

# MEDIA RELEASE

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

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## **AUSTRALIANS DON'T WANT HIGHER POWER BILLS FROM FORCED COAL CLOSURES**

Nearly 50% of Australians would disapprove of the closure of coal-fired power plants if electricity prices were to increase by between 4 and 10 per cent the following year, according to a new survey conducted by Galaxy Research for free market think tank the Institute of Public Affairs.

"This survey is a wake-up call to policy makers who think they can continue to fool the public by pushing more and more renewables into the energy market," said Brett Hogan, Director of Research.

"As the coal-fired power stations that deliver cheap and reliable 24/7 electricity close, the higher prices and more regular supply interruptions, will see public support for renewables evaporate."

The survey findings were broadly consistent across the States in the National Electricity Market.

"While South Australia's coal closures, 40% renewables footprint and increasing dependence upon its interconnector with Victoria to guarantee reliable electricity are well documented, it is Victoria that now has much more to lose."

"In just the last 6 months the Andrews Government has tripled the tax on brown coal, announced a new 40% renewable energy target, and extended the current ban on exploration for new gas supplies."

"Victoria is the low price anchor of the National Electricity Market, with its surplus electricity currently patching the holes in renewables-rich South Australia and Tasmania. The closure of Hazelwood, which removes 20% of Victoria's capacity in one hit, means that these three states will now be competing for the same, reduced power output."

"It also means that from next summer, Victoria will be a net importer of electricity during periods of peak demand with blackout prevention depending on other States. This is madness."

"No new coal, no new gas, no new dams and no nuclear equals less electricity and less jobs. For politicians all over the country, it will also mean less votes," said Mr Hogan.

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# Methodology

# Methodology

This study was conducted on the Galaxy Online Omnibus on Thursday 8 December to Sunday 11 December, 2016.

The sample was 1,000 Australians aged 18 years and older distributed throughout Australia, as follows:

➤ NSW/ACT	325
➤ Victoria/Tasmania	264
➤ Queensland	209
➤ South Australia	102
➤ Western Australia	100

Age, gender and region quotas were applied to the sample.

Following the completion of interviewing, the data was weighted by age, gender and region to reflect the latest ABS population estimates.



# Main Findings

## Main Findings – Attitudes towards closure of coal fired power plants

- Just over one third of Australians (37%) say they would approve of the closure of coal fired power plants even if electricity prices increased between four and ten per cent the following year, while 48% would disapprove and 15% say they don't know.
- Younger Australians 18-34 years (46%) are more likely than those 35 years and older (33%) to say they would approve of the closure of coal fired power plants even if electricity prices increased between four and ten per cent the following year.



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# Questionnaire

**SECTION C – ASK ALL RESPONDENTS**



C3. Last month, it was announced that the Hazelwood coal fired power station in Victoria would close. The Victorian Government and consumer groups have stated that this will lead to electricity price increases of between four and ten per cent.

Would you approve or disapprove of the closure of coal fired power plants even if electricity prices increased between four and ten per cent the following year?

**Please select one option only**

SR  
Strongly approve ..... 1  
Approve ..... 2  
Disapprove ..... 3  
Strongly disapprove ..... 4  
Don't know ..... 5



# Detailed Tabular Findings

# Tables

The tables of findings are set out such that they include the following details:

**Base Weight Sample (000s):**

The number of completed interviews has been weighted to reflect the latest ABS population estimates. These estimates are shown in hundreds (000's). The percentages in the table are based on these weighted figures.

**Weights:**

This indicates that in order to reflect the latest ABS population estimates the data has been weighted by age, gender and postcode.

**Filters (where applicable):**

If the table is based on a subset of respondents then this will be titled as a Filter and accompanied by a description of the sample upon which the table is based.

**Respondents:**

These figures show the actual sample size, indicating the total number of respondents who were asked the relevant question.

## Tables ...continued

Each question has been analysed by a series of demographic variables as follows:

### **SEX:**

- Male
- Female

### **AGE:**

- 18-24 years
- 25-34 years
- 35-49 years
- 50 years or older

### **GROCERY BUYER:**

- Main or joint grocery buyer
- Not main or joint grocery buyer

### **MARITAL STATUS:**

- Married (Married/de facto, living together)
- Not married (Never married, separated, divorced, widowed)

### **CHILDREN LIVING AT HOME:**

- Children aged under eighteen years living in the household
- No Children aged under eighteen years living in the household

## Tables ...continued

### **WORK STATUS:**

- Full time
- Part time
- Not working

### **LOCATION:**

- NSW/ACT
- Victoria/Tasmania
- Queensland
- South Australia
- Western Australia

### **CAPITAL CITY:**

- Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide
- Rest of Australia

### **HOUSEHOLD INCOME:**

- Under \$40,000
- \$40,000-\$89,999
- \$90,000 or more

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 TABLE 5  
 Standard Banner 1  
 \*BY\* C3. Approve\ disapprove of the closure of coal fired power plants even if electricity prices increased between four and ten per cent the following year  
 BASE: WGT SAMPLE (000s)  
 WEIGHTS: Age/Sex/Area

