



Australian Government

Department of Industry, Innovation and Science

Media Release: Initial community consultation closes for National Radioactive Waste Management Facility

11 March 2016

Today the 120 day initial community consultation period for the establishment of a permanent National Radioactive Waste Management Facility closed.

Finding a permanent, national site for Australia's low and intermediate level radioactive waste is a matter of national significance. Each week the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation delivers 10,000 patient doses of potentially lifesaving nuclear medicines to over 250 hospitals and medical practices across Australia and overseas. One in two Australians will require such nuclear medicines during their lives.

The Government is committed to safely and responsibly managing the by-products from these processes to enable this life-saving work to continue.

Importantly, a single national facility would replace over 100 interim storage sites across Australia, including in hospitals and universities.

This site will not host high level waste or waste produced by other countries. Further, the facility will be designed, built and operated to the highest safety and environmental standards. This will require a thorough assessment by the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency, Australia's independent radiation safety regulator, and an environmental assessment under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act*.

This consultation process has been very productive. My department has undertaken more than 160 face to face meetings with stakeholders, and has visited each of the communities of the voluntarily nominated sites at least three times. Further, more than 600 written submissions have been received to date. I have been encouraged by the level of constructive and open feedback received during the last 120 days and thank all the members of the communities for their active participation. I would like to especially thank the landholders who voluntarily nominated their land.

Having concluded the first phase of consultation, the outcomes and feedback, including that obtained directly through meetings and via the extensive community surveys, will be used to inform the Government's consideration of the next phase of this process. This will involve further community consultation and more detailed technical assessment before a shortened list of potential sites is announced in

coming months. Ultimately, the Government is seeking a final site which has broad-based community support.

More information can be seen at www.radioactivewaste.gov.au.

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