

MEDIA RELEASE

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AMMA urges caution in debate on closure of coal-fired power stations

(AMMA – Australian Mines and Metals Association)

AUSTRALIA's resource industry employer group, AMMA, has called for future closures of coal-fired power stations to be properly planned, notified well in advance and based on facts and informed discussion to avoid risking Australia's long-term energy security and leaving people jobless.

The advice was provided to a Senate Environment and Communications References Committee inquiring into the long-term transition from coal-fired power stations to renewable energies, including policy mechanisms to speed up the process and mitigating the economic and community impacts.

"Australia requires genuine and constructive policy discussions on our energy future, including on the emergence of renewable sources and ensuring we meet our international obligations such as those agreed in Paris," says AMMA head of policy Scott Barklamb.

"However, discussions on future power generation in Australia must also be firmly grounded in facts. For instance, while there will be a considerable shift in investment towards renewables over the next 25 years, the World Energy Council projects fossil fuels will remain the dominant producer of electricity until at least 2050.

"Industry, employees and communities need greater certainty on future transitions and the energy mix Australia will pursue across future decades."

AMMA has called for a **National Energy Transition Plan** be developed, including harmonised renewable energy targets, that ensures affordable, reliable and secure energy and delivers measured transitions that are as fair as possible for employees, communities and the industry.

"While government will have an important role in promoting and incentivising new sustainable energy technologies, its first priority must be maintaining access for Australian industries and communities to affordable and proven reliable energy sources," Mr Barklamb continues.

"We are also concerned about naïve optimism that the renewable energy industry can seamlessly pick-up all jobs lost from coal fired power stations. Unfortunately, there is minimal geographical commonality between Australia's current coal fired power stations and where our potential for renewable energy will emerge.

"Even if former coal-fired power station employees had perfectly transferable skills and experience, most would have to relocate to find employment. We've seen through the commodity price and investment boom that Australians have a low appetite for relocation.

"It is also unlikely that the renewables industry will require a similarly labour intensive operational workforce as existing coal fired power generation.

"The key challenge for governments will be implementing energy transitions predictably and transparently, while minimising losses of existing jobs, maintaining energy security and positioning Australia's energy sector as an attractive and globally competitive place to invest and do business."

The Committee's interim report is due by 28 November 2016, with a final report by 1 February 2017.

[Click here](#) to read AMMA's submission. [Click here](#) for more information on the inquiry.

MEDIA CONTACT: Tom Reid, 0419 153 407, Tom.Reid@amma.org.au