



Committee Secretariat
Standing Committee on Environment and Energy
P.O. Box 6021
Parliament House ACT 2600

Dear Secretariat

Re: Inquiry into the prerequisites for nuclear energy in Australia

The Queensland LNP Opposition appreciates the opportunity to provide a submission to the Committee relating to the above Inquiry. Importantly, it is stressed the LNP does not support lifting the bipartisan ban on nuclear energy generation in Australia.

Within that context of maintaining the moratorium on nuclear energy in Australia, the following comments are provided to assist the Committee with its deliberations.

With respect to the terms of reference for your Inquiry, we make the following observations:

(a) Waste management, transport and storage

Radiation from nuclear waste is a long-term proposition and can pose potential risks for current as well as future generations.

(b) Health and safety

Nuclear power has historically been associated with presenting unacceptably high health and safety risks. It is acknowledged that there are inherent risks in the production of any form of energy. However, with countries such as Japan and Germany now closing their nuclear power plants, it does reinforce the need for safety issues associated with nuclear energy to be fully understood.

(c) Environmental impacts

As a power source that uses more water than other sources, as well as presenting major concerns for contaminants in our soils, air and many forms of life, nuclear energy can have significant negative consequences for the environment.

(d) Energy affordability and reliability

Rather than further examine nuclear energy, greater focus should be placed on energy efficiency measures, along with encouraging investment in renewable energy options like wind and solar, in combination with battery storage when it is technologically and economically feasible to do so.

(e) Economic feasibility

It is considered that Australia's rich renewable energy resources are more affordable and bring less risk than the elevated cost and risk associated with nuclear energy.

(f) Community engagement

In view of the inherent risks and the community's strong rejection of nuclear energy, any further investment in community consultation does not appear to represent the most productive use of resources.

(g) Workforce capability

The LNP encourages additional jobs and investment in Queensland's renewable energy industry, while also supporting resource jobs and exploration which provides baseload power and employment for thousands of Queenslanders.

(h) Security implications

In addition to the possibility of accidents and operational failures, nuclear facilities can be a potential target for terrorists. Securing insurance around such possibilities would be virtually impossible.

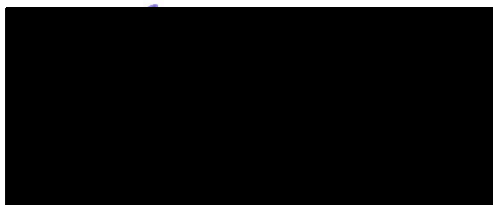
(i) National consensus

It is recognised that Australia's energy systems are changing in line with new technologies and consumer demand. However, there is no imperative to contemplate nuclear energy.

In conclusion, the commercial as well as the political risks associated with nuclear energy are substantial. To this end, the LNP is strongly committed to an energy policy that delivers safe, affordable and reliable energy to consumers, while fulfilling Australia's international emissions reduction obligations.

We believe this can be achieved without lifting the moratorium on nuclear energy generation. Accordingly, we would encourage the Committee to ensure an increased emphasis is placed on measures designed to encourage investment in renewable energy that creates green jobs and lowers electricity bills, for both consumers and industry, which does not include nuclear energy.

Yours sincerely



Michael Hart MP
LNP Shadow Minister for Energy