

# Ministerial Statement **The Hon Jay Weatherill MP**

Premier of South Australia

Tuesday, 17 May 2016

## **NUCLEAR FUEL CYCLE ROYAL COMMISSION RESPONSE**

As I have previously informed the house, the Government established the Nuclear Fuel Cycle Royal Commission in March last year. Today I update the house on the next steps in the consultation process, following the presentation of the Commission's Final Report to the Governor on Friday May 6.

Firstly, I thank the former Governor of South Australia, Rear Admiral the Honourable Kevin Scarce for his thorough, highly-detailed report; and I thank everyone who took part in public forums, made a submission or gave expert advice.

The Royal Commission heard from 132 expert witnesses, over 37 sitting days and attracted a further 170 direct responses after its Tentative Findings were released on February 15 this year.

The report makes 12 key recommendations – including pursuit of the establishment of used fuel and intermediate level waste storage facilities in South Australia.

The report found that it is both safe and viable to pursue a used fuel waste storage facility, and that this would have extraordinary economic benefits for South Australia, however, it also found that without broad social and specific community consent, such a proposal would not be achievable.

While ultimately, the government is responsible for deciding if South Australia's role in the nuclear fuel cycle is expanded, all South Australians will have the opportunity to express their views through a consultation process in coming months.

The Report recommended the government take immediate steps to establish a dedicated agency, overseen by an advisory board to undertake community engagement.

Last week I announced that the Government would establish these two bodies, and today I confirm that Cabinet has approved the establishment of the Nuclear Fuel Cycle Royal Commission Consultation and Response Agency and the appointments to the Nuclear Fuel Cycle Royal Commission Consultation and Response Advisory Board.

The purpose of the new agency, which will draw upon existing government expertise and expertise from the Royal Commission itself, will be to increase awareness of the Royal Commission's report and facilitate the community consultation process.

The independent Advisory Board will oversee the Agency throughout the consultation process. The Advisory Board includes prominent Australians with high levels of integrity and awareness of the importance of working with the South Australian community.

The Board will be chaired by the Honourable John Mansfield, Member of the Order of Australia and retiring Justice of the Federal Court of Australia, who will commence the role immediately after his retirement from the Federal Court. The other members of the board will be:

- Parry Agius, former Chief Executive Officer of the South Australian Native Title Service;

- Adjunct Professor Daniela Stehlik, Griffith University, is one of Australia's leading social scientists in the fields of sustainability, human services and social cohesion with a particular focus on families and communities.
- Rebecca Huntley, Social researcher and former Director of The Mind & Mood Report, Australia's longest running social trends report;
- Professor Deb White, Director of Cancer Research at the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI)

The outcomes of this community engagement process will help inform the government's response to the Report, which I intend to deliver to the Parliament by the end of this year.

The Royal Commission identified political bi-partisanship as critical to the long-term, inter-generational impact of its recommendations, so to assist the Parliament's consideration of the recommendations today I gave notice that I will introduce a motion to establish a Joint House Select Committee to consider the findings of the Nuclear Fuel Cycle Royal Commission, focusing on the issues associated with the establishment of a nuclear waste storage facility.

I propose that the committee comprises two Government members, two Opposition members, and two cross bench members.

The Royal Commission's Final Report provides a substantial evidence base for South Australians to consider, and marks the start of a very important conversation about the future of our State.

We need an informed discussion leading to wise judgement on our state's role in the nuclear fuel cycle, and the Royal Commission's Report presents a substantial body of evidence which will assist us to do just that. I encourage all South Australians to familiarise themselves with this report so that they can participate in this important decision about our State's future.