

Senate Standing Committee on Economics
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Innovation, Industry, Science and Research Portfolio
Budget Estimates Hearing 2011-12
30 May 2011

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: AUSTRALIAN NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ORGANISATION

TOPIC: HIFAR Reactor

REFERENCE: Question on Notice (Hansard, 30 May 2011, E9)

QUESTION No.: BI-2

Senator LUDLAM:Can you give us an update on the status of the decommissioning work on the HIFAR plant?

Dr Paterson: In formal terms, no decommissioning is taking place at HIFAR at present. The HIFAR license is a possess and control license. Under a possess and control license we maintain the facility safely while the decommissioning plans are developed. As those plans are developed and put into action, we will be requesting from ARPANSA a decommissioning license.

Senator LUDLAM: Okay. So that has not been issued yet. When do you anticipate applying to that license?

Dr Paterson: There are two scenarios in place at present. One would be an early application and the other one would be a later application. I will provide the details of those two alternatives on notice.

ANSWER

The early option would see the detailed planning, characterisation and preparation of the application for a decommissioning licence from ARPANSA and of the environmental approval process under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* commence in early 2012.

A later option would see the approval processes commence around 2014. In either case, we expect that those processes would take two to three years to complete. The physical dismantling process could commence only after all relevant approvals are obtained and once a National Radioactive Waste Management Facility is available.