



Australian Government
Department of Industry,
Innovation and Science

National Radioactive Waste Management Facility

Barndioota Consultative Committee

Meeting Notes

Tuesday 15th May 2018

Agenda

Time	Item	Lead
Tea and coffee available from 09:00		
09:30-09:35	Welcome to country	Aaron Stuart
09:35-10:00	Housekeeping <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Apologies - Overview of the meeting agenda - Approval of the Draft Notes of meeting of 11 April 2018 and 14 March 2018 - Observer Protocol – meeting attendees 	Greg Flint, Deputy Convener
10:00-10:15	Project Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Site Characterisation Updates - Waste Acceptance Criteria & Jobs associated with the facility 	DIIS
10:15-10:30	Morning Tea Break	
10:30-11:15	Information Timeline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fact Sheets 	DIIS
11:15-12:00	AEC Vote Community Outline voting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vote Process - Vote Boundary - OCA community/voting boundary - Decision on boundary 	Mr Mark Sutton, OCA Greg Flint, Deputy Convener, to facilitate boundary decision
12:00-13:00	Lunch	
13:00-14:00	ANSTO Waste Acceptance Criteria & Jobs	Mr Hefin Griffiths

Attendees:

Greg Flint (Deputy Convener)	John Rowe	Ronald Daniel
Susan Andersson	Ashley Haywood	Julia Henderson
Dianne Ashton	Steven Taylor	Janice McInnis
Philip Fels	John Hennessy	Denise Carpenter

Apologies:

Paul Thomas (Convener)	Jon Gill	Cecilia Woolford
Rachel Vella	Aaron Stuart	David Michael

Other Attendees:

Name	Organisation
Bruce Wilson	DIIS: NRWMF Project Team – General Manager
Ian Carter	DIIS: NRWMF Project Team – Assistant Manager
Sarah Hill	DIIS: NRWMF Project Team – Assistant Manager
Stephen Clarke	DIIS: NRWMF Project Team - Community Consultation Team
Adam White	DIIS: NRWMF Project Team – Community Consultation Team
Zaheer McKenzie	DIIS: NRWMF Project Team – Community Liaison Officer
Mark Sutton	Outback Communities Authority (Observer)
Hefin Griffiths	ANSTO

Action Items

Item	Status
1. AECOM to present on the site characterisation report when complete	Complete
2. Inform Minister Canavan Hawker power generator issue	In Progress
3. Discuss with the Flinders Ranges Council on advertising a reminder of enrolment cut off dates.	Complete
4. Department to update meeting dates for June, July and August 2018.	Complete

Meeting opened 09:30am

Welcome to Country

- Greg Flint gave a Welcome to Country.

Draft Notes of meeting on 14 March 2018 and 11 April 2018

- Members raised points to be amended in the 11 April 2018 meeting notes:
 - Discussion when the vote on the community vote boundaries would occur. It was discussed to do it at the end of the April meeting and then it was moved to the May meeting.
 - Clarification was given that the vote would be on the boundary used for the community vote and not for the community benefit package.
 - Minister Canavan advised that ideally a site preference would be notified in October. Following this there would be a 60 day consultation period.
 - The Flinders Ranges Council (FRC) will host the vote.

These points were amended. Members accepted the meeting notes of the meetings on 14 March 2018 and 11 April 2018.

Housekeeping

The Deputy Convener introduced Mark Sutton from the Outback Community Authority (OCA) who attended the meeting to give information on the OCA's role in the community vote. It was advised that he had completed an observer protocol form to ensure that he was not replacing a committee member who is also part of the OCA.

Discussion

- A member raised that there was nothing listed on the Hawker Expo day which was held the week before.
 - It was advised that the expo was organised by the Economic Working Group (EWG) and discussed at their meeting.
 - A committee member who also sits on the EWG provided an overview of the expo day. The expo day went well and there was a good turnout. It was mentioned that some local businesses struggled to attend as there were working with the site characterisation crews at the proposed sites.

Project Update – Department of Industry, Innovation and Science (DIIS)

Bruce Wilson (DIIS) gave an overview of the site characterisation work and streams of other work including the following topics:

- Deep geological borehole drilling is underway.
- First part of the seismic testing has been finalised.
- The Waste Acceptance Criteria (WAC).
- ANSTO are working with Jacobs (engineering firm) to come up with a facility design.
- Minister Canavan has written to the councils on the vote.
- The Information Timeline has been provided to committee members and will cover the information to be delivered between now and August.

