

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Resources, Energy and Tourism Portfolio
Supplementary Budget Senate Estimates
20 October 2010

Question: SR1
Topic: British Nuclear Tests in South Australia
Proof Hansard Page: Written

Senator Ludlam asked:

1. The Totem tests occurred at Emu Fields on 15 and 27 October 1953. Is it the case that ordinance, planes, clothing and earthmoving equipment, and other debris from the tests were sent back to Woomera for decontamination and disposal?
2. Where is the disposal site?
3. Are there dump sites at the Amberley Air Base for ordinance, planes and clothing that were sent there for decontamination and disposal following all the major trials?

Answers:

1. Some items of equipment from the 1953 Totem nuclear weapons tests were sent to Woomera, South Australia (SA), for decontamination to enable their further use or salvage.
2. Historical records suggest that waste from decontamination procedures at Woomera was disposed of at the Airfield Cemetery, Maralinga (SA), and subsequently dealt with as part of the Maralinga Rehabilitation Project.
3. The Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) confirms that a RAAF Lincoln Bomber was buried at RAAF Base Amberley and that there is some unconfirmed historical evidence to suggest that an additional aircraft was converted to components and subsequently buried at RAAF Base Amberley.