	Sex		Age			Grocery Buyer		Marital Status		Children		Work Status				
	Total	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-49	50+	Yes	No	Marr -ied	Not Marr -ied	Yes	No	Full Time	Part Time	Not Working
RESPONDENTS	1000	500	500	122	182	274	422	724	276	647	353	339	661	355	250	395
WGT SAMPLE (000s)	18228	8901	9327	2230	3263	5033	7702	13246	4982	11744	6884	6180	12048	6406	4562	7260
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
C3. Approve\ disapprove of the closure of coal fired power plants even if electricity prices increased between four and ten per cent the following year																
TOTAL APPROVE	2114	1102	1012	251	519	465	879	1589	525	1402	712	633	1481	849	565	700
Strongly approve	12%	12%	11%	11%	16%	9%	11%	12%	11%	12%	11%	10%	12%	13%	12%	10%
Approve	4633	2422	2211	763	980	1206	1684	3238	1395	2899	1734	1598	3035	1512	1346	1776
	25%	27%	24%	34%	30%	24%	22%	24%	28%	25%	27%	26%	25%	24%	30%	24%
**SUBTOTALS	6747	3524	3223	1014	1498	1671	2563	4827	1920	4301	2446	2231	4516	2361	1911	2476
	37%	40%	35%	45%	46%	33%	33%	36%	39%	37%	38%	36%	37%	37%	42%	34%
TOTAL DISAPPROVE	5122	2417	2705	659	971	1207	2286	3707	1415	3245	1878	1743	3380	1860	1274	1989
Disapprove	28%	27%	29%	30%	30%	24%	30%	28%	28%	28%	29%	28%	28%	29%	28%	27%
Strongly disapprove	3603	1924	1678	142	395	1139	1927	2700	903	2640	963	1136	2467	1241	702	1659
	20%	22%	18%	6%	12%	23%	25%	20%	18%	22%	15%	18%	20%	19%	15%	23%
**SUBTOTALS	8725	4341	4384	801	1366	2345	4213	6407	2318	5884	2941	2879	5847	3101	1976	3648
	48%	49%	47%	36%	42%	47%	55%	48%	47%	50%	44%	47%	49%	48%	43%	50%
Don't know	2756	1035	1720	416	399	1016	925	2012	743	1559	1197	1071	1685	944	675	1137
	15%	12%	18%	19%	12%	20%	12%	15%	15%	13%	18%	17%	14%	15%	15%	16%
TOTALS	18228	8901	9327	2230	3263	5033	7702	13246	4982	11744	6884	6180	12048	6406	4562	7260
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%



Standard Banner 2  
\*By\* C3. Approve\ disapprove of the closure of coal fired power plants even if electricity prices increased between four and ten per cent the following year  
BASE: WGH SAMPLE (000s)  
WEIGHTS: Age/Sex/Area

	State				Capital City		Household Income			
	NSW	Vic/Tas	Qld	SA	WA	Yes	No	< \$50K	\$50K- \$99K	\$100K+
<b>Total</b>										
RESPONDENTS	1000	325	264	209	102	100	353	322	350	217
WGH SAMPLE (000s)	18228	6233	5049	3652	1399	1905	6699	5879	6385	3316
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
C3. Approve\ disapprove of the closure of coal fired power plants even if electricity prices increased between four and ten per cent the following year										
<b>TOTAL APPROVE</b>										
Strongly approve	2114	653	721	329	123	288	1464	729	634	474
	12%	10%	14%	9%	9%	15%	13%	12%	10%	12%
Approve	4633	1627	1206	953	380	467	2940	1432	1812	1003
	25%	26%	24%	26%	27%	25%	26%	24%	28%	26%
<b>**SUBTOTALS</b>	6747	2280	1928	1282	503	755	4404	2161	2446	1478
	37%	37%	38%	35%	36%	40%	38%	37%	38%	38%
<b>TOTAL DISAPPROVE</b>										
Disapprove	5122	1690	1453	1152	315	512	3250	1626	1827	1107
	28%	27%	29%	32%	23%	27%	28%	28%	29%	28%
Strongly disapprove	3603	1312	990	607	384	310	2117	1220	1197	769
	20%	21%	20%	17%	28%	16%	18%	21%	19%	20%
<b>**SUBTOTALS</b>	8725	3002	2443	1759	699	822	5367	2846	3024	1876
	48%	48%	48%	48%	50%	43%	47%	48%	47%	48%
Don't know	2756	951	678	611	187	328	1758	872	915	563
	15%	15%	13%	17%	13%	17%	15%	15%	14%	14%
<b>TOTALS</b>	18228	6233	5049	3652	1389	1905	11529	6699	6385	3916
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%



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