



Newsletter

KIMBA

November 2017



Image: The Kimba agricultural tour group at ANTSO

Agriculture and radioactive waste

Karen Baines is a Farmer and Farm Safety & Compliance Consultant North West of Ungarra on the Eyre Peninsula. She recently visited Sydney and Canberra along with the Buckleboo Farm Improvement Group on an agricultural tour to find out more on radioactive waste storage and its impact on Agriculture.

Before undertaking research and visiting ANTSO, Geoscience and meeting with former Minister Barnaby Joyce, she had no definitive opinion on the NRWMF.

"After much thought and research, my opinion is that any potential threats to health & safety posed by this facility are extremely remote," she said.

"I would be happy to have this type of facility nearby to our farm."

"After much thought and research, my opinion is that any potential threats to health & safety posed by this facility are extremely remote"

"I feel far more comfortable about the safety of this facility than I do with some of the chemicals we use on farm and the complacency that surrounds their risk," she explained.

To see Karen's full report on her experience and findings, visit the NRWMF website.

Concerns of farmers

Some members of the delegation raised concerns about the NRWMF being sited in the region, including why the intermediate level waste couldn't remain at ANSTO, what guarantees the government could provide that the reputation of the agricultural industry would not be adversely impacted, and whether the Commonwealth would override the SA Government's legislation that prohibits the establishment of certain nuclear waste storage facilities in the State.

Why can't the waste be left at ANSTO?

Firstly, it won't fit. The Federal Government is looking for a 100 hectare site. The whole Lucas Heights campus of the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) is only 70 hectares in size, and it already has more than 80 buildings on it. Surrounding this is 300 hectares of bushland made up of ridges and valleys. About 130 hectares of the perimeter is also currently used as a municipal tip which will operate for another 25 years.

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Secondly, it's not allowed. ANSTO's Lucas Heights campus is only licensed by the independent nuclear regulator, the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA), to store waste on a temporary basis, and on the condition that a plan is developed by the end of the decade for a final disposal pathway for its waste. Also, multiple commitments have been given to the community around Lucas Heights over many years that the waste could only be stored at Lucas Heights on an interim basis until a purpose built facility was available.

What guarantees can the government provide?

Some members of the delegation were concerned about what guarantees the government could provide that the reputation of the agricultural industry would not be adversely impacted.

The Department of Agriculture and Water Resource has advised they do not expect any implications for domestic or export products originating from farms that are nearby a NRWMF. Products such as grains have radiation standards, and the regulatory requirements imposed ensure these standards are not exceeded. Further, given that the main buyers of Australian grain products also have advanced nuclear programs, it is not evident why there would be discrimination against Australian products where there is no evidence of actual contamination.

Radioactive waste management facilities are located in high value agricultural areas across the world including the Champagne region of France, and have not impacted its reputation, product quality or price. There is no credible reason to suggest the Australian experience would be any different.

While we cannot foresee a plausible incident of a nuclear nature, given the waste is solid and isolated from the environment, if any incident occurred at the facility that impacted on the surrounding farming land, the Commonwealth would be responsible for remediation. Additionally, in seeking a licence the Commonwealth will need to demonstrate through a safety case that the facility is able to withstand all plausible catastrophic events, and have in place controls to protect human health and the environment.

Doesn't SA legislation prohibit the establishment of a nuclear waste storage facility?

The national facility is a project of national significance that will be established under Commonwealth law.

In terms of South Australian state law, the national facility is a project of national significance that will be established under Commonwealth law. Noting that no decision has been made to site a facility in South Australia, or any other state, the Government will consult with the relevant state government before any final decision is made.

Christmas In Kimba



Image: Kimba locals with the NRWMF project team in front of the Kimba silos

The NRWMF project team celebrated Christmas with the Kimba community at the Kimba Gateway Hotel on Wednesday 29 November 2017. The NRWMF project team attended as well as Bruce Wilson (Head of Resources, Department of Industry, Innovation and Science).

Kimba Consultative Committee announced

The Kimba Consultative Committee has been appointed, and includes 14 members plus an Independent Convenor and a Deputy Convenor.

The new Committee is a critical part of the Phase Two Consultation process that is continuing in Kimba in relation to the proposed National Radioactive Waste Management Facility.