Discussion

- A member asked when the Cultural Heritage Survey would be provided.
 - The department advised that Adnymanthna are finalising the document, it will be provided when available.
- A member asked when a new Aboriginal representative will be appointed to the Barndioota Consultative Committee (BCC).
 - The department advised that there is currently a name before the Minister to be considered. Once the Minister signs it off the new member will be appointed as a member of the BCC.
- A member asked whether the drillers log would be made available.
 - It was advised that that information is expected to be included in the site characterisation report.
- A member asked how detailed the report would be on the drilling. Would it included what rock formations were drilled through or the water quality of any water found in the drilling process?
 - The department advised that AECOM will prepare the report but they expect that information to be made available.
 - Bruce Wilson added that the department will have the technical reports which might be difficult for some people to read and interpret. Summaries will also be provided and based on the technical reports.
- A member asked when assessment of the grounds was first started it was non-intrusive but now that the cultural assessment and boreholes have started, are they considered intrusive?
 - It was advised that some of the assessments are somewhat intrusive but they are all being conducted with supervision from a number of aboriginal and heritage workers.
- A member asked about the timeline and sought clarification on mid-July date?
 - The department advised that we can't put specific dates on some of the information at this stage but mid-July would be around the 20th.
- A member asked whether the department felt that there is enough time for people to absorb the information being presented before the vote.
 - The department advised that they believe it is enough time. People in these communities have been across this issue for some time and those that have engaged have a pretty good understanding.
- A member raised that when Minister Canavan attended the April 2018 meeting he discussed the 10 million dollars for the community that hosts the facility. One of the things he mentioned was that there's a constitutional limitation on the funds and that the BCC should discuss the structure of those funds.
 - Another member mentioned that this was raised at the Wallerberdina Economic Working Group meeting and at this stage the Minister is aware that both Kimba and Hawker do not want the South Australian government in charge of the 10 million dollars. The idea has been put to the Minister that the money be given to either council and they use the interest of that money annually. This is still in his office at this stage and he needs to put it through the Prime Minister's Office.
 - Another member raised that there was a general consensus that they wouldn't put it in the hand of the council either.
 - A member asked the department whether this would be a subject for the regional committee once a site has been selected. There isn't much point discussing the fund until a site is finalised.
 - Another member raised that if the site does come along, there needs to be a plan for where the money should go.

- A member raised that some community members would want to know where the money will go before they vote.
- A member raised that Wallerberdina is out of district and that the OCA need to be consulted.
 - Another member mentioned that Wallerberdina is in and out of district.
 - The department advised:
 - That the boundary between FRC and OCA runs through Wallerberdina Station. The actual site is in OCA area but the bulk of the community is the FRC. The department is working with both on this issue.
 - The Minister heard the feedback that the funding under the Act regarding was not widely supported by either community and that the communities would like the fund located close to the community. There was little support for the fund being in the council and no support for the state government.
 - We are taking on board any feedback that people want to give us on a benefits package. We are going to finalise by July a long term benefits package holistically with what are all the benefits that would come with the facility.
 - We're looking at it at the moment. Of course if we are to change the current arrangements around the fund that will likely require amendments to the Act and that will need to be taken into account. The Minister or the department can't make any promises until it goes through cabinet.
 - The feedback is that the community want the say over the funds. Hypothetically if a new fund was established it would have to reside with a competent fund manager that the government was satisfied with and that the money was secure and managed appropriately. It might be a council, a professional fund manager or a commonwealth future fund. It would just need to be an organisation that we would have faith that they would invest in good projects. It may have a some governance arrangements above it such as a board and a fund committee where the community can have input. There would be transparency in there for the community to know what projects are being invested in.
- A member asked when will the site characterisation report be available.
 - The department advised that the report will come in mid-July. The BCC will likely have presentations on that before mid-July.
- A member asked if a problem was flagged in the site characterisation report whether it could push the vote back.
 - The department advised that it would depend on the issues.
- A member raised that the councils will enter caretaker mode in September which could prevent the councils making a decisions based on the vote.
 - It was advised that under caretaker mode the councils can't initiate new processes. The department is talking with councils and they are comfortable with the vote coming in. The vote result are presented to the Minister and council doesn't need to make any decisions so there's no reason why the vote can't finish in caretaker mode.
- A member asked whether Kimba Council had asked for 15 million dollars to be given.
 - The department advised that they asked for a fund that would generate 1 million dollars per year but they didn't put down a definitive number.
 - The Kimba Consultative Committee has asked the Kimba Economic Working Group for a potential list of projects which will then be relayed back to the Minster.
- A member asked for a follow up on the Minster making contact with South Australia Power (SA Power).

- The department advised that they did not know at this stage and it was doubtful that it has happened in the last couple of weeks because the Minister would have been preparing for the budget.
- Another member provided an update from SA Power. They advised that they would need 2 million dollars to do the project with a donation of 500,000 dollars. They also advised that if they received a letter that stated they would get the half a million dollars they could get started on the project. A decision needs to be made by end of May.

Action 1: AECOM to present on the site characterisation report when complete.

Action 2: Inform Minister Canavan Hawker power issue and contact SA Power.

Australian Electoral Commission Vote Outline Process

The Deputy Convener invited Mark Sutton, director of the Outback Communities Authority (OCA), to give an overview of their role in the community vote and how they see the site.

The OCA were made aware of the site at Wallerberdina early in the process at the same time as the Flinders Ranges Council (FRC). It was identified as most likely to be in FRC area and some possible OCA areas. Over time it has been determined that it is in the OCA area and the closest town is Hawker.

From the point of view the OCA, we don't necessarily agree with but we are comfortable with the defined area following the consultation process. The OCA doesn't have an opinion whether the site should be a facility or not, we just want people to have as much information as possible. The OCA will work with the FRC, the Commonwealth and the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) to identify the properties in those areas and provide that information for the voting process. The OCA has received a letter from the Minister which was similar to the information the committee has been provided. The OCA has sent the Minister a letter regarding our views on the voting process and that we are supportive of what has been proposed.

