

Media release

Time to bring nuclear into the mix for Australia's zero-emissions future

Statement from Tania Constable, Chief Executive Officer

The recognition of the myriad benefits of nuclear power – including advocating for the Clean Energy Finance Corporation to invest in nuclear technology – is a positive step in line with changing community sentiment in Australia towards nuclear power.

All technology options including the latest nuclear energy technologies such as Small Modular Reactors, advanced coal generation with carbon capture, utilisation and storage (CCUS), gas and renewables – must be considered as Australia moves towards a zero-emissions future.

The rest of the world is already focusing on the critical role nuclear energy will play in delivering zero emissions 24/7 energy to a power-hungry world.

Polling for the MCA by JWS Research in late 2019 showed more Australians support lifting the ban on the use of nuclear power than oppose it, with 39 per cent backing nuclear power in Australia compared to 33 per cent opposed.

Support for nuclear power grew to 55 per cent when those polled were asked whether they would accept lifting the ban on the use of nuclear power in Australia if they knew that a majority of Australians supported it, with more than half those surveyed – 54 per cent – unaware nuclear power is banned in Australia.

Lifting the archaic prohibition on nuclear energy in the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* would provide a pathway for safe, reliable and affordable zero-emissions power for Australian businesses and households.

In particular, Australia's adoption of Small Modular Reactors being developed in Europe and North America would provide low-cost, 24/7, zero emissions power for a wide range of applications from remote mining sites to large-scale industrial use including the provision of hydrogen and the revival of regional manufacturing industries.

This potential has been recognised by major unions including the AWU and CFMEU. Nuclear power is also a critical element of the Biden Administration's approach to meeting emissions challenges in the United States.

With 30 per cent of the world's known uranium reserves and as the third largest uranium producer, Australia should be a major player in helping the world meet its need for electricity while also reducing emissions.

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