The committee will be a direct link between the Government, the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science and the local community. Its roles will include:

- Providing advice in relation to jobs, business opportunities and community benefits;
- Receiving advice on the technical aspects to relay back to the community; and
- Reviewing the nominated projects under the \$2 million Community Benefit Package.

The establishment of the Kimba Consultative Committee mirrors the successful consultation model put in place to support a third nominated site, in South Australia at Wallerberdina Station, near Hawker.

In total, 51 people applied to be appointed to this Committee.

Minister for Resources and Northern Australia, Senator Matt Canavan, welcomed the strong interest and congratulated the successful community members.

“The Kimba Consultative Committee is an important part of the community consultation process,” Minister Canavan said.

“The large number of applications received is a great demonstration of how highly the Kimba community is engaged with this discussion, and I thank everyone who put their name forward.

“The Kimba Consultative Committee is made up of a large mix of people including local business owners, landowners, members of local government and members of the community.

“It also includes people whose stated views are supportive, opposed or neutral in relation to the proposal for the area.”

The first meeting of the Committee is expected to be scheduled in January 2018 and it will meet regularly throughout the consultation period.

Applications are currently open for grants under the \$2 million Community Benefit Programme, and the new Committee will consider these early next year.

Committee Members

- Allan Suter (Convenor)
- Dean Johnson (Deputy Convenor)
- Symon Allen
- Heather Baldock
- Jeffrey Frank Baldock
- Pat Beinke
- Randall Cliff
- Kellie Hunt
- Sally Inglis
- Jeff Koch
- Meagan Jane Lienert
- Kerri Rayson
- Toni Scott
- Peta Willmott
- Peter Woolford
- Amy Wright



Image: Mayor Dean Johnson (KCC Deputy Convenor), Maree Barford (Community Liaison Officer), and Bruce McCleary (General Manager NRWMF)



Image: Kimba locals at a Community Benefit Programme information session

Community Benefit Programme

The Community Benefit Programme is now open for 2018. The programme will provide up to \$2 million for community projects.

Applications close 5pm AEDT on Monday 5 February 2018.

For more information please visit www.business.gov.au or visit:

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Experts Visit Napandee

Experts were in town in October to hold public information sessions.

The session featured presentations from experts, Dr Geoff Currie (Associate Professor in Medical Radiation Science at Charles Sturt University), Frank Harris (Chief Adviser Radiation Governance and Product Stewardship, Rio Tinto Uranium) and Mark Moore (GM of ANSTO Nuclear Medicine).

While in Kimba the experts also had the chance to visit Napandee with Jeff Baldock.



Image: (From left to right) Frank Harris, Professor Peta Ashworth, Jeff Baldock, James Hardiman and David Abbott

Characterisation Works

The department has put out a Request for Tender (RFT) for Site Characterisation works .

Site Characterisation is an important part of Phase 2 in selecting a site to host the Facility and includes:

- Assessing flora and fauna, geology, seismic activity, risks, the surrounding environment, transportation and other infrastructure.
- Inputting into the Detailed Business Case, with reference to the site specific design and cost estimates that arise from site characterisation.
- An additional option, following site characterisation, for the preparation and development of submissions for licensing and approvals process.

Bruce McCleary, General Manager of the National Radioactive Waste Management Facility Taskforce, said that site characterisation is an important activity in the next part of the project.

“Three sites, two at Kimba and one at Wallerberdina Station were voluntarily nominated by their landowners and moved to Phase Two assessment after the community supported continuing the discussion,” McCleary said.

“Phase Two involves building a detailed understanding of the nominated sites, through in depth community consultation and technical assessments.

“Community consultation is now well underway, including appointment of locally engaged officers and establishment of site offices in both areas, creation of committees and working groups, and regular visits from members of the project team and experts to provide information on the project.

“The other part of it is site characterisation, which involves looking in detail at all aspects of each site, and understanding whether they fit the technical criteria to be a suitable location.”

McCleary said this second phase of the process at all three sites will be underway until the end of next year.

Christmas Shutdown

The department will be shut down over Christmas from 22 December 2017 through to 2 January 2018.

The NRWMF project team wishes everyone a safe and happy holiday period.

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