



Public Hearing in Canberra

Applying the science of geosequestration

Power generation from stationary facilities, such as coal-fired power stations, is a major source of greenhouse gas emissions in Australia and therefore methods to capture and store CO₂ from these sources could have a significant impact on emissions. However, there are major challenges to be addressed including cost and environmental issues.

Representatives from Rio Tinto Australia will attend a public hearing into the science and application of geosequestration by the House of Representatives Science and Innovation Committee in Canberra on Monday 26 February. Rio Tinto is both a user and producer of energy. Rio Tinto has acknowledged that there is a link between greenhouse gases (GHG) and human activities and is committed to finding solutions to reducing GHG emissions. In this regard, Rio Tinto has created a company, Post Combustion Capture Ltd. to undertake research into post-combustion capture of CO₂ in conventional power stations. If serious inroads into our levels of emissions are to be realised over the next 10 -20 years then it will be critically important to reduce the level of CO₂ emissions from our current stock of conventional coal-fired power stations.

Rio Tinto has also stressed the need for the development and deployment of Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) technologies to be accelerated. CCS has the potential to reduce CO₂ emissions by up to 85% from power stations; therefore it is important for Australia to demonstrate this technology given our vast reserves of coal. Equally, the successful development of this technology will also provide an opportunity to export this technology to other major world consumers of coal; namely, India and China.

The Minister for Education, Science and Training, Julie Bishop, has requested that the Committee inquire into and report on the science and application of geosequestration technology in Australia, with particular reference to:

- The science underpinning geosequestration technology;
- The potential environmental and economic benefits and risks of such technology;
- The skill base in Australia to advance the science of geosequestration technology;
- Regulatory and approval issues governing geosequestration technology and trials; and
- How to best position Australian industry to capture possible market applications.

Venue: Committee Room 2R2, Parliament House, Canberra

Date: Monday 26 February 2007

4:45 pm **Rio Tinto – Australia** (Submission No 31)

6:00 pm Hearings close

The public hearing will be broadcast internally (audio only) on HMS radio frequency 98.7. Further details, including the terms of reference, membership of the Committee and advice on making submissions can be obtained on the Committee's website at

<http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/scin/geosequestration/index.htm> or by contacting the committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4150 or emailing scin.reps@aph.gov.au

For media comment: contact the Committee Chair Mr Petro Georgiou at Parliament House on (02) 6277 4419 or at his electorate office (03) 9882 3677.

For information: contact the Committee Secretary on (02) 6277 4150