

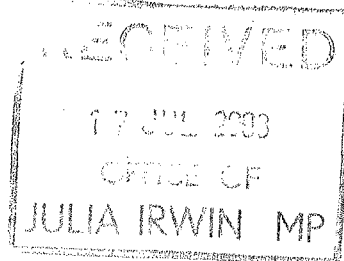


HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STANDING COMMITTEE ON
PETITIONS
received 21.7.08

The Hon Peter Garrett AM MP

Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts

Ms Julia Irwin MP
Chair
Standing Committee on Petitions
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600



- 8 JUL 2008

Dear Ms Irwin

Thank you for your letter of 27 May 2008 concerning a petition on uranium mining at Olympic Dam.

The proposal to expand the Olympic Dam mine requires my approval under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. My delegate determined on 8 November 2005 that the impacts of this proposal will need to be assessed by an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). This means that the potential impacts of the mine, including the impacts of radioactive waste material, will need to be rigorously examined in the EIS and subjected to review through a public comment period.

The proposed development also triggers state legislation and requires approval from the South Australian Government. The Australian Government assessment is being undertaken in collaboration with the South Australian Government. Joint guidelines for the EIS were finalised in January 2006.

The proponent, BHP Billiton, is responsible for the development of the EIS. Once the EIS has been developed, it will be released for public comment for a period of eight weeks. Its release and the call for public comments will be advertised.

I encourage those who have signed the petition to make their views known through the formal review process when it occurs. In the meantime I have asked my Department to note the concerns in the petition for reference during the formal assessment process.

Yours sincerely

Peter Garrett AM

Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600

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