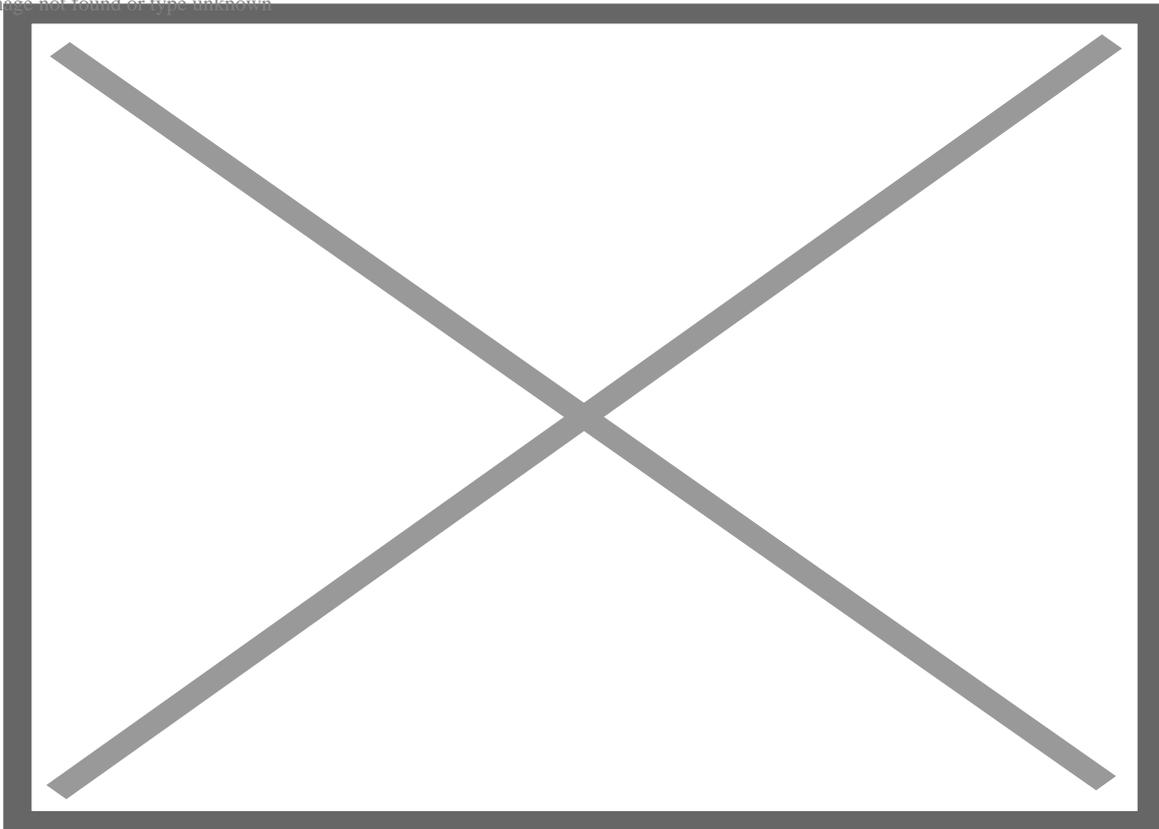


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Submission To The Senate Environment And Communications Committee – Ensuring A Future For Australian Coal Fired Power Stations

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Electricity systems exist to provide safe, reliable and affordable power to consumers and to businesses. The role of government should only be to support competition and private sector innovation in energy markets.

When the production of economically viable electricity can also support the employment of thousands of people, particularly in regional Australia, this is a genuine win-win.

The international market for both thermal and metallurgical coal is strong, and is likely to remain so for many decades yet. Artificial regulatory actions to curtail Australian coal mining and electricity generation will do nothing to change demand for either commodity or even to reduce global carbon dioxide emissions.

While the current international political climate favours so-called ‘action on climate change,’ conventional political wisdom is often turned on its head, as 2016 has shown with the decision of



the United Kingdom to leave the European Union and the election of Donald Trump as President of the United States.

Indeed, if President-elect Trump implements his energy-related election promises and proceeds with his preferred candidate to head the Environment Protection Agency transition team, 116 change may come a lot sooner than many may think.

Coal mining, electricity generation, farming and other industries can co-exist as they have done in eastern Victoria for many decades.

Short of major technological breakthroughs which revolutionise the production of electricity and reduce international demand for steel, even if policy makers are successful in shutting down Australia's coal industry in the short to medium term, it is likely to return, driven by the ever-present need for reliable power and durable building materials.

It is just a terrible shame that so much economic and social damage will have been done in the mean-time.

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