Discussion

- A member asked, in what way will the properties not in the FRC have a vote? Will it be part of the CEO roll?
 - The unincorporated areas won't vote in a local government process as there's no votes in the OCA structure. They are appointed by the governor and then nominated by the Minister. It is a foreign process for people in unincorporated areas to vote for a councillor. What we will do is we'll be given some maps of the 50km radius, we'll identify the properties within that and that information will be provided to the AEC and then through to FRC and those people will be given the same opportunity to vote.
- A member asked whether the vote is available to the owners of those properties and not the residents in that 50km?
 - Mark advised that it will be consistent with the information that's been given to the communities. It will likely work in the same way as a council election, if you own the land then you can vote.

- A member asked whether this process is outside anything that's happened before or would it work in a similar way that people who own a business in the area but don't live here can apply to vote.
 - The OCA advised that the whole vote for the Wallerberdina site would be consistent across the whole area. The rules that apply how the commonwealth conducts the vote and the OCA will participate in that process and follow the same rules.
- A member asked if there is a closing date for these properties to be nominated?
 - The OCA advised they do not have a date at this stage but will be considered at the OCA board meeting on the 15th and 16th of June 2018. Once they approve information will be provided in the public domain and the likely recommendation would be to support the process to let people have a vote. This will depend on their approval.
 - A member asked for clarification, if there is a property outside the FRC area but falls within the 50km radius, the OCA will nominate the properties on their behalf?
 - The OCA advised that they will identify the properties and provide the information to the AEC to send out the ballot pack to these properties. The properties won't need to nominate themselves. The department advised that we will advertise for people in those areas to contact us. The department will do what we can and we also have Geoscience Australia helping us to identify the blocks.
 - The OCA mentioned that the Commonwealth wants the OCA involved in the process. Geoscience Australia could identify the properties in the area and go straight to AEC which would exclude the OCA from the process. They have decided on a process which involves us and we are quite welcoming of that.
- A member asked about those that live on a station within the 50km radius but don't actually own the land, are they eligible to vote?
 - It was advised that they can vote if they are a resident or own a property then you can elect to vote if you wish. A resident is automatically on a roll but the owner of a property can nominate to have a vote.
- A member raised that the problem might come up if someone lives outside of the FRC but they work on a property that falls within the FRC.
 - It was advised that if they are eligible to vote under the FRC rules then they will be eligible for this vote.
- A member asked whether there one vote for the property, is it either the person residing on the property or the landowner, or do they both get a vote?
 - It was advised that owners and residents both get a vote, that's how it would work in a local council election.
- A member raised that people who are turning 18 can apply to be on the roll before voting arises.
 - The department advised that the FRC will update and close their roll in line with their election commitments.
- A member asked whether that means the FRC are hosting the ballot?
 - The department advised that was the discussion we had with the FRC and they didn't indicate there would be any problems.
- A member raised the council had not met to discuss the vote.
 - The department advised that it will be up to the council to have a meeting and discuss it but the CEO can also make a decision on it if they choose to.
 - The department advised the AEC conduct the vote as a fee for service. It's not being done under the electoral act as part of an election.
- A member asked whether it was correct that the Kimba Council said for the vote to happen the roll will need to close a certain time before the vote and it closes at the end of the month.

- The department advised that the council will proceed in a way that is consistent with their processes but it is up to them.

The Deputy Convener gave an overview of the timeline.

Activity	Timeframes
Local Councils contract with AEC and finalise the details	ASAP
Local Council announces vote and calls for nominations of supplementary roll	4 weeks (4 July)
AEC finalises the roll	3 days (1 August)
AEC preparation and mail out of ballots	2 weeks (6 August)
Time for filling out ballots	5 weeks (20 August)
AEC report of vote	3 days (28 Sept)

- The department advised the AEC have told the department that because it is a fee for service there is some flexibility. They will take the roll that they are given and it doesn't need to be a council roll. They will print the question that they are asked to provide.
- A member asked that some members of the community need time to get on the roll, is there a process for advertising to tell people to get on the roll.
 - The department advised that we will do what we can to get people to enrol. The FRC will need to update and close their roll for the local government elections in October. We are happy to run advertisements to get people to enrol and we can talk to FRC about that.

Discussion on Vote Boundary

The discussion centred on deciding the boundary, the default position of the FRC boundary plus the 50km radius of Wallerberdina Station or the previous Hawker Council boundary plus the 50 km radius of Wallerberdina Station. The BCC were presented with a vote paper summarising the previous information and maps supplied to the committee from meetings with Professor Peta Ashworth University of Queensland.

- A member raised that they don't think it should be changed, there's been one vote like this and we can't move the goalposts now.
- A member mentioned that Quorn is included for economic reasons. How many Quorn business were at the expo? Another member advised none attended the expo and that some Hawker businesses also struggled to attend due to increased workloads as a result of the site characterisation work.
 - The member raised that if they are not interested and that was the reason for including Quorn, is it still relevant? Would Hawker people get a vote if something was happening in Quorn?
 - Another member said that Quorn people deserved to have a say.
 - Another member mentioned that there seemed to be less interest in Quorn now then there had been previously.
- Another member mentioned that we should leave it the same. If Quorn people are interested then they can vote, if not then they won't. It wouldn't help to exclude them.
- A member raised that all the documentation presented to the committee at this meeting is mainly about the boundary remaining the same.

