



NUCLEAR – FREE ZONE POLICY

Supported by unanimous vote WACRA General Meeting 25th January 2017

The General Meeting of the Western Adelaide Coastal Residents' Association Inc voted unanimously on the following resolution in relation to the importation, transportation, storage, disposal and dumping of nuclear waste within the Charles Sturt Council region.

Purpose of the resolution

For Council to adopt a policy and a commitment, consistent with many other South Australian Councils, declaring the City of Charles Sturt a Nuclear - free Zone.

A Nuclear - free Zone is a place which has been declared “off limits” to:

- high and intermediate level radioactive materials or wastes being created, used, stored or transported
- nuclear power plants, including power stations, uranium enrichment and reprocessing plants
- nuclear weapons or facilities associated with the development, manufacture, transport or use of nuclear weapons, component parts and associated technology

The exception to the above is for safety approved low level applications (e.g. radioisotopes) in medical, hospital and/or research facilities, approved under the terms of the Protection of the Environment Operations Act. Low Level Waste is generated in hospitals and industry. It has short-lived radioactivity and does not require shielding during normal handling or transportation.

Discussion

Councils are charged with many aspects for protecting the health, safety and wellbeing of its citizens. As such, it is imperative for Council to consider nuclear and radiation issues as part of their responsibilities for health, town planning, community information and education. Whilst recognising that local governments' powers in relation to nuclear power, weapons and defence are limited, they can be a voice for their community and advocate positive initiatives that can be implemented by other levels of government.

Whereas the Radiation and Protection Control Branch of S.A. Health oversees the S.A. Government's responsibility for safe handling of radioactive substances, this does not relieve the Charles Sturt Council from support for and commitment to apply the general provisions of the S.A. Public and Environmental Health Act in its municipality.

Since 1977, 115 Australian Local Government Authorities declared their municipalities a Nuclear - free Zone, including 10 from South Australia. They were:

- Elizabeth City Council
- Gawler Town Council
- Kensington and Norwood City Council
- Munno Para City Council
- Port Adelaide/Enfield City Council
- Unley City Council
- Prospect City Council
- St Peters Town Council
- Hindmarsh Town Council (which held this policy when it was subsumed into the City of Charles Sturt)
- Noarlunga City Council
- The capital Cities Councils of Sydney and Melbourne.

In 2016 the South Australian Government established Citizens Juries to review the Nuclear Fuel Cycle Royal Commission's Report and a proposal to create the world's biggest nuclear waste site. The outcome was conclusive. The Citizens Jury were unconvinced about the safety/health claims and dubious economic benefits identified in the Commission's Report.

Overseas experience shows that the nuclear industry is in global decline. This is partly due to the costs of decommissioning existing reactors and trying to find ways to safely store the waste. It is also due to the investment and establishment of alternative renewable energy sources. France will reduce its current dependency on nuclear fuel from 75% to 50% by 2025.

The declaration of a Nuclear - free Zone by Council is an important public statement demonstrating care and commitment to its citizens and future generations.