

**To: ALP National Policy Forum (NPF) delegates**

**RE: [2026 ALP NATIONAL PLATFORM | CONSULTATION DRAFT](#)**

Public input by David Noonan B.Sc., M.Env.St.,

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a Voice of the [No Nuclear Dump Alliance](#)

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**AUKUS imposes US origin nuclear materials but fails to have a ‘process’ to deal with it:**

Labor’s AUKUS nuclear decisions seek to impose a High-Level nuclear waste future in Australia.

AUKUS nuclear submarines (N-subs) impose a *globally unprecedented* task in disposal of High-Level nuclear waste, without any capacity - or even a process - to do so, see: “[The lethal legacy of Aukus nuclear submarines will remain for millennia – and there’s no plan to deal with it](#)” (The Guardian, 10 August 2025, Interview with Prof Ian Lowe).

The Minister for AUKUS The Hon Richard Marles MP has already broken a public commitment to [announce a process](#) - due by early 2024, to identify a site to dispose of AUKUS nuclear wastes.

Labor’s multi-billion \$ AUKUS nuclear waste liabilities do not even have a cost estimate and are *additional* to a \$368 billion bill for AUKUS N-subs that has already skewed our Defence budget.

The Platform Draft inappropriately seeks to *defer disclosure* on these fundamental unresolved AUKUS issues, see ‘Enhancing Australia’s National Security (Part V), Governance and oversight’:

*32. Labor will ensure that at an appropriate time, the Australian Government outlines the process and cost estimate for accommodating the permanent storage of high-level nuclear waste. (Consultation Draft p.113)*

The key word ‘*appropriate*’ is used seventy-one times in the Consultation Draft and could be meaningless here. Labor is already over two years late in a broken commitment to do so.

The public has a **Right to Full Disclosure** on Labor’s AUKUS nuclear decisions. Communities have a **Right to Know** what regions are in a target range for storage of AUKUS nuclear wastes.

Instead, Labor has taken up secrecy and draconian powers to impose storage of AUKUS nuclear waste *by decree*, see a Brief: “[The people and environment of SA, WA and NT must be protected from Federal imposed storage of AUKUS High-Level nuclear waste](#)” (06 March 2026, attached).

The Guardian “[Aukus costs balloon with more cash and staff for submarine agency amid ongoing search for nuclear waste dump](#)” (13 May 2026) reports Labor is belatedly seeking advice on nuclear waste storage while still failing to inform the public of related work since early 2023:

*Successive federal governments have spent three decades unsuccessfully trying to establish a nuclear waste site. In 2023, the defence minister, Richard Marles, committed to publicly outlining a process for identifying a waste site “within 12 months”. No plan, or site, has yet been identified. Marles has said a site will be identified on defence land, current or future.*

*The 2026-27 budget earmarks \$11.9m over two years for the Australian Radioactive Waste Agency to assist “in developing advice to inform Australia’s future radioactive waste management and disposal pathways”.*

**Recommendation: The ALP National Platform must require prompt full disclosure and transparency across Labor’s AUKUS nuclear decisions and core required process and plans for High-Level nuclear waste storage must be subject to public scrutiny ASAP.**

**Minister Marles wants to put a flag on US High-Level nuclear material and ‘call it our own’:**

Labor intends to take on second hand US Virginia class N-sub from the early 2030’s on, loaded with US sourced military High-Level nuclear material that is to be stored in Australia for ever: US nuclear wastes accrued in up to a dozen years of US military reactor operations and US High Enriched Uranium fuel as ‘dual use’ fissile materials – Atomic Bomb fuel for nuclear weapons.

Labor’s AUKUS plans undermine and make a mockery of tenets of the National Platforms, see:

*Labor will: ... 8.d. remain strongly opposed to the importation and storage of nuclear waste that is sourced from overseas in Australia. (Uranium Part R p.101-102) and:*

*27. Australia will not be responsible for disposing spent nuclear fuel or high-level radioactive waste from any other country. (Nuclear Safety and Stewardship p.112-113)*

Labor ‘normalising’ US military High Enriched Uranium dual use fuel and fissile material in Australian hands compromises peace and security in the Pacific. This makes a farce of key tenets of ALP National Platform policy and AUKUS claims to ‘Nuclear Safety and Stewardship’:

*6. Labor will work towards: c. limiting the processing of weapon usable material (separation of plutonium and high enriched uranium in civilian programs); (p.101)*