- The department advised the reason for that is that it is the default position. The Minister will look at documentation presented to him.
- A member raised whether there were enough committee members present to hold a vote on their preference.
 - Another member responded that that was the case at the last meeting and it can't keep being postponed.
- A member raised that people are suggesting it is too late to change the default position and the discussion might be for nothing. If people want to include Quorn it should be for specific reasons and not because it was the definition used 2 years ago. As part of the discussion the committee is allowed to revise the definition to be used in the vote and that is part of the committee's role.
 - A member responded that this was brought up late last year and the committee was supposed to make a recommendation last year but there was always some reason it was never done. It's not the committee's fault but it has never been brought up to make a final decision on it. Now we're in a position where it will be difficult to change the definition. Every time we nearly made a decision it got moved for some reason or another.
 - Member said after all the discussion we have to make a decision either way.
 - Member raised that the committee doesn't have to make a decision and members don't have to vote.
 - The department assured the group that there is nothing set in motion that will prevent us from moving away from the default position. We have written to the councils indicated our preferred option is the default position but we have also advised them that the consultative committees are giving a view. If there was a clear view and the Minister chose and the councils were happy we can change the boundary determinations.
- A member mentioned that they know a lot of people who have strong positions either for or against in Quorn and those people will vote. I can't speak for the people that remain silent.
- A member raised that Quorn can out vote Hawker 4 to 1 which would take control out of our community.
 - Another member mentioned if the ballot papers were colour coded for Hawker and Quorn and one community voted strongly one way then it might be taken into consideration when the Minister makes his decision.
 - Another member mentioned that it may not mean anything. If Quorn outvote Hawker or Hawker outvote Quorn then may still not mean anything.
- Members asked whether there was a way to identify the votes received from the OCA area.
 - The OCA advised that lines on maps create a fair bit of tension regarding who is in and who is out. The OCA believes the original area is fair and reasonable for a vote. If the OCA had their way they would argue that Quorn is 75kms from Barndioota, Leighman is 78kms and Parachilna is 63kms. Now the way the outback usually works is very much north to south and not south to north in relation to community catchment. So there is a strong connection with people in Parachilna with Hawker, more so than Quorn but that is subjective. The reality is the consulted area, the original vote, for equity and based on the fairness in the engagement process, the OCA can live with that.

Divergent Discussion from the vote boundary

In discussing whether to include Quorn or not a member raised the transport route may decide this. If the transport route is through Quorn then they are impacted , if not then no impact. At this point numerous topics were raised.

- A member raised that the discussion has diverged from the boundary. The member put it to the chair that the committee take a vote and find out what the consensus is. That way we can move on.
- A member raised that the convener won't vote because he is independent.
- The department clarified that this vote would be purely for the boundary and not for the Community Benefit Programme.
- A member asked what colour would the ballot paper be for people in the OCA area? The department advised that it was an option we wished to get the opinion of the committee on. It would provide an indication of the general feel but it could also cause more division.

Action 3: discuss with the FRC on advertising a reminder of enrolment cut off dates.

OCA discussion on the long term benefits of the facility and the fund

The chair invited the OCA to also discuss the long term benefits that comes as a result of the facility being located at Barndioota as well as the vote.

Mark Sutton advised that the OCA has written a letter to the Minister regarding the benefits to the surrounding communities. OCA will meet with the Minister in Canberra and articulate their views.

Mark gave an overview of the letter which stated that the OCA would expect that the National Radioactive Waste Management Facility would provide quality of life benefits to other communities outside of the northern FRC area. The proposal was that there should be another fund on top the Capital Contribution Fund to be given to other communities. The fund would produce a minimum amount per annum, support the community and provide short term and long term benefits. The OCA is seeking a genuine commitment to sealing the assistance through the state government.

Discussion

- A member raised concerns that some of the aspects are out of district. It's not in our territory, it's happening in land that is not in our council area.
 - The OCA advised that it is about community. We have been strong saying the outback represents one community. It is fair to say that Hawker is the closest population to support the facility and this is about people. We think geographically we have a good argument and we would see a good partnership with the FRC to move forward.
- A member stated that their view is that it's in the OCA area and Hawker will be the main beneficiary but it is in OCA district.

