



Community development

A community skills and capacity building package

The community that hosts the National Radioactive Waste Management Facility will receive a brand new industry and a substantial injection of local investment, through construction, operation and infrastructure upgrades. To help the community better leverage these benefits, the **Federal Government has confirmed that an increased Community Development Package of up to \$31 million will be available.** The Package will focus on building skills and capacity so that a community can prepare for, and maximise, the benefits from the construction and operation phases of the Facility. This includes supporting local Aboriginal cultural heritage and economic development.

The **Community Development Package** will be provided through dedicated funding streams for community skills and development, and then for ongoing community investment during the operational phase. During the four year licensing and construction period, **\$8 million of grants through a Community Skills and Development Program will strengthen the economic and skills base within the nearby communities.** The funding will assist local workers,

potential workers, and local businesses prepare to competitively respond to initial opportunities in early works, construction, delivery and flow on businesses. Funding will also support specific training and economic development opportunities for local Aboriginal communities.

A \$20 million National Radioactive Waste Management Facility (NRWMF) Community Fund will be established for long-term support of the region once the Facility is fully licensed. Benefits from the Fund will receive input from local and regional representatives into projects that benefit the local community and/or region. The Fund would contribute to sustainable health services, agriculture research and development, enhancements to local critical infrastructure, and further development of the indigenous economy.

In addition, up to **\$3 million** from the Government's Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) will support the delivery of an **Aboriginal Economic Heritage Participation Plan**, to strengthen Indigenous skills training and cultural heritage protection in the successful community.



\$8 million Community Skills and Development Program

The Community Skills and Development Program will provide \$8 million in community grants after a site is selected for the National Radioactive Waste Management Facility, and while various licensing, regulatory and construction activities are undertaken in relation to the site.

The host community will have four years to get ready for the new industry, and this package is about making sure that as many people, businesses, and community bodies as possible have the capacity to be competitive in their job applications, tenders and other work opportunities with the Facility.

It will also focus on supporting the targeted growth of flow-on industries. A large construction workforce will be involved in the project, estimated in a study by Cadence Economics to be more than 100 workers. When complete, based on advice from ANSTO, 45 new jobs will be created in the community, and there will be a stream of visiting scientists, engineers, tourists and regulators.

The Program will support job training and commercial readiness projects, strengthen the community's economic base, and provide assistance for the targeted support for Aboriginal skills and training, and promotion of local culture and heritage.

Funding of \$2 million per year will be provided. Like the Phase 2 Community Benefit Programme, funding decisions will be informed by community consultation. This will help to ensure that community projects are prioritised for consideration and funding. This Community Skills and Development Program will be modelled after the successful Community Benefit Programme delivered through AusIndustry.

\$20 million NRWMF Community Fund

Once the National Radioactive Waste Management Facility is licensed to operate, the Australian Government will provide \$20 million into a NRWMF Community Fund, which will support community driven projects.

Following consultation with the community, the existing National Repository Capital Contribution Fund under the *National Radioactive Waste Management Act 2012*, has been increased by \$10 million and will be restructured, so that it can more directly support the host community in the long-term, once the Facility is operational.

The earnings from the \$20 million NRWMF Community Fund will contribute to a range of community focused projects, including sustainable health services, agriculture research and development, and enhancements to local critical infrastructure, such as roads and telecommunications.





▲ Deidre McKenzie, Chairperson of the Viliwarinha Yura Aboriginal Corporation and Heritage Monitor with Melinda Morris, Hydrogeologist from AECOM, during fieldwork

Aboriginal Economic and Cultural Heritage Participation Plan

Up to \$3 million will be provided to support the delivery of an **Aboriginal Economic and Heritage Participation Plan**, to promote economic opportunities for the local Aboriginal community and manage cultural heritage values at and around the site. The Plan would be continuously developed during a detailed technical cultural heritage investigation, as well as during the life of the Facility.

