

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2004-2005 ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: ANSTO
Output Group: ANSTO

DEST Question No. E677_05

Senator Nettle provided in writing.

Question:

Becquerel Laboratories recently ceased operations in premises leased from ANSTO at Lucas Heights.

1. Did the operations of this company generate radioactive waste?
2. If so, can you provide full details and the type, volume and isotopic content of this waste?
3. Where is this waste currently located?

Answer:

ANSTO has provided the following response:

Becquerel Laboratories

1. Some radioactive waste was generated from the irradiation of samples of mineral sands and rock powders in HIFAR.
2. The volume of waste generated from Becquerel Laboratories' activities was approximately 12 m³, of which 85% was mineral sands/rock powder samples and 15% comprised general waste (gloves, tissues, waste bags, cloth waste and carbon). The majority of this waste was non-radioactive.

Isotopic content includes Zn-65, Eu-152, Pa-234m, Pb-214 and Bi-214.
3. As the irradiation of these samples was carried out in HIFAR, wastes arising are currently stored at ANSTO within the Waste Operations storage facilities, as foreseen by Section 5(1)(ba) of the *Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation Act 1987*. The majority of the waste has already decayed to background level.