

**Submission  
No 26**

**INQUIRY INTO COSTS FOR REMEDIATION OF SITES  
CONTAINING COAL ASH REPOSITORIES**

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The NSW Government is ill-equipped for the inevitable closure of the state's five remaining coal-fired power stations, and the ongoing management of their coal ash repositories. This is now urgent, with the real risk that the NSW Government and taxpayers will be held liable for a multi-decade clean up of pollution created by highly profitable generators.

The state's vast stockpiles of coal ash represent both a toxic risk to the neighbouring environment and community and an economic opportunity. In other countries, viable industries have been built on coal ash, generating economic and employment opportunities.

The risks of leaving these coal ash repositories poorly managed post-closure are immense and will persist for decades after the companies generating power in NSW have moved on to alternative fuels. The current regulatory regime is total inadequate to either manage or anticipate these risks.

Other nations have adopted stronger regulatory regimes that hold energy generators accountable for the impacts of coal ash. I urge the Committee to look especially to Tennessee in the United States for lessons about what to do and not do. The disasters in that state have led to new laws and policies for coal ash storage, re-use and regulation.

I endorse the submission from Environmental Justice Australia and its recommendations and would be pleased to address the Committee during your deliberations.