A key aspect of this plan will be to identify opportunities for Aboriginal business development and to set a minimum number of Aboriginal jobs at the Facility, appropriate to local circumstances. It will also identify the skills and training needed for Aboriginal workers, including traineeships and cadetships.

More information can be found in the *Aboriginal Economic and Cultural Heritage Participation Plan* factsheet, at www.radioactivewaste.gov.au

Ensuring local content and Aboriginal economic participation

The Australian Government will ensure the company that successfully tenders to construct the Facility will have in place a detailed local business and jobs plan, to ensure local development opportunities are maximised through construction and operation.

Plans will include workforce development and Aboriginal participation with regular and transparent reporting on outcomes.

Once a site has been selected, the Australian Government will undertake a targeted assessment of the capacities and competencies of businesses and workers in the area.

This would include everything from the provision of materials and labour during construction, through to accommodation and catering for visiting experts.

Economic benefits

During the construction and operation of the Facility, the host region can expect a major increase in business activity and spending in the local community. An independent study was undertaken by Cadence Economics and completed in July 2018. The study investigated what additional economic benefits would be likely to flow to the host community during construction and operation.

The independent study shows that during the four year construction period, it is estimated that **\$2.5 million worth of construction** per annum would be undertaken by local firms.

In the cases where workers come from outside the region to work during the construction phase, each would be expected to **spend an average of \$100 a day locally**.

The report then estimates that, when fully operational, the Facility will generate an additional **\$8.3-\$8.4 million in annual benefits** to the local economy.

Over the first 33 years of the project, from 2021 to 2054, the net present value of the projected increase in real Gross Regional Product will be just over **\$95 million**.

From the full operational phase beginning in 2025, **45 full-time equivalent workers** will be employed at the Facility, of which **75 per cent** will come from the local region. The Facility employees are expected to earn, in total, a **combined \$4.7 million in salary**.

The *Regional Economic Impact Assessments of the National Radioactive Waste Management Facility* report is available at www.radioactivewaste.gov.au

Boosting employment

Malcolm 'Tiger' McKenzie is Co-Chair of the Wallerberdina Station Economic Working Group. If the Facility goes ahead at the site, Tiger is hopeful it will boost employment for the local Aboriginal community.

"If the new Facility goes ahead, there will be 45 new jobs. I can see Aboriginal people having many opportunities to participate. It would be great news all around," Mr McKenzie said.

"The money that is being invested will hopefully get more Aboriginal people in my area working. It is about building relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people."

Job opportunities

Based on the advice of nuclear experts and their 60 years' experience, and staffing levels in similar facilities elsewhere in the world, the Facility will need 45 full-time equivalent staff members.

The Government has already made the commitment that there will be a minimum number of Aboriginal jobs, which will be provided for within the organisational structure.

In addition to jobs created directly at the Facility, there will also be other opportunities created through construction and operation, and also for service providers, suppliers, tradespeople, and food, beverage and tourism businesses.

More information can be found in the *Jobs at the National Radioactive Waste Management Facility* factsheet, at www.radioactivewaste.gov.au

Co-benefits and enabling infrastructure

Enabling infrastructure, which services the community, will also be improved to support the Facility, and these infrastructure improvements will in turn benefit the broader community.

As part of the site characterisation works, AECOM considered the critical service infrastructure needed to support the Facility, reviewing the distance, standard, reliability and capacity of critical infrastructure required to build and operate the Facility. Infrastructure that was assessed included water, wastewater and stormwater, power and renewable energy, communications, transport and waste.

A report will outline the improvements needed to support a Commonwealth facility of this kind, with flow on benefits that would be experienced by the broader community.

Readiness for benefits

David Schmidt, Kimba Economic Working Group Chair, said it is important the community is prepared, should the Facility go ahead.

"We need to be ready to ensure the investment and jobs go to the best use, and make the biggest difference," Mr Schmidt said.

From the Minister

Minister for Resources and Northern Australia, Matt Canavan, said ensuring a host community benefits from the establishment of the Facility is key.

