

IPA MEDIA RELEASE

Institute of Public Affairs | Australia's leading free market think tank

15 February 2016

NUCLEAR ROYAL COMMISSION WRONG ON NUCLEAR POWER

While the Tentative Findings of South Australia's Nuclear Fuel Cycle Royal Commission in regard to mining and waste storage are welcome, its recommendations on nuclear power are disappointing, according to free market think tank the Institute of Public Affairs.

"Nuclear energy offers the opportunity for reliable, locally-generated baseload electricity of a scale that could power a resurgence in manufacturing and be exported to other states," says Brett Hogan, Director of Energy and Innovation Policy at the Institute of Public Affairs.

"This is important as South Australia is about to lose its last coal-fired power stations and become increasingly reliant on intermittent solar and wind, as well as limited imports from Victoria."

"Rather than building taxpayer-subsidised submarines and cars, South Australia could be investing in something in which it has a genuine competitive advantage," says Mr Hogan.

The International Energy Agency's 2015 World Energy Outlook found that international demand for nuclear-powered electricity will increase by 86 per cent up to 2040, with India alone planning a tenfold increase in its nuclear capacity.

"If you don't have affordable electricity, you don't have sustainable jobs. Given that South Australia already has the nation's highest unemployment rate and its most expensive electricity, it should be investing in new and reliable sources of energy now," says Mr Hogan.

"Nuclear power can be part of Australia's energy mix if state and federal policy makers ensure a level playing field for the various energy sources and technologies by discontinuing current subsidies for solar and wind power, which have distorted market signals and investment decisions throughout the western world," says Mr Hogan.

For media and comment: Brett Hogan, Director, Energy and Innovation Policy, Institute of Public Affairs, bhogan@ipa.org.au or 0407 273 884.