- The OCA advised that they will articulate those views. We will talk to the letter and see what the Minister says.
- The department advised that there is a lot of asks in the OCA letter but it will be up to the Minister. There is some merit looking at what the radius of the benefits would be. I would think that you want to maintain good faith with the communities currently being consulted but also that you want to look at the ability for those funds to reach other communities.
- A member asked about the mobile phone package that the OCA has put forward and that it will take a while to get a response on that.
 - The OCA advised that that is correct. The OCA has spoken to Telstra and the projects must have a minimum of \$10 million put in before it will be matched. This is part of a two stage process and until we move to stage two to be funded. Whether or not we are successful with the regional growth fund we will use stage one as a lever for stage two with the commonwealth as part of this process.
- A member raised that national was emphasised. They mentioned this because every person from interstate I have spoken to doesn't know about the facility. Adelaide people think that it will go to Kimba.
- The OCA also spoke on where the fund should sit. It was discussed this morning that the fund shouldn't sit with the council. We agree. The idea is that it is independent, it should live and die by itself. You can't have a state government having a finger in the pie or a local government.
- A member mentioned that the OCA are saying that every year we have \$1 million fund and then people apply for grants of that money.
 - The OCA advised that there are lots of funds which run in a similar way around the country.
- A member raised that the concern from the committee is that it has to go to state government. We don't want it to go there because we will never see it.
 - The OCA responded that they are part of the state government so that's why they don't want it.
 - A member mentioned that we need to make sure it's not in the state and I'm sure the Minister is aware of that.
 - The OCA advised that their model protects the Minister. The government of the day still retains the big \$10 million dollar fund and they can have the structure of how it is in the Act. However it must produce a dividend of \$1 million per year plus CPI that goes into a community foundation or similar that is administered locally. The OCA's view would be that 50% goes to FRC and 50% goes to OCA and one member from each of the councils and a representative from the Minister.
- A member raised with a minimum of \$1 million, if it's not going to grow fast enough to keep up with inflation then only getting \$1 million will be the demise of it.
 - The OCA advised that it's \$1 million plus the CPI per annum so it would increase. It has a guaranteed commitment of \$1 million. A normal foundation would have a nest egg of X amount and live off the interest to remain sustainable. This wouldn't have to live off the interest because you're actually getting the interest. You also don't have to give away \$1 million per year in grants.
 - A member raised that that was proposed initially as part of the Community Benefit Programme.
 - The department responded that that was the weakness with the grant program unlike the idea of a capital fund. The departments get given on an annual basis and if

you don't spend it then the assumption is that it gets taken back into general revenue. So any grants that aren't spent within the financial year are terminated and that's just how government works. You can apply for funds to be carried over but it usually in very exceptional circumstances that that happens. So if you were to administer this fund as a grant then you run that risk that it has to be spent. If it is a fund set up in this proposed way then it's really under the control of the communities and there's no rule that it has to be spent.

- The OCA said that this is the same for state government as well. The OCA has to get permission to carry money forward so we normally have to spend it in the financial year that we get it. However the foundation model allows you to create a nest egg that you can build over time for a bigger project or disperse the money on a more irregular basis.
- The department mentioned that if it is a stable and predictable source of revenue it would allow you to leverage off multiple new programs better than a grant program. If you know you are going to get the money consistently over the next 10 years then it allows you to set up multiple projects more easily than the grants program.
- The OCA suggested that if it is built here then the money will likely always be there. I would imagine that the 10 years is a bare minimum.
- The department mentioned that the feedback from Kimba and we would imagine that the feedback would be similar here that they would want it set up in a way that the principle cannot be clawed back by a future government. The government has been looking for a community to engage with, they can't afford to mess the communities around.
- A member mentioned that they have been looking for 40 years so they would likely oblige the host community and now is the time to ask.
- A member asked that the letter to Minister is written for this particular site.
 - The OCA responded that the letter isn't supporting a particular outcome but should the outcome be Wallerberdina these are the things we would expect to see as a result.
- The OCA mentioned that a point was raised about the site boundaries. One of the Kimba sites is on the boundary with the incorporated areas. The OCA's view is that the neighbour on the northern side is quite vocal about that. The community issues there are reasonably heated and we have stayed out of it. It's a bit like the way it was discussed here with the FRC and OCA boundary but it's a bit more defined there. We haven't written the same letter for them if it was to go there.
 - The department responded that they wouldn't propose one fund structure for Wallerberdina and another for Kimba. The funds will prioritise local and regional benefits in both areas.
 - The OCA advised that if one of the Kimba sites is successful then we will write a similar letter. We will ask for different things because the communities north of Kimba are a little bit different.

Vote preference on the boundary

At this point after a lengthy discussion on the vote boundary and OCA points on the structure of a fund the topic reverted to the committee deciding which boundary to use.

BCC Vote

The Deputy Convener raised that the Barndioota Consultative Committee needed to come to a consensus on the preference for the boundary.

The options are the 50km radius around the proposed site plus FRC or the 50km radius around the proposed site plus the old Hawker Council area.

The committee voted on their preference. The votes were not unanimous.

The results were:

- 7 Members voted for the 50km radius plus the FRC area
- 4 members voted for the 50km radius and the old Hawker council area

The department thanked the members for stating their preference and they will take the results back to the Minister and reflect that there were two sets of views.

Please note the deputy convenor did not vote, 5 members were apologies. The vote item was noted by the convenor at the April meeting would be decided at the May meeting.

Waste Acceptance Criteria and jobs associated with the facility Presentation

Hefin Griffiths from ANSTO gave an overview of the jobs that would be required at the facility and the waste acceptance process for the facility.

Mr. Griffith's presentation included the following topics:

- Waste Management Principles
- Project development
- Waste Acceptance Process
- General conditions of waste acceptance
- Types of waste in the inventory
- Defence in-depth & multi-barrier approach
- Case studies of ILW storage
- Latest jobs required at the facility

Discussion

- A member asked when we will know about the generic safety case?
 - The department advised that there is no confirmed timeline at this stage and it is being developed by ANSTO in line with the design requirements.
- A member asked about the process being as practical as possible and whether it is governed by money.
 - Mr. Griffiths advised that there is an element of economic restrictions in terms of what needs to be done to the waste. For example the hazard potential of LLW is less

than ILW so moving LLW into Synroc wouldn't be reasonably practical. You can overcome this by ensuring that there are multiple barriers between the waste and the environment.

