



**Ban Uranium
Mining Permanently**

MEDIA RELEASE

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Uranium mining a health risk

The Anti-Nuclear Alliance of W.A. believes that the community has a right to hear the message that there is no safe dose of ionising radiation: the message coming clearly from a series of addresses around W.A. this week.

Dr. Bill Williams, National President of the Medical Association for the Prevention of War, speaking to a meetings in Perth and the Kimberley, states that workers in uranium mines have a 1 in 420 chance of contracting cancer, especially lung cancer, either while they work in uranium mines or up to thirty years later.

“While this is bad for the health of individuals concerned, what is worse is that radiation-caused cancers affect the gene pool, so that damaged DNA cells can cause various problems into future generations.

Dr. Williams explained that there is no level of radiation exposure below which there is zero risk, and that even low doses have adverse environmental and human consequences. It is an accumulative issue, with so-called “allowable levels” frequently being revised downwards by the International Commission on Radiation Protection.

Jo Vallentine, ANAWA Chairperson, expressed concern that the long-awaited national register of workers and their radiation exposure levels is not yet in place, despite Federal Government promises.

Union members in the audience revealed that it sometimes happens that workers reach their “allowable dose” in one mine and then move on to another, without being tracked. And that there is not always rigorous adherence to use of personal protective equipment. W.A.’s work force needs to be much better educated about the risks they are taking if they work in uranium mines, which would be a completely new industry to this state.

Jo Vallentine concluded that “No matter what regulatory regime is put in place by the Government, accidents and slack procedures occur, with examples at both Ranger & Roxby mines where world’s best practices are supposed to apply. There are considerable risks from ionising radiation at uranium mine sites. Why should workers be exposed to those unnecessary risks?”

Jo Vallentine - Chairperson



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