to produce radionuclides produces nuclear medical waste. Most of the waste at Woomera is from research.

*Is all of the medicine produced at ANSTO for use in Australia?*

Australia has been exporting nuclear medicine for about 10 years. From around mid-2017, Australia will be producing about 30 per cent of global supply.

*Why are we producing nuclear medicine for other countries when it creates extra waste?*

The OPAL reactor is only using a part of its capacity for nuclear medicine production. However, other ANSTO facilities needed extending/upgrading so the medicine can be processed once it comes out of the OPAL reactor.

Australia needs to export more because Canada's reactor is about 60 years old, and is no longer licenced to produce the most widely used nuclear medicine, molybdenum-99. Canada was producing about 40 per cent of the global supply, so discontinuing the production is leaving a global shortage of this nuclear medicine.

ANSTO will continue to service the Australian market before exporting overseas.

*Why put radioactive waste in the Flinders Ranges, a seismically active region, with a water course over Wallerberdina Station?*

Comparing with the rest of the world, most places in Australia would be seen as one of the best places you could build a radioactive waste management facility from a technical perspective.

Australia is one of the most seismically stable countries in the world. Although there is occasional flooding on Wallerberdina Station, this could be addressed in a facility's design. There is no technical reason not to site a facility here.

*How many TN81 canisters are there?*

We currently have one canister, but expect to receive four over the lifetime of the previous and current reactor.

*What government would spend \$1 billion to bury 4 canisters?*

It is expected that would be a licensing condition for siting a facility.

**Action item:** *For inclusion on the future work plan – what are the guarantees that the intermediate level waste won't be kept here indefinitely?*

## General discussion

*When will Phase 2 finish?*

Finishing Phase 2 is dependent on completing the cultural heritage and technical assessments. We are hopeful this can happen by the end of 2017.

*What's happening in Kimba, and what will happen if it enters into Phase 1 (which is the consultation period)?*

The Government has received two new nominations from the Kimba community. The Minister is likely to make a decision about whether to take any of the nominations forward into a consultation period in Kimba in the coming weeks. Any new nomination/s proceeding to phase two would be eligible receive \$2 million each for the Community Benefit Programme, pending approval from the Minister. Hawker would also be eligible to receive a further \$2 million if the nomination continues into the 2017-18 financial year.

## *Comments*

Some Committee members commented that the agenda was being set by the Department and requested that it be structured around members' needs. To ensure there is a plan, and a balance of information being presented, the Chair will consult with Committee members to advise the department about what topics they want to cover. This will complement the topics discussed by the department.

**Action item:** *Committee members to advise what topics they want covered. The department will present a future work plan at the next meeting.*

The facility will only be sited at Wallerberdina Station if there is broad community support, and the Committee will provide input about what will constitute support, and how it will be assessed. The Committee has suggested they begin discussing this assessment soon, and what 'support' looks like.

**Action item:** *include the community support assessment in work plan.*

The Minister committed to look into improving mobile phone coverage in the area. To have this issue investigated, the Department has been engaging with Telstra, and needs some information about the coordinates, or priority areas to improve coverage.

**Action item:** *Committee members, particularly those linked to the Flinders Ranges Council and Outback Community Authority, will consider which areas are the highest priority to upgrade, and provide input into the next Committee meeting*