- A member asked about how resistant Synroc would be to degradation? We don't know how resistant it will be in future, it will be monitored across the lifetime of the facility?
 - Mr. Griffiths said that the waste will be monitored up until the waste has decayed until a point it no longer needs control. In regards to the ILW there is a lot of evidence in the natural world of how resistant to degradation substances like glass are. Eventually there will be another facility for ILW disposal. These are aspects that will be included in the safety case such as how resistant to degradation these materials are, how long hypothetically it could take for material to penetrate those barriers and what would be left at that time.
- A member raised that the TN81 canisters are guaranteed for 40 years.
 - Mr Griffiths advised that the engineers who design these canisters are quite conservative. After 40 years it needs to be reassessed or requalified. There is no real way that the canisters will have degraded with the mass of material that is in there. Even if the canister took thousands of years to degrade you would still have the material bound up in the glass.
- A member asked where LLW goes once it is cleared from ANSTO?
 - Mr. Griffiths responded that once the waste is no longer radioactive it is moved off site to another general waste site close to ANSTO but once it is cleared it is just general waste.
- A member asked what is the longest that International LLW has been stored for?
 - Mr. Griffiths said that LLW had been stored in various parts of the world since the early 1960's. There haven't been any issues to my knowledge but the engineered barriers weren't designed as well as they are now.
- A member raised that when the French delegation came out to visit the communities in 2017 they were asked if the facility had been built on a seismically active plain and had an underground water table, would it have gone ahead in France. They said that no it wouldn't have been built.
 - Mr. Griffiths advised that that would be part of the site characterisation process. If a site was selected from the characterisation study it would be pretty embarrassing for the site to fail the safety case which is independently administered by ARPANSA. I would imagine that this is a key part of the selection process that the Minister will use to make his decision. In France they had a different process which was based on finding the best site and just imposed it on those communities. The French process has since changed to be a consent based process
- A member asked when people start getting employed for the facility, does the safety case have to identify what training the employees will need? It has been raised that when there was a spill at ANSTO that the employee hadn't been trained properly.
 - Mr. Griffiths responded that the training had been delivered as required. This incident wasn't anything to do with the waste management but it does raise issues that are worthy of addressing. This comes back to the passive safety and not having a requirement for people to be interact directly with the material engaged as you do when they are quality testing high specific activity nuclear medicines. We are looking at how the conditions can be improved but these sorts of interactions directly with radioactive material are significantly less in the waste area.

- A member raised that an American nuclear physicist had said that the basic problems are human error.
 - Mr. Griffiths said that that is correct. Systems are designed to be as non-reliant on human performance as possible. You don't want to have a system where employees are required to work at peak performance, examples of this would be people who have a young baby or an ill family member. The good thing about waste management is that there isn't the same time pressures as there is when producing medicine to be delivered by a particular time. As an example if there was a problem with a crane, we can just make the area safe and leave it until we are able to solve the problem.
- A member asked whether ANSTO is planning to remove any of the canisters inside the TN-81? And if they are taken out of the canister for disposal where would they be repackaged?
 - Mr. Griffiths responded that the canisters won't be removed from the TN-81 at this stage. They would be taken out of the package at the final disposal facility.
- A member asked what happens if finding a disposal facility takes longer than 50 years and the canister isn't up to standard, would it have to be transported elsewhere to be repackaged?
 - Mr. Griffiths said that is correct. I don't believe that will be a significant issue in the performance of this canister. These canisters will be inspected on a 6 monthly basis as they are now. The main issue would be the seals between layer one and two at the top of the canisters which has a pressure sensor attached. Even if that was to fail the primary containment is in the waste form itself. This system is designed to keep the operators safe and there would be no immediate need to repackage the material.
- A member asked if there was any news on finding a pathway for the disposal of ILW?
 - Mr. Griffiths replied that there is a bit going on in that space internationally. I've been talking to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) about appropriate forms of ILW disposal for countries with small amounts of ILW. One of the options for ILW disposal is adapted boreholes. This process of disposal hasn't been done as of yet. The Canadians and Brazilians are interested in this and we would likely line up with them. The borehole systems would be ideal and would be far cheaper than what the French are doing for their large volumes.
 - A member asked that for the final disposal it would need to be in a geologically stable area.
 - Mr. Griffiths replied that the geological barriers would have to provide a stable environment.
 - A member asked how deep the boreholes would go?
 - Mr. Griffiths advised that it would depend on what the geology is. With the right geology it could possibly be 200 metres or it could go up to 400 metres. The important things that would be looked at would be on erosion or human intrusion. This depends on the activity of the waste and the geology of the area. As an example the South Africans are looking at boreholes to dispose of their spent fuel. They are looking at maybe one thousand boreholes but the surface area for that would be very small, probably around 100m by 300m.
 - A member asked if this option falls over, will we look at sending it back overseas?
 - Mr. Griffiths advised that we would probably find our own solution.