*7. Labor believes that as a non-nuclear armed nation and a good international citizen, Australia can make a significant contribution to promoting disarmament, the reduction of nuclear stockpiles, and the responsible use of nuclear technology. (p.101)*

*8. Labor will c. fully meet all Australia’s obligations as a party to the NPT; (p.101-102)*

*22. Labor will ensure Australia remains fully committed to the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty, known as the Treaty of Rarotonga. (p.112)*

This farce is not alleviated by a new claim to only ‘monitor’ low-enriched uranium fuel programs:

*31. Labor will ensure the Australian Government monitors all relevant United States and United Kingdom research and development programs into submarines including, but not limited to, programs exploring the use of low-enriched uranium in nuclear powered submarines. (Governance and oversight p.113)*

Labor’s AUKUS nuclear decisions and undemocratic legislation to impose High-Level nuclear waste storage means Australia is likely to again be targeted for International Nuclear Waste.

Labor is paving a nuclear path for a next Coalition Government to take up OR for a nuclear complicit State Labor Gov to again push to take on International High-Level nuclear waste storage in SA (as Premier Jay Weatherill did over 2014-17 in contravention of the Platform).

**Recommendations:**

**Australia must not take on second hand US Virginia class N-sub in 2030’s, with required perpetual storage of US sourced High-Level nuclear waste and HEU fissile materials.**

**The ALP National Platform must require an Independent Public Inquiry on AUKUS High-Level nuclear materials, including intended storage of US sourced HEU fissile materials.**

**If, against advice, Labor does proceed with an AUKUS N-sub build with the UK, the ALP National Platform must require the use of low-enriched uranium fuel in nuclear reactors.**

### **Recommendations to change the ALP National Platform Consultation Draft:**

The ALP National Platform must require prompt full disclosure and transparency across Labor's AUKUS nuclear decisions and core required process and plans for High-Level nuclear waste storage must be subject to public scrutiny ASAP.

Australia must not take on second hand US Virginia class N-sub in 2030's, with required perpetual storage of US sourced High-Level nuclear waste and HEU fissile materials.

The ALP National Platform must require an Independent Public Inquiry on AUKUS High-Level nuclear materials, including intended storage of US sourced HEU fissile materials.

If, against advice, Labor does proceed with an AUKUS N-sub build with the UK, the ALP National Platform must require the use of low-enriched uranium fuel in nuclear reactors.

### **Discussion:**

There is a clear public interest onus on this ALP National Platform process and the Conference in Adelaide mid-year to take concerns over AUKUS nuclear waste seriously, to ensure ASAP disclosure and scrutiny of a process to manage, store & dispose of High-Level nuclear wastes.

The public has a **Right to Know** the position of its elected representatives regarding the vexed issue of storage of High-Level nuclear waste from the AUKUS project. Community are rightly dissatisfied with Federal and SA and WA Labor's lack of near any meaningful response - near evasion - to fundamental community concerns repeatedly raised over AUKUS nuclear wastes.

In my case, as part of ongoing correspondence with the Director of the SA Premier's "Office for AUKUS", in early Dec I provided four key Q's to the Premier (attached p.7) seeking answers in the lead up to the March 2026 state election. The Office for AUKUS replied on 18 Feb:

*Confirming the Office for AUKUS, Department of the Premier and Cabinet has received your correspondence and will respond as soon as we can.*

No response has been forthcoming despite a further request. A community group wrote in Dec to all sitting SA State Labor MP's & MLC's with a similar set of Q's. A belated single reply from State Labor thanked them but did not even refer to the AUKUS public interest Q's raised.

I've met with my Federal Labor MP in Boothby and look forward to a meaningful response. A Minister in WA dismisses community concerns saying AUKUS wastes will go to Woomera in SA.

