

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. E648_06

Senator Wong provided in writing.

Question:

Is there any existing contractual agreement between ANSTO and COGEMA or another company over spent fuel reprocessing after the US agreement ends? Please provide details. Is there scope for the US agreement to be extended beyond 2016?

Answer:

ANSTO has provided the following response concerning reprocessing of spent fuel

Yes, there are contractual arrangements between COGEMA and ANSTO covering the reprocessing of spent fuel from the OPAL reactor. Within these contractual arrangements, COGEMA, in late 2004, formally confirmed its agreement to accept all silicide fuel irradiated in the replacement reactor facility during the period prior to the availability of a new processable fuel duly qualified in Australia.

The US has provided no indication that it intends to extend the Foreign Research Reactor Spent Nuclear Fuel policy beyond the dates announced in December 2004. ANSTO's spent fuel management plans beyond that date do not rely upon any such extension.