

Submission

to

Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education
Legislation Committee

Inquiry into the Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Bill 2005

Submission no: 161

Received: 18/11/05

Submitter: Mr Scott Alderson

Organisation: Sunshine Coast Environment Council Inc.

Address: PO Box 269
NAMBOUR QLD 4560

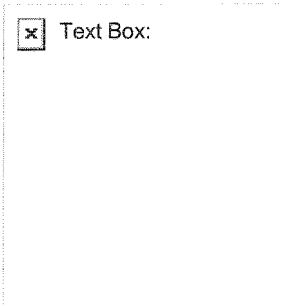
Phone: 07 5441 5747

Fax:

Email: campaigner@scec.org.au

McMahon, Rosalind (SEN)

From: SCEC Campaigns [campaigner@scec.org.au]
Sent: Friday, 18 November 2005 5:36 PM
To: EET, Committee (SEN)
Subject: Submission on Nuke Waste



SUNSHINE COAST ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL Inc.
 ABN 23 500 365 569

3 Porters Lane PO Box 269 Nambour Qld 4560 Phone (07) 5441 5747 Fax (07) 5441 7478
 Email: info@scec.org.au Website: www.scec.org.au

**SUBMISSION FROM THE SUNSHINE COAST ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL ON THE INQUIRY INTO
 THE RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT BILL**

November 2005-11-17

*to the Chair - Senator Judith Troeth
 Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education Committee
 Inquiry into Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Bill 2005*

The Sunshine Coast Environment Council has serious reservations about the proposed Commonwealth Radioactive Waste Management Bill.

It seems that this legislation has been rushed through without any proper consultation with aboriginal traditional owners, the Northern Territory Government or the wider community, both in the Northern Territory and throughout Australia; in particular the communities that would be on any likely transport routes. We feel that the committee should at least travel to the Northern Territory to hear from the public. The Senate Scrutiny of Bills Committee criticised the bill for its adverse impacts 'on personal rights and liberties'. The rush seems totally inappropriate when dealing with nuclear waste which can be harmful for thousands of years. This is also the case for such a short submission time for the public to have a say on an issue that is complex and is full of detailed science.

By overriding the federal and territory laws it has set a terrible precedent and has undermined any confidence that the general public had in their democratic rights. It has been clearly mandated at the last Territory election that the people of the Northern Territory did not want a nuclear waste dump. All sides of politics in the Northern Territory are against this planned dump. It also goes against what the federal government originally said when it gave "absolute categorical assurance" that no nuclear dump would be imposed on the territory. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) maintains that such facilities require community consent and a reasonable degree of 'social license'. This legislation is inconsistent with this international obligation.

With the general public and all sides of Government opposing this proposal, it seems that there could be any potential to reuse further waste from overseas. This could mean what starts as a low level to intermediate level nuclear waste facility, could turn out to be a high level international waste dump. It has been described as necessary so we are able to access high quality nuclear isotopes for medicine but this comment has been refuted by medical professionals including the Lucas Heights Reactor former head, Barry Allen.

In closing, the Sunshine Coast Environment Council would like to clearly state it is against this facility and any nuclear operations in Australia. It is still unsafe, unclean and unnecessary.

The process in which this bill has occurred has been totally inappropriate. Good public policy is developed through negotiation and inclusion - not imposed by governments determined to get their way no matter what.

21/11/2005

ours truly,
Scott Alderson