



## Campaign Media Release

# MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION, HERITAGE & THE ARTS

### EXPORT APPROVAL FOR SAFE DESTRUCTION OF BOTANY BAY LEGACY WASTE

Environment Protection Minister and Member for Kingsford Smith, Peter Garrett, today granted an export permit which will finally see Australia's largest and only stockpile of hazardous hexachlorobenzene (HCB) waste leave our shores to be safely destroyed overseas.

This follows the decision by the Danish Government to agree to import and destroy the first tranche of (HCB) legacy waste stockpiled at Orica's Botany Bay facility in Sydney.

"The Danish Government's decision to grant this important permit finally means this legacy waste stockpile will now no longer be stored on the shores of Botany Bay and in close proximity to the residents of Kingsford Smith," Peter Garrett said.

"My decision to grant an export permit, under Australia's *Hazardous Waste (Regulation of Exports and Imports) Act 1989* (Hazardous Waste Act), will ensure the HCB's will be properly transported and then destroyed in a safe and environmentally sound manner using state of the art technology.

"A number of investigations by State and Federal authorities concluded Australia does not have an adequate facility to safely destroy the toxic HCB waste.

"Those same investigations have also found that it would take many years to develop suitable facilities and at significant cost."

The local Community Participation and Review Committee (CPRC) has worked tirelessly with Orica, the local community and government to find a solution and their support for the transportation and destruction of this waste has been integral to the success of the application.

"The Danish Government's import permission brings to a close this chapter in Botany Bay's history of legacy waste that is more than 40 years old," Peter Garrett said.

The Danish Government's decision is made in accordance with the *Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Waste and their Disposal*.

That Convention allows the movement of waste for destruction where one country does not have suitable facilities for disposal and the receiving country does.

“I know that this decision will be welcomed by residents in my local community of Kingsford Smith for whom the removal and final destruction of this stockpile has been a matter of great concern for many years,” Peter Garrett said.

HCB waste was created as a by-product from the manufacture of chlorinated solvents from 1964 to 1991. There is no longer any production of HCB's in Australia.

Orica has been repackaging the waste in United Nations approved packaging for the last 3 years in anticipation of the export. The waste is stored safely in secure and licensed warehouses. It is anticipated that a first shipment will leave before the end of this year.

Australia will work closely with Denmark in ensuring that the stockpile is treated in full accordance with legally binding standards for best environmental practice.

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**COMMUNICATIONS UNIT: Phone: (02) 9384 2220 | Fax: (02) 9264 2213**  
**[www.alp.org.au](http://www.alp.org.au)**

**AUTHORISED N.MARTIN for the ALP, 5/9 Sydney Ave. Barton ACT.**