

SENATE.
Minister for Supply.

QUESTION FOR THIS DAY.

Notice Paper No. 73.

14th May, 1963.

QUESTION NO. 18.

Senator Cavanagh: To ask the Minister representing the Minister for Supply -

- (1) Have experiments with nuclear explosions been conducted at Maralinga, South Australia.
- (2) Were Department of Supply personnel and vehicles used prior to such explosions in attempting to keep native aboriginals away from the area.
- (3) Were aboriginals kept away from the area at the time of such explosions.
- (4) Has the Government any knowledge of harmful effects on natives as a result of these explosions.

ANSWER.

- (1) Yes, but not since 1957.
- (2) Department of Supply personnel and vehicles were used in conjunction with aircraft to ensure by survey that natives were not within the prohibited area.
- (3) No aboriginals were in the area at the times of such explosions.
- (4) No.

AFP file
All other related material in original file 2x 31/5

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FILE No.	84-1208
FILE No.	81-301877
ASSIGN OFFICER:	A GARRAN
31 MAY 1984	

DISCOVERY OF BODIES OF ABORIGINES AT MARALINGA

The Minister for Resources and Energy on 2 May 1984 wrote to the Special Minister of State drawing his attention to recent media reports of allegations by a former RAF technician, Mr John Philip Burke, concerning atomic tests at Maralinga in 1963.

Mr Burke claimed that he found the bodies of four Aborigines in a bomb crater at Maralinga during the tests in 1963. Mr Burke also claimed that he had informed Commonwealth Police at the time.

In his letter, the Minister for Resources and Energy asked if relevant material could be made available to his Department to assist them in preparing a detailed background report on the atomic tests in Australia.

Consequently, I have been asked by the Special Minister of State to have Australian Federal Police (AFP) records examined and any relevant information on the alleged incident conveyed to you.

You will appreciate that the alleged incident occurred prior to the formation of the AFP and the records examined were from the former Commonwealth Police.

I am informed however, that no records have been located relative to the alleged incident.

The (now retired) Commonwealth Police Officer in Charge at Maralinga during the period concerned has been contacted and he has stated that no reports of the incident alleged by Mr Burke were made. Similarly, another officer now with the AFP in Adelaide, who was a Commonwealth Police Officer working at Maralinga in 1963, also denies any knowledge of such an incident.


 (R.A. Grey)
Commissioner of Police

29 May 1984