

## Opposition Reservation

Opposition Senators acknowledge that as the expert agency on nuclear research and management, ANSTO has a critical role to play in the management of nuclear waste and materials nationally. In the current security climate, it is also sensible for ANSTO to assist law enforcement agencies in the management of nuclear materials.

The Opposition's reservation to this bill hinges on two critical issues. First, this bill strengthens ANSTO's ability to be involved in management of nuclear materials and waste destined for the nuclear waste repository to be constructed in the Northern Territory. Labor reiterates its opposition to the nuclear waste facility has been imposed on the Northern Territory under provisions of the *Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Act 2005*. The concerns of the Opposition were made clear in its dissenting report on this bill tabled by this committee on 29 November 2005. Further, the Opposition is concerned that the Government may use this Bill not just to enable ANSTO to usefully lend its expertise to national nuclear waste management but to pre-empt and close off opportunities for the community to express its concerns over the proposed nuclear waste repository in the Northern Territory.

The Opposition emphasises strongly its concern that the Government may use the legislation to allow the Lucas Heights nuclear facility to become a de facto national waste repository in the event of any delays or other problems with any planned national repository. Labor opposes Lucas Heights becoming the site of a national waste repository.

While supporting the extension of ANSTO's powers, the Opposition will be pressing the Government on these broader waste issues and requiring reassurances in relation to storage at Lucas Heights.

Senator George Campbell

for

Senator Gavin Marshall  
Deputy Chair

