

# Medical Association for Prevention of War (Australia)



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28 October 2009

Ian McPhee  
Auditor-General for Australia  
Australian National Audit Office  
GPO Box 707  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Mr McPhee

**Re: Request for Auditor General to assess a contract between the Commonwealth of Australia, the Northern Land Council and the Muckaty Aboriginal Land Trust**

I write on behalf of the Medical Association for Prevention of War (Australia), a nation-wide organisation of approximately 600 doctors and health care professionals working to prevent war by addressing its causes and consequences.

We write regarding a contract reportedly signed between the Commonwealth of Australia, the Northern Land Council and the Muckaty Aboriginal Land Trust, agreeing to the site to be nominated for assessment as a radioactive waste dump.

The subject of this contract – the placement of a radioactive waste dump – is of considerable interest to our members, who believe that the nuclear industry presents immediate risks to human and environmental health, and increases the risks of catastrophic nuclear war. The potential ramifications of a radioactive waste dump make this an issue of national public concern, of the highest order. The process should be completely transparent to all Australians.

Previous requests to view this document, including a request by Senator Ludlam in the Senate Committee for Environment, Communications and the Arts at their meeting on Friday 28 November 2008, were denied on the basis that the Northern Land Council regards the contract as **commercial in confidence**.

We therefore request that the Auditor General of Australia undertake an assessment of this contract to determine if it has been correctly classified as **commercial in confidence**.

The contract reportedly signed between the federal government, the Northern Land Council and the Muckaty Land Trust for assessment for a federal radioactive waste dump, involved an initial payment of \$200, 000 to the Chairperson and a group of Traditional Owners in the Muckaty Aboriginal Land Trust. This contract therefore involves an amount exceeding the “Murray Motion” Senate requirement of 2001, which requires contracts over \$100 000 to be made public. (We note that other Traditional Owners have expressed concerns about the contract.)

Yours sincerely

Dr Bill Williams  
President, Medical Association for Prevention of War (Australia)

