

23 January 2013

Submission No. 03

(ANSTO Project)

Date: 24/01/13

Committee Chair
Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Chairman

Re ANSTO NUCLEAR MEDICINE PROJECT

The Australasian Association of Nuclear Medicine Specialists* (AANMS) strongly supports the ANSTO Nuclear Medicine Project that will enable the establishment of significantly increased production capacity for Molybdenum-99 (Mo-99) for both the Australian community and for international markets.

Mo-99 is widely used in nuclear medicine and having a consistent and reliable source is crucial to the timely provision of essential diagnostic nuclear medicine services to Australian patients. Notwithstanding that Australia may import such products at times of interrupted supply locally, there is an inherent unreliability in this approach as a long term strategy. Maintaining a reliable supply of radioisotopes is vital as disruptions and delays adversely affect patient care.

It is also important to note that ANSTO's production of radioisotopes uses low-enriched uranium (LEU) unlike the vast majority of international producers of radioisotopes that are still using highly-enriched uranium for this purpose. It is significant for Australia to be one of the leaders of LEU radioisotope production internationally, given the international focus on non-proliferation.

The AANMS understands the project provides for transition from the existing Mo-99 production facility, the effective life of which is designed to end in 2017, and the construction and commissioning of a new facility, together with the establishment of a waste treatment facility. ANSTO has identified the fact that without a significant investment in production of Mo-99 at this time, the anticipated end of life of the existing production facility would see significant disruption to the supply of Mo-99 in Australia.

In addition, at a time when international production of Mo-99 has been under stress, this project will allow ANSTO to build on its role as an international supplier

Promoting Quality Molecular Imaging In Medicine



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of radioisotopes in the longer term, and at the same time strengthens ANSTO's capacity to meet Australia's needs for these radioisotopes.

It is understood that ANSTO has carried out the necessary investigations and consultations to ensure this project is undertaken and completed in an appropriate and timely manner.

The AANMS believes this project:

- will be of significant benefit to the Australian community by securing a reliable source of high quality Mo-99 for Australian patients;
- meets the stated purpose of the project;
- is suitable for that purpose;
- meets a significant need in the community;
- has revenue producing potential through the supply of Mo-99 internationally; and
- demonstrates current and prospective public value.

Accordingly, the AANMS recommends support for this project.

Yours sincerely

Janine Sargeant
Chief Executive Officer

* Formerly Australian & New Zealand Association of Physicians in Nuclear Medicine (ANZAPNM)