



**THE HON JOSH FRYDENBERG MP**  
**Minister for the Environment and Energy**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

31 August 2017

**LABOR'S GOBBLEDYGOOK ON COAL**

Labor's hypocrisy on coal has been put on full display this morning in an interview by the Opposition Energy Spokesman Mark Butler.

Appearing on ABC 774 with Raf Epstein, Mark Butler was asked five times "do you want coal fired power stations to stay open or do you want to encourage them to close?" He fumbled, bumbled and ultimately stumbled, refusing to answer the question. No surprise that the public can see through this charade, with a caller immediately after the interview saying:

"You asked him the same question five times, do you support the closure of existing power stations and he didn't give you an answer. He talked about natural attrition and all this **gobbledygook**."  
*Caller, ABC 774, 31 August 2017*

Bill Shorten and Mark Butler are now all at sea, with Federal Labor supporting completely contradictory Senate motions on the issue over the past year:

"to **encourage the retirement** of coal-fired power stations"  
*Senate motion co-sponsored by Senator Dastyari, 13 October 2016*

"should **not force the early retirement** of coal-fired power stations"  
*Senate motion supported by Labor, 9 August 2017*

However, it is in fact Federal Labor's stated policy to close coal-fired power stations across Australia:

"Labor will introduce a framework to **kickstart the closure**" of coal-fired power stations.  
*Labor Climate Action Plan, April 2016 & Mark Butler, National Press Club, 27 April 2016*

The Labor Party knows that, despite coal providing reliable power and existing coal being the cheapest form of electricity in Australia, their policies will hasten the closure of Australia's coal fleet. Their policies are a recipe for a higher priced and less stable energy system.

Despite coal providing over 70 percent of power in the NEM, they can't give a straight answer on its future:

"Coal has a **future in Australia**."  
*Bill Shorten, Doorstop, Melbourne, 26 October 2016*

"Coal is in structural decline and has **no long-term future in Australia**"  
*Senate motion supported by Labor, 22 March 2017*

Labor has form on this issue. In Victoria, the Labor Government has tripled the coal royalties and overseen the closure of Hazelwood, which notwithstanding Daniel Andrews' predictions of a \$44 a year increase has seen household electricity bills go up by \$135 this year. In South Australia, a Labor Government of 15 years has run a self-proclaimed 'big experiment' of 50 percent renewables which has seen coal-fired power pushed completely out of that state.

When there are black-outs, investment losses and job destruction, Bill Shorten cries crocodile tears in the full knowledge that it is his Party's policies that have brought this on. Today's interview is yet another instance of Labor hypocrisy. They chase green votes at the cost of blue-collar workers. They say one thing in the Latrobe Valley and do another in Parliament. How are Australians meant to trust this gobbledygook?