A response by Minister Marles Office to Federal Labor rep's in SA will just further embroil them in unresolved community concerns on AUKUS nuclear wastes and the lack of a public process. While 'appreciative of concerns', the response to community (14 May) is inadequate, evasive of why there is no process as promised, and will be seen as disrespectful given what is at stake:

*It is expected that there will not be a need to dispose of any nuclear fuel waste until the 2050's, providing ample time to ensure the site selection process is given the time and care needed, including consultations with key stakeholders and local communities. The Minister's office has advised that there will be a need for some low-level waste storage in the nearer term. For example, the PPE worn by the nuclear propulsion systems maintenance team. This waste will be handled in the same way that current medical nuclear waste is managed, using similar facilities. Please be assured that a site will be selected in due course.*

**Labor has to do better.**

## **The people and environment of SA, WA and NT must be protected from Federal *imposed* storage of AUKUS High-Level nuclear waste:**

*Brief by David Noonan Independent Environment Campaigner, 06 March 2026.*

The Australian public have a **Right to Say No** to *undemocratic* new federal Labor powers to impose AUKUS High-Level nuclear waste, effectively *by decree*, across SA, WA and the NT.

AUKUS [Regulation 111](#) (02 Oct 2025) overrides protections in our existing State and Territory laws, and specifically names and prescribes SA and WA laws that *prohibit* High-Level nuclear waste storage. These draconian federal powers lack social licence and are an affront to civil society, they damage public trust in governance and are an ongoing threat to Aboriginal People's rights and cultural responsibility to protect their country.

The *Objects* of the SA [Nuclear Waste Storage \(Prohibition\) Act 2000](#) set out what is at stake: **"To protect the health, safety and welfare of the people of South Australia, and the environment in which they live"** by prohibiting certain nuclear waste storage facilities.

Community now face federal imposition of untenable and illegal AUKUS nuclear waste storage, see ["The lethal legacy of Aukus nuclear submarines will remain for millennia – and there's no plan to deal with it"](#) (The Guardian, 10 August 2025, Interview with Prof Ian Lowe).

### **Federal Labor has broken its commitment to announce a process for AUKUS waste storage:**

AUKUS Minister Richard Marles MP made a commitment to [announce a process](#) to identify a site to dispose of AUKUS nuclear wastes *by early 2024*. The failure by Defence to set out any process - other than to take up powers to *impose* nuclear wastes *by decree* - is unacceptable.

'Transparency warrior' [Rex Patrick](#) has brought to light: "A Brief on how to choose a location for AUKUS nuclear waste was provided to Defence Minister Richard Marles in Dec 2023", see ["Submarine boasts, yet nuclear waste dumps submersed in secrecy"](#) (MWM, 16 Feb 2026).

The public has a **Right to Know** what regions across SA, WA and the NT are being targeted for storage of AUKUS nuclear wastes. The secretive ongoing Defence review *"to identify potential nuclear waste disposal sites"* ([ABC News](#) March 2023) and the Brief must be made public.

The **Woomera Area** was reported to be a 'favoured location' for storage and disposal of nuclear sub wastes back in August 2023, see ["Woomera looms as national nuclear waste dump site including for AUKUS submarine high-level waste afr.com"](#). WA, Qld and Vic political leaders [rejected](#) a High-Level nuclear waste disposal site in their States in 2023. WA has suggested the Woomera Prohibited Area in SA: *"would be one obvious location within the Defence estate, however, we will await the outcomes of the federal review"* ([SMH](#) 15 March 2023).

### **Through AUKUS Federal Labor are 'normalising' and legitimising High-Level nuclear waste.**

Aspiring International nuclear waste dumpers [Tellus Holdings Ltd](#) that operates the Sandy Ridge waste repository in WA has partnered with Amentum UK to expand the [Chandler Project](#) in the NT. Amentum provides services to Pine Gap and was involved in the "Waste Isolation Pilot Plant" - the only nuclear geological repository in the US. In a Jan 2026 [submission](#) to a federal Inquiry Tellus offered to first take AUKUS & International Low-Level waste at Chandler.

**The public has a right to full disclosure in an informed debate *ahead* of AUKUS nuclear decisions. Silence by political leaders paves a path for an AUKUS nuclear dump agenda.**

### **Min Marles wants to put a flag on US Navy High-Level nuclear wastes and ‘call it our own’:**

AUKUS Minister Marles aims Australia take on second-hand US Virginia Class nuclear powered subs in the early 2030’s loaded with US origin military High-Level nuclear fuel waste accrued in up to a dozen years of US Navy operations of US ‘High Enriched Uranium’ nuclear reactors.

Swapping an Australian flag onto this US military nuclear reactor waste places an untenable ‘for ever’ burden on future Australian generations to have to try to isolate these US nuclear wastes.

