

## South Australian Nuclear Fuel Cycle Royal Commission Final Report

May 2016

On 9 May 2016, the South Australian Premier the Hon Jay Weatherill MP released the Final Report of the Royal Commission into the Nuclear Fuel Cycle.

The 320-page document includes 12 key recommendations regarding opportunities and risks represented by increasing South Australia's participation in nuclear fuel cycle activities.

On 10 May 2016, the South Australian Premier launched a community engagement process to encourage public feedback on the recommendations. The outcomes of this process will help inform the Government's response to the Final Report, which is expected to be delivered to Parliament by the end of 2016.

Further information about the community engagement process is available [here](#).

The Commission was led by Rear Admiral the Honourable Kevin Scarce AC CSC RAN (Rtd).

The Final Report was handed down to the South Australian Governor on Friday 6 May 2016, before being publicly released.

The final report is available [here](#).

### Key Observations

The observations that frame the Commission's Findings include that:

- South Australia can safely increase its participation in nuclear activities, however at social, environmental, safety and financial risks, of which the South Australia Government is already managing some of these risks;
- Some new nuclear fuel cycle activities are viable, such as the disposal of international used fuel and intermediate level waste, which could foster economic benefit;
- A waste disposal facility could generate more than \$100 billion income in excess of expenditure, as outlined in viability analysis undertaken for the Commission; and
- Sufficient public support in South Australia would need to be demonstrated to proceed with legislating, planning and implementing a project.

### Key Findings

The Commission provided the following recommendations in relation to the potential for increasing South Australia's participation in the nuclear fuel cycle:

1. Pursue the **simplification of state and federal mining approval requirements** for radioactive ores, to deliver a single assessment and approvals process;
2. Further enhance the integration and public availability of pre-competitive geophysical data in South Australia;

3. Undertake further geophysical surveys in priority areas, where mineral prospectivity is high and available data is limited;
4. Commit to increased, long-term and counter-cyclical investment in programs such as the [Plan for Accelerating Exploration](#) (PACE) to encourage and support industry investment in the exploration of greenfield locations;
5. Ensure the full **costs of decommissioning and remediation** with respect to radioactive ore mining projects **are secured in advance** from miners through associated guarantees;
6. Remove at the state level, and **pursue removal of** at the federal level, existing **prohibitions on the licensing** of further processing activities, to enable commercial development of multilateral facilities as part of nuclear fuel leasing arrangements;
7. Promote and actively **support commercialisation strategies for the increased and more efficient use of the cyclotron** at the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute;
8. **Pursue removal** at the federal level **of existing prohibitions on nuclear power generation** to allow it to contribute to a low-carbon electricity system, if required;
9. Promote and collaborate on the **development of a comprehensive national energy policy** that enables all technologies, **including nuclear**, to contribute to a reliable, low-carbon electricity network at the lowest possible system cost;
10. Collaborate with the Australian Government to **commission expert monitoring and reporting on the commercialisation of new nuclear reactor designs** that may offer economic value for nuclear power generation;
11. Pursue the opportunity to **establish used nuclear fuel and intermediate level waste storage and disposal facilities** in South Australia; and
12. **Remove the legislative constraint** in section 13 of the [Nuclear Waste Storage Facility \(Prohibition\) Act 2000](#) **that would preclude an** orderly, detailed and thorough **analysis and discussion of the opportunity to establish such facilities** in South Australia.

### Next Steps

The Royal Commission recommends the immediate next steps are for the government to:

- Make public the Commission's report in full;
- Define a concept, in broad terms, for the storage and disposal of international used fuel and intermediate level waste in South Australia, on which the views of the South Australian community be sought;
- Establish a dedicated agency to undertake community engagement to assess whether there is social consent to proceed; and
- In addition, task that agency to:
  - i. prepare a draft framework for the further development of the concept, including initial siting criteria
  - ii. seek the support and cooperation of the Australian Government
  - iii. determine whether and on what basis potential client nations would be willing to commit to participate.

**Further information**

View Hawker Britton's Occasional Paper on the Tentative Findings into the South Australian Nuclear Fuel Royal Commission [here](#).

View Hawker Britton's Occasional Paper on the announcement of a Royal Commission into Nuclear Energy [here](#).

Further information about the public feedback process on the Royal Commission recommendations is available [here](#).