

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

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

Outcome: 3

Output Group: 3.2 – Assistance for science collaboration and innovation

DEST Question No. E489_06

Senator Crossin provided in writing.

Question:

Does the Federal Government still accept the requirement under the EPBC Act nuclear trigger for a full Environmental Impact Statement for a nuclear waste storage facility? What remaining validity could the EPBC Act, the application of the Objects of the Act, and the required EIS assessment have, when the EPBC Act and processes have been excluded from the site selection decision?

Answer:

Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Facility

Yes. The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) requires nuclear actions to undergo referral, assessment and approval in accordance with the Act.

The site selection process is the preliminary process for selecting a site to undergo full regulatory consideration under the EPBC Act and the *Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Act 1998*.

The process of assessment of the environmental impact of the Facility by the Minister for the Environment and Heritage under the EPBC Act is independent of the process by which the Minister for Education, Science and Training decides upon a preferred site to undergo the assessment.