### **Aboriginal People have a Right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent over AUKUS wastes:**

Q: Will our political leaders commit to respect and comply with Aboriginal People’s human rights, set out in the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) Article 29 (UNDRIP 2007), to “Free, Prior and Informed Consent” over storage of hazardous materials on their lands. AUKUS nuclear wastes absolutely are hazardous materials! Traditional Owners across SA, WA and the NT have repeatedly had to [Say No](#) to the imposition of nuclear wastes.

The SA Premier was called on to declare his position back in Dec and has so far not responded.

### **SA Premier to let ‘national security interests’ decide the location for AUKUS nuclear waste:**

Premier Peter Malinauskas MP has said AUKUS nuclear waste should go to a ‘remote’ location in the “national security interest”, see “[Site for high-level nuclear waste dump under AUKUS deal must be in national interest, SA premier says](#)” (ABC News 15 March 2023).

The [Premier’s “Office for AUKUS”](#) (Letter, 07 Oct 2025) claims “safe and secure disposal” for High-Level nuclear waste, including spent fuel, produced when N-subcs are decommissioned. The Office expresses no concerns over globally unprecedented High-Level nuclear waste disposal, declines to reveal what is underway and yet expects “community acceptance”:

*“Determining suitable locations and methods for safe and secure disposal will take time, but Australia will do so in a manner that sets the highest standards ... and which builds community acceptance for a disposal solution.”*

Ahead of the SA Election the Premier has been called on to answer the Q: Will you accept or reject federal imposed storage of AUKUS nuclear waste in SA? so far there is no response.

**REPORTER:** Is a high-level nuclear waste dump the price that South Australia will have to pay for the jobs that go to the state? (Minister Marles [Press Conference](#) 14 March 2023)

**MARLES:** *Well, as I indicated there will be a process that we will determine within the next 12 months for how the site will be identified. You’ve made a leap there, which we’re not going to make for some time. It will be a while before a site is ultimately identified.*

SA is left in the dark, without a say, as an ongoing target for an AUKUS nuclear waste dump.

### **Scenario: AUKUS nuclear waste to ship into Whyalla Port to go north to the Woomera Area**

The Woomera Area is expected to be a target on a federal regional short list for an AUKUS nuclear dump site and Whyalla Port to be on a likely AUKUS nuclear waste transport route.

Rex Patrick has set out an array of potential locations and types of AUKUS nuclear waste facilities across Australia, see “[AUKUS waste in perpetuity](#)” (MWM, 22 July 2025).

**For further information:** see Friends of the Earth <https://nuclear.foe.org.au/nuclear-subcs/>

**AUKUS nuclear waste storage plans require transparency ahead of the SA State Election:**

Under current plans, Australia will be responsible for management, storage and final disposal of high-level and intermediate-level nuclear waste, including spent nuclear fuel and nuclear reactors, from AUKUS nuclear powered submarines. I understand that Australia will also be responsible for storage of spent nuclear fuel from Virginia class submarines acquired second hand from America, even though highly enriched uranium fissile material and much of the spent nuclear fuel will have accumulated before Australia takes over the subs.

Storage and disposal of nuclear waste is prohibited under South Australian law (the *Nuclear Waste Storage Facility (Prohibition) Act 2000*). However, under new AUKUS Regulations (*Australian Naval Nuclear Power Safety Regulations 2025*), the Federal Government intends to over-ride state prohibitions. Storage of AUKUS nuclear waste is *illegal* in our State.

Regarding a site for storage of high-level nuclear waste, in March 2023 Minister for Defence Richard Marles stated, “*We will, in the course of the next year, announce a process by which that site will be identified.*” Two and a half years later, still no process, plans or costings for the AUKUS high-level nuclear waste dump have been released to the public.

The public has a right to know the position of its elected representatives in regard to the vexed issue of storage and disposal of nuclear waste, especially high-level spent nuclear fuel, emanating from the AUKUS project. In the lead up to the March 2026 state election, will you, therefore, please provide answers to the following questions:

1. Will you oppose or accept an AUKUS high-level nuclear waste dump being imposed on South Australia by the Federal Government?
2. Will you call for full and prompt disclosure from the Federal Government on an AUKUS nuclear waste storage and siting process?
3. Will you respect and support Indigenous Peoples’ human rights to say “No” to storage and disposal of AUKUS nuclear waste on their country in South Australia, and commit to uphold the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (2007)?  
*“Article 29, part 2. States shall take effective measures to ensure that no storage or disposal of hazardous materials shall take place in the lands or territories of indigenous peoples without their free, prior and informed consent.”*
4. Will you rule out or accept the decommissioning of AUKUS nuclear powered submarines and nuclear reactors at Osborne / Port Adelaide, or at Whyalla or elsewhere in SA?

