

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Calls for BHP to explain leaky mine at AGM**

BHP Billiton will face tough questions about its plans for an open pit mine at Roxby Downs in South Australia during its Annual General Meeting today, after receiving more than 4,000 public complaints against the proposal.

“This proposed mine will leak three million litres of liquid radioactive waste every day until 2050 – that’s equivalent to an Olympic sized swimming pool every single day for more than 30 years,” said David Noonan, ACF nuclear free campaigner.

“This leakage is a given, not a possibility. BHP has told the federal government this leakage will happen.

“The company also plans to leave behind on average 68 million tonnes of toxic crushed rock every year. That’s 67 football fields filled to up to 10 times the height of the goal posts to be ‘hidden’ by BHP under a wafer thin layer of dirt.

“BHP seems to think it’s ok to quietly go about cutting corners with its new mine and hope no-one will notice. Out of sight out of mind doesn’t work for radioactive waste.

“This practice is unacceptable in Australia in this day and age. We need an Australian Erin Brockovich to expose what’s going on here.”

The radioactive waste will create a 120 km<sup>2</sup> ‘no go zone’ for humans and wildlife – that’s four times the area of Sydney Harbour.

All this, says Mr Noonan, when the company could significantly reduce the risks and still trade profitably and create jobs as one of the world’s largest copper mines, leaving the uranium and other radioactive waste at the mine site.

As BHP looks to soon release a *Supplement to the Olympic Dam Expansion Environmental Impact Statement*, ACF challenges the mining giant to show how it might:

- 1 Avoid nuclear risks by processing only copper and not uranium
- 2 Prevent leakage of toxic wastes, instead sealing it for the standard 10,000 years
- 3 Openly consult the public on project alternatives and the real scale of mining impacts

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