



NEW SOUTH WALES  
MINISTER FOR HEALTH

M03/4320

Mr P Primrose MLC  
Chairman  
Joint Select Committee on the  
Transportation and Storage of Nuclear Waste  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

-4 DEC 2003

Dear Mr Primrose

I write in response to your letter of concerning the inquiry into proposals by the Commonwealth Government to transport and potentially store nuclear waste in New South Wales.

The NSW Department of Health is of the view that the transport and storage of nuclear waste must be managed in accordance with risk and threat management principles. The transportation of nuclear waste must be taken in the context of the current terrorist threat environment and appropriate levels of security must be factored into operational plans. The risks associated with transport accidents must also be evaluated. Transport routes must be carefully considered, preferably confined as best as possible away from high-density residential areas.

The NSW Department of Health considers that a full and detailed risk assessment must be undertaken.

It is assumed that proposed storage sites and transport mechanisms are developed in accordance with the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear safety Agency (ARPANSA) guidelines, with particular reference to the following:

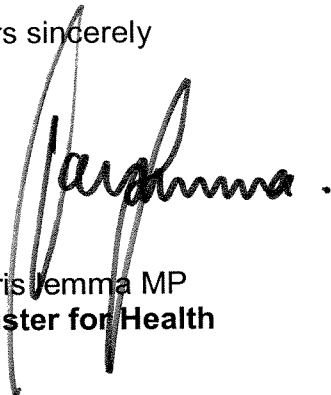
- the general public shall not be exposed to more than 1 mSv per annum (over and above natural background)
- occupational exposure shall not exceed 20 mSv per annum (reference [www.arpansa.gov.au/is\\_rad.htm](http://www.arpansa.gov.au/is_rad.htm))

The occupational health and safety risks associated with the transportation and storage of nuclear waste must be considered, particularly in regard to annual exposure levels.

The extent of community anxiety associated with the transport and storage of nuclear waste is also likely to be considerable and should not be underestimated.

It would be appreciated if you would convey this response to the Committee Manager, Mr Ian Thackeray, and advise him that the NSW Department of Health contact in relation to the advice above is Dr David Cooper, Director, NSW Health Counter Disaster Unit, on (02) 9391 9028.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Morris Jemma', with a large, stylized flourish above the name.

Morris Jemma MP  
**Minister for Health**