

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2005-2006 BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: 3

Output Group: 3.2 – Assistance for science collaboration and innovation.

DEST Question No. E139_06

Senator Carr provided in writing.

Question:

Please report on the progress of finding a site for the Waste Repository. Has ANSTO already submitted license applications for a new site? How many applications? What are the potential sites?

Have any consultants been involved in the identification of a new site? How many DEST staff are working on identifying a new site? What costs have been incurred already in identifying a new site?

Answer:

Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Facility

On 15 July 2005 the Minister for Education, Science and Training announced that three sites in the Northern Territory had been identified for detailed consideration of their suitability as the site for the Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Facility.

No licence applications have been submitted in relation to the Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Facility.

DEST has continued to retain the services of Dr John Harries as a scientific consultant. Dr Harries has provided advice in relation to identifying potentially suitable sites. GHD Pty Ltd has provided advice on the comparative costs associated with constructing the Facility at various locations. GHD was paid \$1,980 for its work; Dr Harries has been paid \$19,850 between July 14 2004 and July 1 2005.

An average staffing level of 3.0 within the Radioactive Waste Management Section has been involved in providing advice to the Government on potentially suitable sites. The estimated cost, over one year, is \$406,000. This figure includes salaries, administrative on-costs and office accommodation and equipment.