

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. E490_06

Senator Crossin provided in writing.

Question:

How could the Federal Environment Minister then claim to conduct any credible environmental assessment of the construction and operations of a nuclear waste dump, based on an arbitrarily imposed site?

Answer:

Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Facility

An environmental assessment of the Facility proposal must take place in accordance with the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

The site selection process is the preliminary process for selecting a site to undergo 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.