“This federal government facility will provide benefits for decades and over that lifetime the community will receive many direct benefits in terms of employment and opportunities,” Senator Canavan said.

“The Federal Government will become a member of that community and we want to ensure we contribute to the wider economic and social objectives of the community. The \$31 million Community Development Package will be one part of that. It will ensure the selected community has the skills and capabilities in place to take advantage of all the opportunities that will come with the Facility, and help support other industries that the community might wish to specialise in over the long-term.

“Of course there are additional benefits that will follow the establishment of a new industry and a new government facility near a town – including upgrades to local infrastructure and services, and local businesses benefitting from new people and new spending in town. Our Community Development Package aims to maximise the benefits of that improved infrastructure by supporting agriculture, tourism or other industries that the community prioritises.

“What shipbuilding or aircraft bases do for some communities, and steel-making or mining does for other towns, the National Radioactive Waste

Management Facility will do for its host town – in terms of employment, opportunities for new careers in trades and university qualified positions, and flow-on benefits. The main difference is the permanence of this Facility and the benefits.

“There would also be new partnerships between the community and the Facility, and many other ways the community would be involved in the Facility including through new groups and committees. The host town will become a key part of the world-leading Australian science ecosystem, providing exciting career pathways for young people in the town.

“Nuclear medicine saves lives right around the world. Australia is at the cutting edge of nuclear medicine, and the technology is still growing and developing.

“The community is at the centre of our selection process and that focus will continue as we progress – this Package was developed based on the detailed discussions we have already had and further discussions will inform the delivery of it moving forward.”



▲ Minister Canavan with David Schmidt, Chair of the Kimba Economic Working Group.

Ensuring local priorities are met

Communities are currently at the centre of a discussion about hosting the National Radioactive Waste Management Facility, and that community focus will continue should one of the three sites being considered progress.

From the early stages of project planning and approval, through to construction and operation, it is important the local community is core to delivery of community benefits.

A **Regional Consultative Committee** with local and regional membership will act as a focal point for consultation, and will share information between the department and the community.

The Regional Consultative Committee will also advise on the Community Skills and Development Program, and the governance framework and guidelines for which projects would best benefit the community under the \$20 million National Radioactive Waste Management Facility Community Fund.

Scientific research and education outreach

No matter where the Facility is built, it will be a world-class facility and part of a global network of nuclear expertise. It will be primed to deliver science education and outreach programs similar to those at the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) in Lucas Heights. The Facility would work with schools to promote science at school and STEM careers.

As Australia's home of nuclear science, ANSTO will also hold discussions at the successful site with local industries, to understand what kind of research the area might benefit from.

Farmers and agricultural associations will be consulted about potential research opportunities that may exist to benefit the agricultural industry. Every year researchers and scientists from agricultural businesses and universities use technologies at ANSTO for applications such as:

- soil and farm chemicals analysis;
- environmental and pollution monitoring;
- analysing machinery materials for wear and fatigue;
- groundwater assessments; and
- irradiating seeds to produce new traits for disease resistance, different food qualities and agronomic traits to improve the productivity and marketability of grain crops.

ANSTO is also home to advanced technology used to shed light on ancient indigenous artefacts, and has been part of projects that have identified some of the oldest inhabited areas in Australia.

ANSTO research is non-invasive, which means the artefacts and rock are preserved, and can be further investigated in the future. ANSTO expertise in this area includes reconstructing artefacts, dating Aboriginal rock art, bones, soil and artefacts, confirming timelines for settlements and studying the use of fire management.



▲ Visitors at the ANSTO Discovery Centre.

Use of the buffer zone

Only a relatively small amount of land – around 160 hectares – will be taken up by the Facility. This will include a 40 hectare Facility, set inside a wider buffer zone – a potential research and development area. The Government is currently working with host communities to explore how the buffer at the Facility could be used, with examples including the potential to use it for agricultural research.



This document is part of a series of factsheets providing information on the process to site the National Radioactive Waste Management Facility.

For more information

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