



Fusion energy group to appear at uranium inquiry hearing

Canberra public hearing, 8 December 2005

Representatives of the Australian International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) Forum will attend this Thursday's public hearing for a parliamentary inquiry investigating the strategic importance of Australia's uranium resources.

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Industry and Resources is conducting hearings to gather evidence for its inquiry into the development of the non-fossil fuel energy industry in Australia. The Committee has commenced its inquiry with a case study examining Australia's uranium industry.

The Committee will receive evidence from representatives of the Australian ITER Forum, a group of scientists and engineers advocating an Australian role in the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor. The Forum is comprised of scientists and engineers from the Australian National University, Flinders University, University of Canberra, University of Sydney, University of Newcastle, ANSTO and the Australian Institute of Nuclear Science and Engineering.

The ITER is intended to be the next-generation fusion test reactor. Currently, China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, the European Union and the United States are cooperating to build the ITER under the auspices of the International Atomic Energy Agency. It was announced last June that the US\$10 billion experimental fusion reactor will be built at Cadarache in France.

The Forum's submission argues that the current ITER partners "see the development of fusion energy as being an essential strategy in a multifaceted long term world energy solution". It is argued that Australian participation in the ITER would generate benefits for Australian engineering and component manufacturing industries and increase Australia's standing in international science and engineering, as well as giving the nation access to a large range of technologies.

The inquiry is examining the global demand for Australia's uranium resources, the strategic importance of these resources and the potential implications for global greenhouse gas emission reductions from the further development and export of Australia's uranium resources.

Submissions to the inquiry are available on the Committee's web site:
<http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/isr/uranium/subs.htm>

PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULE

Venue: Committee Room 1R2, Parliament House, Canberra

11.40 am – 12.30pm **Australian ITER Forum** (Submission no. 17)

For media comment, please contact the Committee Chairman, the Hon Geoff Prosser MP, on: (02) 6277 2055 (Parliament House) or (08) 9791 1146 (Electorate Office in Bunbury, WA)

For further information, please contact the Inquiry Secretary on: (02) 6277 4609 or via email at ir.reps@aph.gov.au