- The department asked Mr. Griffiths to elaborate on some literature which discussed how well science understood the long term effects of radioactivity on rocks and how Synroc was developed.
 - Mr. Griffiths advised that a natural nuclear reactor had been found in Africa. It was a sandy area and full of silicon it formed into glass. There was further research into this by the French. Along with Prof Ted Ringwood at the Australian National University, these are the things we have based Synroc on. Natural rock systems are really good at binding radioactive material.
- A member raised that international best practice and ANSTO's requirement is that a waste facility is not sited against the wishes of the traditional owners, how will this be assessed?
 - The department responded that this is a complex question. It is quite site specific. We are making sure that the traditional owners will have as much say as anybody else and the Minister specifically wants to understand their point of view. We have also said that no one group or individual will have the right to veto the process, however that doesn't mean that their views won't be taken into consideration.
- The department asked Mr. Griffiths what is the track record at ANSTO.
 - Mr. Griffiths responded that ANSTO's 60 years has been pretty good. The decisions around the previous tumble tip site don't stack up to modern standards but ARPANSA are satisfied that that situation is being managed safely. In terms of the rest of the waste management there were some issues 30-40 years ago and the practice of dry storage of spent fuel. That led to the decision that Australia would not store high level waste. Instead we would go down the vitrification process and what we end up with is ILW is durable and is easier for us to handle.
- A member asked whether the licence application to ARPANSA would need to include a plan for the disposal of ILW? Or a timeline to complete it by?
 - Mr. Griffiths said I can't speak for the regulator but I would anticipate that would be a requirement. There will likely be two licences for this facility, one for disposal and one for storage. I believe the storage licence will need to demonstrate that a viable disposal option is achievable.. I would imagine that for ILW disposal there would need to be a similar disposability evaluation to that which has been developed for Synroc and we would need to show that we have a path that is viewed as reasonable by the host community.
 - The member asked what the timeline was for storage when the original licence was granted to Lucas Heights?
 - Mr. Griffiths advised that there isn't one currently but when we were granted the licence for this facility it states that as soon as it is available the material should leave Lucas Heights.
- The department advised that an Environment Minister in the late 90's put a condition down that the government should develop a disposal pathway for ILW. The recent decision to co-locate ILW also came with the decision of confirmation by the federal government that would progress the identification of a ILW disposal solution as soon as this facility was bedded down.
- A member raised that ARPANSA said that ANSTO must submit a plan for permanent disposal of ILW no later than June 2020.
 - Mr. Griffiths advised that that plan will be based on this commitment from the government.

- A member mentioned that there are to be no liquids in the waste at this facility, is there a way that liquids used in the Synroc process could separate over time?
 - Mr. Griffiths responded that that can't happen. The liquid used in Synroc also goes through a two stage drying process so it is a powder by the time it gets into the can.
 - The member raised the point because the community is frequently hearing that the facility could contaminate the water table. We need reassurance that this cannot happen.
 - Mr. Griffiths advised that it gets back to the barrier approach. There won't be any liquids that can get out of the packages. The only way that material could get out is if water finds its way into once of the packages and then manages to find a way out again. It would have to erode its way through concrete, corrode its way through steel. The basis of the system is to have a number of barriers in place that if one were to fail there would still be a number of them in place.
- A member raised you can't really say that it will stand 10,000 years because you don't know.
 - Mr. Griffiths advised that for the LLW system it doesn't look at a time period that long. For the ILW it would have to be in a form such as Synroc where the material won't come out. What's been observed in nature is that once it's locked in the glass it stays in the glass. If we put that into a geological barrier then even if that material gets out it won't come in contact with the biosphere.
- A member asked about the possibility of ILW being stranded at the facility. What happens if we can't find a disposal site or somewhere to accept it?
 - Mr. Griffiths advised that it would come back to ARPANSA.
 - The member raised that ARPANSA are appointed by government and who know what the governments priorities will be in the future and ARPANSA may not apply strict regulations like they do now.
 - Mr. Griffiths responded that in my experience any case where the government interfered with the regulator didn't end well for the government. As well as the appointment by the government it is overseen by the IAEA. For example if the Australian government is seen to be putting pressure on an independent regulator then that will fall foul of the IAEA who is a particular arm of the United Nations and I don't think Australia would want to do that.
 - The member responded that strange political things can happen and we don't know what will happen in the future.
- A member raised that countries are moving away from nuclear and moving towards renewable energy. What happens in the future if there is no nuclear industry and nobody cares about the nuclear waste which is a potential scenario.
 - Mr. Griffiths advised that that would come back to the construction and licencing process. ARPANSA will want to see something definitive which would go against this material being stranded. Nobody wants the material to be stranded here or at Lucas Heights. I think while there is this requirement it's the best chance to get these guarantees built into the licencing requirements.
- A member raised that it has previously pointed out that the IAEA has no real power over what Australia does.

