

**Submission  
No 12**

## **INQUIRY INTO URANIUM MINING AND NUCLEAR FACILITIES (PROHIBITIONS) REPEAL BILL 2019**

**Organisation:** Azark Project  
**Date Received:** 29 August 2019

---

***Australia should explore nuclear waste before we try domestic nuclear power***

It is generally accepted wisdom that before establishing a nuclear generation industry it is necessary to have proper means of storing and disposing of nuclear waste.

To that end the Azark Project can readily provide for probably the best and most effective permanent disposal of nuclear waste in the world at its planned facility in Western Australia.

The need for properly managing nuclear waste by storage and disposal before embarking on nuclear power generation is lucidly explained in the well argued paper by Associate Professor Heiko Timmers of the University of New South Wales which bears the title at the start of this submission and was published in *The Conversation – Australia* on 5 August 2019<sup>(1)</sup>.

Professor Timmers says that:

“Australia’s incredibly stable geology offers the opportunity to build a radioactive waste disposal facility similar to the repository under construction in Onkalo in Finland.”<sup>(2)</sup>

He goes on to say that by Australia having a nuclear disposal facility it would also address its:

“.....responsibility for any environmental consequences of sending uranium into the world. Importantly, supplying the world’s carbon-free nuclear reactors and managing their waste responsibly could be an important plank in Australia’s efforts to reduce carbon emissions”.

As explained in greater detail in the attachments to this submission the Azark Project is developing an underground facility for nuclear waste storage and disposal at probably the best possible site in the world providing Australia with the safest and most acceptable manner of managing nuclear waste in accordance with the current stringent international prescriptions and standards.

However a facility for that purpose would probably still require the nationwide repeal of all prohibitive state legislation similar to the *Uranium Mining and Nuclear Facilities (Prohibitions) Act 1986* of New South Wales particularly if the waste were to come from all parts of Australia for disposal.

## SUBMISSION

This submission is made by Azark Project Pty Ltd (ACN 618 973 792) on behalf of the Azark Project as more specifically described in attachment A.

IT IS RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED that the Standing Committee in accordance with the terms referred to it should:

- (a) pass the *Uranium Mining and Nuclear Facilities (Prohibitions) Repeal Bill 2019* to begin the removal by the Parliament of NEW SOUTH WALES of all prohibitions on all aspects of the nuclear energy cycle; and
- (b) support and assist the establishment of the Azark Project nuclear waste disposal facility as described in this submission as a necessary condition before contemplating any domestic nuclear electricity generation.

## REASONS

The reasons for this submission are twofold and are of importance to the development of the Azark Project.

The first part of the submission is really the full support for the proposed legislation before the Legislative Council to abolish the restrictions on the

nuclear industry including mining in New South Wales although it is understood that the repeal bill would still need to be passed by the Legislative Assembly to achieve that purpose.

While the repeal legislation would only apply to New South Wales it is suggested that it will have a very influential effect on the other Australian states in doing away with their nuclear industry restrictions and prohibitions.

The second part of the submission is a pragmatic approach to beginning the development of the nuclear generation industry for as explained by Professor Timmers it is clearly necessary to be able to dispose of nuclear waste before embarking on nuclear power generation or processing.

The operations of the nuclear waste storage and disposal by the Azark Project should also assist in ascertaining the costs involved in setting up nuclear power generating plants.

## CONCLUSION

It is again generally submitted that within the terms referred to the Committee it should pass the repealing bill and work to have it become law so that the nuclear industry can be developed in Australia to its fullest potential having regard to the resulting community and financial benefits.

  
Hon. GEORGE GEAR

  
PETER REMTA

20 August 2019

This submission is made in our capacity as directors of Azark Project Pty Ltd which together with Shire of Leonora and Goldfields Carbon Group Pty Ltd are the Azark Project proponents participants.