

WHAT'S BEING PROPOSED?

With the Federal election round the corner, Peter Dutton's Liberal-National Coalition is pushing a proposal to build nuclear reactors at seven sites across Australia. One of them right here in Gippsland at the Loy Yang coal-fired power station, just outside Traralgon.

They have said this nuclear proposal would be:

- **Paid for by the taxpayer**
- **That they would override existing state bans on nuclear energy**
- **They have provided very little detail about how it will deliver the promised "savings" or how they would manage the many risks involved.**

But there is plenty of information out there from experts, including numerous studies from Australia's chief science body the CSIRO, which found that nuclear energy would:

- **Actually cost the consumer at least twice as much as renewable energy**
- **Take at least 15 years to build and wouldn't make a significant contribution to lowering climate pollution until 2050.**

There are more questions than answers, and we are being asked to take a gamble on the future of our region.

Let's look into this some more, around some of the common questions other Gippslanders are asking:

WHAT CAN WE DO?

If you and others in your community are asking or would like to know more about these sorts of questions, feel free to head to our website for more information, our sources and references.

You can also sign the Nuclear Free Gippsland Petition to make your voice heard.

**HEAD TO: [NUCLEARFREE.COM.AU](https://nuclearfree.com.au)
OR SCAN THE QR CODE**



WHO ARE WE?

Nuclear Free Gippsland is made up of people and organisations from across Gippsland. We are not sponsored by any company and we are not affiliated with any political party or candidates. We welcome new volunteers and groups.

CONTACT:
NUCLEARFREEGIPPSLAND@PROTON.ME

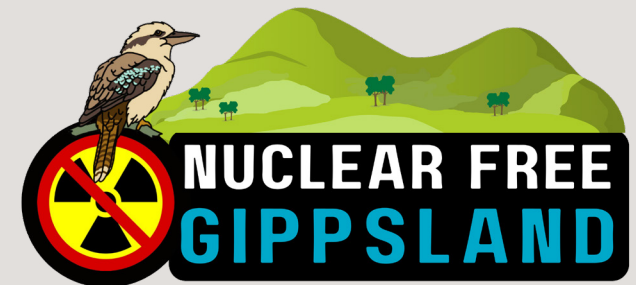
Sources: Please find our full list of sources at nuclearfree.com.au/sources

GOT QUESTIONS ABOUT NUCLEAR?

There's been a lot of talk lately about whether nuclear energy could be a suitable option for Australia.

Politicians are spruiking it as a 'silver bullet' with very little detail about what it would cost us and the risks involved. They're saying they plan on building nuclear reactors right here in Gippsland.

So let's take a look at the facts.



We are a group of concerned citizens and organisations from across Gippsland. Find more information about us at the back of this booklet.

Q: WILL THIS PLAN, PROVIDE US WITH SECURE “BASELOAD POWER”?

A: NO

In fact, it's the opposite. Those who champion nuclear admit that it will only ever make up a small to moderate fraction of our energy needs. **Nuclear would trap us into a rigid, centralised system, leading to more blackouts and less security.**

Baseload power in Australia is being made redundant by renewables and energy storage. The shift to a renewable-powered, decentralised energy system is already providing households and communities with greater energy security and more affordable electricity.

Australia already gets over 40% of its national electricity from renewables, with some days over 60%! South Australia is over 70% renewable while the ACT and Tasmania are fully renewably powered.

By harnessing abundant energy from sources like wind and solar - including the rooftop solar on over 4 million Australian homes - backed up when we need it by large batteries and hydro power, we can ensure a more resilient (and much cheaper!) power supply.

Q: HOW MUCH WATER DOES NUCLEAR USE?

A: TOO MUCH

Nuclear reactors require a large, consistent supply of water - between 20% to 80% more than coal according to analysis by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

This becomes a problem as climate change causes more extreme heat and droughts which increase the risk of power failures and add pressure to our rivers and lakes, agriculture and urban water supply.

Local farmers and businesses have expressed concern about nuclear reactors taking water from them and the negative public perception on Gippsland's 'clean and green' food, fibre and tourism sectors.

Where this enormous amount of water will come from remains the 'elephant in the room'. Nationals leader, David Littleproud says they intend to use the water allocations that are currently used by the power stations, however AGL (owners of Loy Yang) will require this water to rehabilitate Loy Yang open cut coal mine and are already progressing their plan to create pit lakes.

This complex task of rehabilitating our mines may take decades and brings with it its own set of challenges, such as land subsidence and ground movement - begging the question - **is building a nuclear reactor next to an unstable mine and on top of a major earthquake fault line really a good idea?**

The Mine Land Rehabilitation Authority has suggested that “currently housing a nuclear facility at Loy Yang would be difficult”. You can read their complete statement online.

Q: WHAT ABOUT THE JOBS AND COST BENEFITS OF NUCLEAR?

A: IT'S A BAD BET

When it comes to jobs, nuclear is a bad bet - and an unnecessary one. The shift to renewables is already driving significant job growth and has the potential to create even more jobs than currently exist in Australia's fossil fuel export industries.

Across Gippsland, **the planned investment over the next decade in renewable energy projects is over \$40 billion**, which positions us well to continue the proud tradition of powering Victoria.

By generating investor uncertainty and delaying the shift to renewables, the attempt to build a nuclear power industry will decrease the amount of energy jobs in the short-term, and likely deliver zero jobs in the long-term. **Chasing a nuclear unicorn gambles good jobs in clean power.**

When it comes to the taxpayer, we'll do even worse off. The CSIRO has consistently measured nuclear as the most expensive energy option and recent reactors in the US and Europe have cost between 20 & 40 billion dollars (AUD) each.

But construction costs are only part of the nuclear cost and don't take into account the cost of enriched uranium fuel rods, managing radioactive waste for thousands of years, costs for regular maintenance, refurbishment after 30 years and the massive cost of decommissioning at the end of life. Those with local expertise in energy and engineering have estimated the costs and timelines would continue to blowout. **Does it really stack up?**

Q: HOW WILL SAFETY AND WASTE BE MANAGED?

A: POORLY

High-level radioactive waste lasts for many thousands of years and globally there is no proven or reliable way to safely store or isolate it over such a timescale.

Radioactive waste is handing down potential health risks to future generations and increasing the threat of targeted attacks, like we have seen in Iraq and Ukraine.

Under the proposal put forward by the Liberal National coalition, large volumes of radioactive waste, including high level wastes, would be stored on site for at least the next 80-100 years. **There has been no detail on how the storage and transport of this waste will be managed or what this might cost.** Nuclear waste management is a growing and unresolved global problem.

While the frequency of nuclear reactor accidents is low, history has shown that nuclear accidents - such as those at Three Mile Island, Chernobyl and Fukushima - can have catastrophic and continuing consequences.

As Gippslanders we are no strangers to industrial accidents, with the 1998 Esso Longford explosion and 2014 Hazelwood mine fire, which burned out of control for 45 days. While the risk may be slim, **the stakes of such a disaster - with potential for severe radiation exposure, cancer and long-lasting environmental impacts - are very high.** Particularly for those living within the extended fallout zone.

SO WHAT CAN WE DO? >>