I look forward to your early reply,

For further information please see David Noonan’s 2-page briefing paper (09 Nov 2025): **“The people and environment of South Australia must be protected from Federal imposed storage of AUKUS High-Level nuclear waste”**, online at [AUKUS nuclear wastes target SA](https://nuclear.foe.org.au/nuclear-subs/) and at: <https://nuclear.foe.org.au/nuclear-subs/>

Yours sincerely

Mr David J Noonan B.Sc., M.Env.St.

## As to my Relevant Background:

In 30 years' experience campaigning on and scrutinising environment and nuclear public interest issues, with recent public input and Recommendations relevant to AUKUS nuclear submarine and nuclear waste matters to a range of Federal Parliamentary and Defence processes on AUKUS:

- The [JSCT Inquiry](#) into the AUKUS Agreement, Submission No. (06 Sept 2024), Rec's p.10-12;
- The [Inquiry](#) into the *Australian Naval Nuclear Power Safety Bill 2023*, by the Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee, [Submission No.8](#) Jan 2024, Rec's at p.11;
- The [Reforming Defence Legislation](#) Review, [Submission No.34](#), Recommendations 6-7 at p.3 and discussion at p.7, 20 April 2023;
- An earlier [AUKUS Inquiry](#) by the Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee held on the *Defence Legislation Amendment (Naval Nuclear Propulsion) Bill 2023 [Provisions]*, see [Submission No.46](#), Recommendations 1-5 at p.2, 26 May 2023;
- The [Defence Strategic Review](#), my public input is recorded but was not released by that process;
- The "Exchange of Naval Nuclear Propulsion Information Agreement" ([ENNPIA](#)) Inquiry by the Treaties Committee, [Submission No.40](#) (27 p), Recommendations at p.12, 25 Nov 2021.

I served for sixteen years as an Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) environment campaigner 1996-2011 with primary roles on public interest nuclear and uranium mining issues.

Including as lead author of ACF nuclear issues public input to Joint Standing Committee on Treaties Inquiries and as an ACF witness in JSCT Hearings on uranium sales issues with China & with Russia.

As an individual, I later gave evidence as a witness before the JSCT Inquiry on UAE uranium sales, provided input to the JSCT Inquiry on Ukraine uranium sales, and am quoted in both JSCT Reports.

Roles as an ACF campaigner included over 5 years on an earlier Federal gov attempt to impose a nuclear waste dump in SA - 1998 through 2004 – another flawed process that had to be abandoned.

I have been an invited Witness as an individual involved on nuclear waste issues at a 2016 Hearing of the SA Parliament Joint Committee Inquiry on the Findings of the SA Nuclear Royal Commission.

As an Independent Environment Campaigner, I have provided public interest Briefing and Public Submissions throughout the [National Radioactive Waste Management Facility](#) process 2015-23.

For instance see a Brief "[Nuclear Waste Store siting at Napandee also targets the Port of Whyalla](#)" (Feb 2020, 2 p), and a formal Public Comment: "[Input to the CEO of ARPANSA on Alternative Storage of ANSTO ILW at Lucas Heights](#)" (Nov 2021, 26 p).

As illustrative of some of the public interest issues in nuclear waste siting processes I refer you to my public [input](#) to the Federal Environment Department on Guidelines for an Environmental Impact Statement process on the then proposed nuclear waste facility at Kimba (March 2023, 11 p).

I have a role in media comment on public interest nuclear issues, for instance an article: "[Alarm on nuclear waste transport](#)" (SA Sunday Mail Rural Edition, 31 July 2022) and article [AUKUS 'impact assessment' report ignores nuclear sub risks in SA | Pearls and Irritations](#) (28 Feb 2025).

On Osborne, see a Briefer [Flawed 'assessment' of Osborne / Port Adelaide nuclear submarine site ignores accident risk \(David Noonan, Feb. 2025\)](#) sub-heading:

**"SA State Gov impact assessment for the Osborne Submarine Yard concludes 'No significant effects' on community wellbeing but fails to release nuclear accident studies."**