- Mr. Griffiths said that that is correct and governments can't be made to do anything apart from the standard ways of international pressure. It tends to be the precedent that's been set. The IAEA would not want to set the precedent of doing nothing.
- A member asked where the canisters will be unloaded when it gets to the site?
 - Mr. Griffiths advised that the vitrified waste wouldn't be unloaded at the site. However the usual process is to use hot cells to produce the material, these are shielded areas where people work with manipulators. Then we bring in a shielded flask which interlocks with the top of the cell. Hoist the material into the flask and then it can be transported.
- A member asked whether there was a chance that robotics could take over loading waste in the future?
 - Mr. Griffiths said we are looking at those options for our storage but in terms of loading waste into disposal cells then maybe but it's only a 1 or 2 person operation. So you'd have to weigh up the potential costs for that and whether you can make a safety case for it.
- A member mentioned that they've been asked about the jobs going from 15 to 45.
 - Mr. Griffiths replied that the 15 jobs came from me originally and we had anticipated it to jump that much. When we came out for the first few meetings we were just looking at the minimum assuming it was just LLW and I couldn't see doing that job with less than 15 people. I think that 15 got taken up but without the caveats that it was excluding security and health physics etc.
 - Another member raised that we always knew that the 15 had been conservative.
 - The member raised that a few numbers had been given and it had been confusing. You mentioned that this estimate was for LLW but ILW was always intended to come to the facility as well.
 - Mr. Griffiths responded that at the time there was no government decision on the ILW. So at that time I gave the minimal operating jobs because that decision hadn't been made.
- A member asked how many of the 45 jobs do you anticipate will come to local people?
 - Mr. Griffiths said it depends what skills are in the local community. For the operational jobs we take people from various backgrounds. We then train people over a period of about 6 months. Other jobs listed in the fact sheets such as the quality assurance don't need to be nuclear specific. Also looking at the timeline between the decision and the operation it would be about 3 to 5 years and we could train people in that time. The bulk of people will come later in the piece but there might be opportunities to take train people earlier.
- Another member raised 26 jobs are going to have on the job training which could be filled by locals.
 - Mr. Griffiths replied that there will be some jobs with specific qualifications such as a Waste Characterisation Specialist which we won't find in Australia. Whereas things like Environmental Monitor can have training provided along with Transport and Logistics.
- A member raised that those 45 jobs would have a flow on effect for their family members.
 - Mr. Griffiths also added that for the model that is in there I've assumed that we don't have a lot of maintenance staff. Following the model that we have at ANSTO

we would probably look at local areas for those jobs. The maintenance will be things like cranes, forklifts and vehicles.

- A member asked whether they will be 45 full time jobs?
 - Mr. Griffiths replied that yes they will.
- The member asked whether they will require a police clearance?
 - Mr.Griffiths said that I don't know too much about the security side of things as that is imposed by the security agencies but I would imagine they would need a clearance of some kind. At Lucas Heights we have our own security process to go through. For the security side of things usually if you're honest and there's nothing significant to stop you getting cleared it won't be a barrier to entry.
- A member asked about the conditioning plant at the facility.
 - Mr. Griffiths advised that it would be very small and would be to develop packaging. They backfill the drums with a special cement grout and that's what would be done here.
- A member asked about why would you transport the waste here and then fill it at the facility.
 - Mr. Griffiths advised that the containers would be ready for transport in that state. They aren't filled before transport for two reasons. Firstly it will be harder to transport those packages. The second thing is that then there is no way that the facility can inspect the individual packages. These details are still being worked out but the facility will have limited capacity for conditioning, so it's not going to be taking the raw waste and outing it through that conditioning process.
- A member raised that the 45 jobs are required initially but what happens once the initial LLW is transported?
 - Mr. Griffiths said that we are looking at a model to minimise that impact. There will potentially more waste that is come. As an example ANSTO has 7000 drums, Woomera have 9000 drums and we can probably push a maximum of 1000 through our system so it will probably still take us 10-20 years to get through. If we manage that tailing off and the ILW becomes a priority we can maximise the number of jobs for the longest amount of time rather than just recruit people for a short amount of time.
- A member asked whether the increased production at ANSTO meant that the spent fuel rods will come to the facility?
 - Mr. Griffiths advised that the spent fuel rods won't come to the facility. There will be a bit more ILW but that's only about 5-10 cubic metres per year at full production.

Other Items

- A member followed up on a piece of other business from the previous meeting regarding the ATLA and VYAC presenting at future meetings.
 - The department advised they are not aware that the convener has spoken to VYAC or ATLA. The concern is selecting one stakeholder group when there are a lot of stakeholder groups. Their views on the project are also quite clear.
 - A member asked what their views are.
 - The department advised that as far as they are aware ATLA doesn't support the facility and VYAC has voted to support the project.
- The member raised that they would like to hear from any other stakeholder groups as it is important to hear from others.

- The department advised that we continue to engage and would be interest to hear Aboriginal views, local businesses, residents and social progress association. We don't want to force people on their views.
- A member raised that when the original survey was done it did not correctly capture Aboriginal views.
 - The department advised that the survey gave everybody the chance to state their views. We also did a separate Aboriginal survey which was accurate.
 - A member asked whether there was a question on whether people were indigenous or not in the survey.
 - The department advised that I'm not sure if there was a question on cultural background. The survey had a number of usual social background questions.
- A member asked about the senate inquiry submissions being closed on the 3rd of April but one submission made reference to a later date than that.
 - Another member advised that people are given the chance to add to their submissions.
- The department also spoke on behalf of AECOM. AECOM have contacted the department informing somebody has gone out to the site. There are strict OH&S issues which apply to the work going on. The property owners don't want anybody unauthorised to be out there. The department also won't go out there without a traditional owner present. We ask that people do not go out there.

Meeting closed 3:00pm