

## NEWS

to Australian based pricing and other content and information.

“That content is a richer and more personalised experience for an Australian consumer than they would get if they accessed a webpage that was in another language or for another country.”

But committee member Ed Husic (Chifley, NSW) challenged Adobe’s claims that Australians were charged thousands of dollars more for some download products because of personalisation for the Australian market.

“It is very hard for me to see how your programs are personalised or contextualised for the Australian market,” Mr Husic said.

“They are effectively the same product and they are not really much different. So I do not know why Australian consumers are charged over \$1,000 more for your product here when there does not seem to be much localisation.”

However managing director of Microsoft Australia Pip Marlow supported Adobe’s arguments, stating Microsoft operates differently to meet the varied needs and expectations of markets across the globe.

“At Microsoft, while we operate in over 100 countries around the world, we don’t operate on a single, global model,” Ms Marlow said.

“In fact the countries that we operate in are very different and therefore the way that we compete and the way we deliver products and services every day in those countries can be quite unique.”

Ms Marlow said Microsoft would continue to seek to provide value for money through innovation and ensuring their products meet the needs of their millions of customers in Australia.

“We’re going to continue to look at the competition we have, we’re going to continue to innovate our products because we hope that the 17 million Australians that use our products are getting value from them and are making the choice to purchase our products,” she said.

“Ultimately our customers have choice and, at the end of the day, if we price our products too high our consumers will vote with their wallets and we will see our sales decline.” ●

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ALL ABOARD: Cruise industry gets serious about safety

## Cruise industry on board with safety

Brimble tragedy a wake-up call.

**S**afety standards on cruise ships in Australia have been lifted considerably since the 2002 death of Dianne Brimble on board a P&O ship, representatives of the industry have told a parliamentary inquiry into crimes at sea.

Chief executive of the Australian arm of global cruise giant Carnival Australia, Ann Sherry, said the Brimble tragedy was a wake-up call for the whole industry, welcoming the inquiry as an opportunity to spell out the safety improvements made for passengers since then.

“I think they’re probably less vulnerable on the ships than they are anywhere else actually, because we’re monitoring what happens on the ships, we’re very focused on making sure that everyone has a great holiday and safety and security is our mantra on-board so I would say that you’re probably much

more secure on board a ship than you are anywhere else,” Ms Sherry said.

The head of security for the Royal Caribbean cruise line, Michael Giglia, told MPs recent changes to United States laws have also improved safety for passengers.

“The cruise vessel security and safety act – a federal law passed in the US, sometimes known as the Kerry act – requires that all of our ships have at least one person certified in a very specific course in crime reporting and evidence preservation,” Mr Giglia said.

“So every one of our chief security officers and deputy security officers must complete this government-mandated course and be certified in order for a vessel to be allowed into United States ports... it’s easier for us to train all of our security officers regardless of what port they are going to.”

Social Policy and Legal Affairs Committee deputy chair Dr Sharman

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## Green light for nuclear medicine project

Stone (Murray, Vic) said she believed passenger safety had improved over the past 10 years, but work needs to be done to ensure standards are maintained as the sector grows.

The local cruise ship industry is booming, with numbers of passengers boarding at Australian ports approaching one million per year.

“We’ve just got to make sure that as an Australian citizen that even when you leave our waters and end up in the Mediterranean, you’re protected and our policing can reach you without any jurisdictional issues,” Dr Stone said.

Despite the cruise industry’s efforts to make their ships safer, NSW Police Force assistant commissioner Mark Hutchings told the inquiry there were still 27 serious incidents on board cruise ships leaving Sydney reported to NSW police in the past 19 months, including eight deaths from natural causes.

“Eleven of those were assaults, all of which were notified and two of these incidents resulted in police arresting the offender – one was a juvenile and the other was an adult,” Mr Hutchings said.

“There have been four sexual assaults notified to the marine area command, one resulted in a brief of evidence being compiled and referred to the AFP, as the incident occurred beyond NSW jurisdictions.”

However Ms Sherry said these figures should not be used to create a perception that cruise ships are dangerous places.

“One of the challenges when you come to an investigation like this parliamentary inquiry is it feels like it’s something that happens all the time – it’s extremely rare,” Ms Sherry said. ●

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The construction of a new \$168 million nuclear medicine facility at Lucas Heights in New South Wales has been supported by federal parliament’s Public Works Committee.

The new facility will produce Molybdenum-99 (Mo-99), a nuclear medicine product crucial to the detection of life threatening diseases.

Enough Mo-99 will be produced by the proposed new facility to guarantee Australia’s future supply and meet a significant proportion of the global demand for the medicine, which currently totals around 45 million doses a year.

A supporting facility is also planned to convert the nuclear waste by-products of Mo-99 production into a synthetic rock product called Synroc, allowing the waste to be stored and transported safely.

Concerns about the proposals were raised by the Sutherland Shire Council, which questioned whether they may lead to Lucas Heights becoming a long-term nuclear waste storage site and starting to process nuclear waste imported from other countries.

These concerns were magnified by what the council claimed was a lack of detail relating to the size and scale of the proposed Mo-99 operations in the original application by the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO).

“This lack of basic information on the size and capacity of these facilities

represents a major deficiency in the public consultation process.”

The chief executive of ANSTO Adi Paterson moved to address these fears at a public hearing of the inquiry, confirming Lucas Heights cannot be considered as a long-term waste storage site and saying ANSTO had no plans to begin processing foreign nuclear waste.

“I believe we have a duty and a burden to continue to communicate with stakeholders in the shire and in the broader region,” Dr Paterson said. “But I do not think there are any fundamental issues that would in any way compromise the quality of the thinking and the planning that has underpinned this application.”

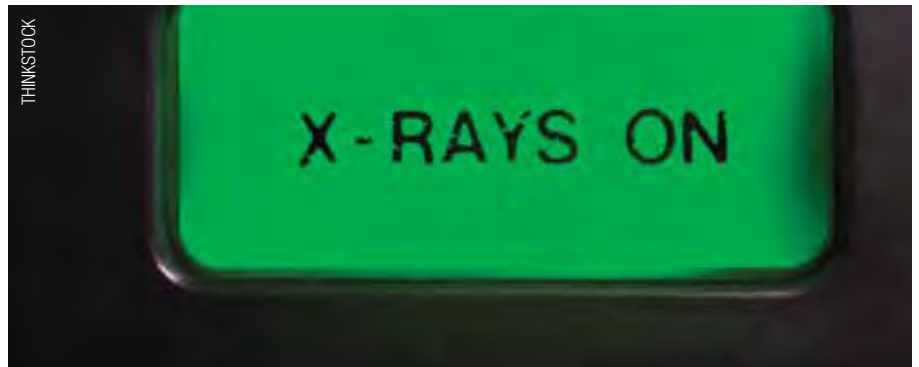
In its report the committee said it was satisfied there was a need for the works, which will replace existing facilities that will reach the end of their useful life in 2017.

However it acknowledged concerns about a lack of detail and consultation, requesting ANSTO continue to engage with the local council and the community on the project and deal with issues directly as they arise.

“In future, ANSTO should endeavour to provide more comprehensive detail in its initial submissions wherever possible,” the report stated. ●

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**GLOWING ENDORSEMENT:** Support for nuclear medicine production