



Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works

Inquiry into Cox Peninsula Remediation Project

The Public Works Committee is conducting an inquiry into the Department of Finance's Cox Peninsula Remediation Project.

The Commonwealth has utilised 4,750 hectares of land on the Cox Peninsula for maritime, communications and Defence purposes for 70 years, resulting in extensive contamination across a wide area both below and at ground level. Asbestos is widespread and pesticides, heavy metals and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) have been detected above safe levels at a number of sites on Cox Peninsula.

The Cox Peninsula is subject to an Indigenous Land Claim by the Kenbi Aboriginal People and the Commonwealth has undertaken to relinquish sites covered by the claim. The Commonwealth has an obligation to remediate the land under the polluter pays principle, and to ensure people who access the site can do so without risk to their health. The contaminated material will be disposed of into an engineered sealed containment cell on the site, and non-contaminated material will be recycled as appropriate.

The proposed works are due to commence from March 2015 and conclude by June 2018.

The estimated cost of the project is \$31.8 million.

The Committee's Chair, Karen Andrews MP, said the Committee will conduct public and in-camera hearings for the inquiry in the Northern Territory in early 2015.

Full details on the project are available on the Committee's website: www.aph.gov.au/pwc

Submissions to the inquiry close on 22 January 2015.

Full details of the public hearing will be announced early in 2015.

NB the Public Works Committee is neither involved in the tendering process nor the awarding of contracts. Enquiries on those matters should be addressed to the Department of Finance.

For interview: Contact the Chair's office on (07) 5580 9111.

For further information, including how to make a submission, the public hearing times, and copies of submissions when they become available, please visit the Committee website <http://www.aph.gov.au/pwc> or contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 4636.