



# KATHERINE TOWN COUNCIL

PO Box 1071 KATHERINE NT 0851  
Civic Centre, Stuart Highway KATHERINE

Our ref: 70/97/2 GB:sh

18 November 2005

Committee Secretary  
Senate Employment, Work Place  
Relations & Education Committee  
Department of Senate  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Attention: Mr Peter Hallahan

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: INQUIRY INTO COMMONWEALTH WASTE MANAGEMENT BILL 2005**

Katherine Town Council on behalf of the Katherine community seeks to make a written submission to this inquiry. Katherine is a town of nearly 10,000 people which is located some 42kms from Fishers Ridge. Katherine would be significantly affected were a Radioactive Waste Storage Facility be constructed at this location.

Katherine Town Council has seven elected members as follows:

Mayor Anne Shepherd  
Deputy Mayor Trevor Ford  
Alderman Bill Daw  
Alderman Des Buckerfield  
Alderman Mark Gage  
Alderman Henry Higgins  
Alderman Jodie Locke

The proposed Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Facility was considered at a Special Meeting of Katherine Town Council on the 17 November 2005. This meeting was attended by 38 residents and at the commencement of the meeting a petition with 1,078 signatures was tabled. The wording of the petition is as follows:

“We, the undersigned, hereby petition the Aldermen of the Katherine Town Council to actively oppose the construction of a Federal nuclear waste dump at Fishers Ridge or at any other site in the Katherine region.”

Following receipt of the petition two motions were debated and a vote was taken.

MOVED: Daw/Higgins

**Motion 1 That Katherine Town Council inform the Federal Government, that for environmental reasons it does not support Fishers Ridge as a location for a Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Facility.**

CARRIED: 5/2

In speaking for the motion Alderman Daw and Alderman Buckerfield indicated that Fishers Ridge was an unsuitable site being located over an aquifer that is the water supply for a number of Aboriginal communities and is at the headwaters of the Roper and King Rivers. Further, the site is located within twelve kilometers of major horticultural activities.

In speaking against the motion, Alderman Gage indicated that there was insufficient information available to make an informed decision. Alderman Gage indicated that Council should not determine a position on Fishers Ridge until the Environmental Impact Statement being arranged by the Commonwealth is complete.

MOVED: Buckerfield/Higgins

**Motion 2 That should a Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Facility be considered elsewhere within the Katherine Region, Katherine Town Council will, if requested, work cooperatively with the Northern Territory and Federal Governments to identify a site that is acceptable from an environmental, social and economic view point to the community of Katherine and the people within the Region.**

CARRIED: 5/2

Mayor Shepherd and Alderman Daw requested that their names be recorded as voting against the motion.

In speaking for the motion Alderman Buckerfield indicated that in the interest of all Australians a suitable site had to be found and this potentially could provide an opportunity for Katherine.

In speaking against the motion Alderman Daw indicated that the Katherine Region with its strong agricultural industry and extensive system of rivers and aquifers was totally unsuitable for a Radioactive Waste Facility.

Please call either myself or Chief Executive Officer Geoff Brooks on (08) 8972 5500 should you wish to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely



Anne Shepherd  
**MAYOR OF KATHERINE**