

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

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

DEST Question No. E174_05

Senator Carr provided in writing

Question:

Similarly, can you provide this Committee with a fully costed waste management contingency plan for the Lucas Heights site?

Answer:

ANSTO – Waste Management

ANSTO has provided the following response:

It is not clear what waste, or what contingencies, this question relates to. ANSTO has assumed that it covers the contingency of a significant delay in the opening of the proposed National Repository for Low-Level and Short-Lived Intermediate-Level Radioactive Waste (LLSW). Given the Prime Minister's recent announcement on 14 July 2004 that the Australian Government has decided to abandon the national radioactive waste repository at Site 40a near Woomera in South Australia, and that the Australian Government will establish a waste management facility for the Commonwealth's low and intermediate level waste on Commonwealth land at a yet to be determined site, ANSTO is now ensuring that it can continue to safely manage LLSW at Lucas Heights into the future.

ANSTO stores its LLSW in a centralised storage facility. The LLSW is packaged carefully in steel drums, most of which are of 200 litre capacity. The centralised LLSW storage facility comprises a tiered racked arrangement, with the drums stacked on pallets (four drums per pallet) within the racks. The facility is designed to store a total of 6,400 drums. ANSTO currently has 6000 drums in storage. With a generation rate of 150 drums per annum, the remaining capacity within this store is less than 3 years. However other compaction technologies are being reviewed.

At this stage, ANSTO does not have a fully costed waste management contingency plan for its future holdings of LLSW at Lucas Heights. Nevertheless, for the information of the Committee, options that may be considered by the ANSTO Board include:

Option 1: Construction of a New Facility adjacent to the Existing Centralised LLSW Storage Facility (or a Significant Extension to the Existing Facility).

<u>Item</u>	<u>Cost \$M</u>
• Extension of the Centralised Storage Facility.	3.0
• Miscellaneous monitoring equipment	0.3
• Ongoing drum management for two years (\$0.1 M per year)	0.2
Total Expenditure (over next 2 years)	3.5

To provide approximately 25 years of additional storage capacity.

Option 2: Extension of the Existing Facility

<u>Item</u>	<u>Cost \$M</u>
• Construction of new store for miscellaneous materials	1.5
• Demolition costs & relocation of materials	0.5
• Relocation of Gamma Scanning facility	0.5
• Modification to existing storage facility (racking)	0.1
• Ongoing drum management for two years (\$0.1M per year)	0.2
Total Expenditure (over next 2 years)	2.8

To provide 20 years of additional storage capacity.

Option 3: Supercompaction of LLSW Drums

<u>Item</u>	<u>Cost \$M</u>
• Relocation of 1000 t press to Waste Operations	0.3
• Modification and upgrade of super-compaction press – mechanical	0.2
• Modifications for safety and control	0.3
• Operating costs (including management)	0.9
• Modifications to centralised storage facility to accept compacted drum container	0.3
• Drum movements & relocation	0.5
Total Expenditure (over next 3 years)	2.5

To provide approximately 15 years of additional storage capacity.

The above estimates do not include design, administration costs or any associated works.