

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Resources, Energy and Tourism Portfolio

Budget Senate Estimates

1 June 2010

Question: BR50
Topic: Nuclear waste repository
Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Eggleston asked:

What is the progress for the creation of a nuclear waste repository at Muckaty Station?

Were any other sites considered for the site of the repository?

Answer:

On 24 February 2010 the Government introduced the National Radioactive Waste Management Bill 2010 (the Bill) to the Parliament, which repeals and replaces the *Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Act 2005* (the 2005 Act). The Bill establishes two volunteer site selection processes for a national radioactive waste management facility.

Firstly, the Bill provides for siting the facility on a volunteer site on Aboriginal land in the Northern Territory (NT). The Bill preserves the nomination of a volunteer site at Muckaty Station made under the 2005 Act. Secondly, in the event that it is not possible to site the facility on a volunteer site on Aboriginal land in the Northern Territory, the Bill provides for the Minister to initiate a nation-wide volunteer site selection process.

The Muckaty Station volunteer site nomination will be further considered following passage of the Bill.

The previous Government initiated site investigations for a Commonwealth radioactive waste management facility at Department of Defence sites at Mount Everard and Harts Range in the Alice Springs (NT) region and at Fishers Ridge in the Katherine (NT) region. Under the Government's policy, which is based on volunteer site nominations, there will be no further consideration given to these locations.