AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: AUSTRALIAN NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ORGANISATION (ANSTO)

TOPIC: HIFAR Reactor

REFERENCE: Question on Notice (Hansard, 15 February 2012, page 27,)

QUESTION No.: AI-17

Senator LUDLAM: If this is complex, perhaps you can table it, but can you provide me with a current timetable and order of works for the decommissioning of the former HIFAR reactor in the site?
Dr Paterson: There is no formal decommissioning plan which has been adopted at the moment. As we indicated, I believe, at a previous estimates, there is a window of time in which we would like to begin that decommissioning process. A will take on notice the current status of how we are thinking about that window and when the works can begin.

ANSWER

ANSTO plans to commence radiological characterisation of the HIFAR reactor during 2012-13. That characterisation process, which will take around two years, will provide essential information for the further planning of the decommissioning program and for the licensing and environmental approval processes. At this stage, and subject to the results of that characterisation program, the anticipated decommissioning schedule is as follows:

Task	Duration
Characterisation	2 years
Decommissioning planning	2 years
Environmental approval process	Up to 1 year
Licence application: preparation, review and approval	1 year
Technical staff recruitment and training	1 year
Equipment and plant procurement	1.5 years
Dismantling of reactor	1.0 year
Final site clean-up and post-decommissioning report	0.5 years
Decommissioning Period	**6.5 years**

It is currently planned that some of the above tasks will be undertaken in parallel. Achievement of the overall timeline would be contingent on adequate funding being available and on the availability of the proposed National Radioactive Waste Management Facility.