



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO. 7 – PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT

## MEDIA RELEASE

# INQUIRY INTO THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT OPERATIONS AMENDMENT (CLEAN AIR) BILL 2021

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**17 NOVEMBER 2021**

An Upper House committee has today tabled its report for the inquiry into the [Protection of the Environment Operations Amendment \(Clean Air\) Bill 2021](#) (the bill).

The bill's objective is to reduce the harmful health impacts for NSW residents of air pollution from coal-fired energy generation. To this end, the bill seeks to set stricter maximum emission limits of concentrations for the following four air pollutants emitted by coal-fired power stations in NSW – solid particles, nitrogen oxides, sulphur dioxide and mercury. Practically, coal-fired power stations would need to install new or upgraded pollution control technology in order to comply with the bill's proposed standards.

Acting Chair of Portfolio Committee No. 7 – Planning and Environment, the Hon Mark Pearson MLC, said "Evidence for and against the bill was presented during the inquiry. Proponents of the bill emphasised the bill's beneficial impact of reducing the human health and economic burden of air pollution from coal-fired power stations. They also highlighted that the bill's proposed limits bring emissions regulation in NSW closer in line with international standards which better reflect scientific evidence about serious health impacts. Whereas industry stakeholders stressed that current air quality in NSW does not justify the tighter standards and installation of this technology would be costly and protracted, impacting their financial and operational viability and, in turn, reliability of electricity in NSW".

Mr Pearson continued, "The current emissions standards have become outdated and the bill would effectively lower the comparatively higher air pollutant concentration levels from coal-fired power stations in NSW, thus improving overall air quality. With the view of mitigating some of the possible unintended consequences identified by industry stakeholders, the committee recommends that in debating the bill, the Legislative Council consider the committee comments and stakeholders' views expressed in this report, particularly in relation to transition measures and provisions".

The committee's report and other inquiry related documents can be found on the committee's website [here](#).

-ENDS-

*For further information please contact Committee Chair, the Hon Mark Pearson MLC, on 9230 2445*