

THE AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS REVIEW

BUSINESS

Ted O'Brien backs community incentives for nuclear power plants

By BRAD THOMPSON

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4 Comments

Opposition energy spokesman Ted O'Brien says business leader Ryan Stokes is right in suggesting communities earmarked to host nuclear power plants must be offered lucrative incentives.

Mr O'Brien stopped short of backing Mr Stokes's call for free power to overcome nimbyism in the [seven communities Opposition Leader Peter Dutton has nominated](#) as sites for nuclear reactors.

"The basic principle to which Mr Stokes speaks is right in that local communities need to be beneficiaries when they are hosting such important national infrastructure," Mr O'Brien said.

The Coalition has promised to release its economic case for nuclear power before the end of the year. Under the plan, taxpayers would build and own nuclear power plants across six states.

Mr O'Brien talked up benefits packages for the host communities under the proposal to build five large-scale power plants and two small nuclear reactors.

The Coalition has said it will create special economic zones around the communities and offer industry and businesses cut-price power.

"We are looking to establish integrated industrial economic zones in each of these communities anchored to the nuclear power plant. This will allow the local

community to attract investment into those zones from businesses which want to enjoy the cheapest electricity in the country,” Mr O’Brien said.

“What will provide for the cheaper supply of power is lower wholesale and network charges. We’ll have more to say about how that will operate in due course, but it is all part of our plan.”

The opposition commitment to cheap power applies to industry but it has made no promises about residential electricity charges.

It has pledged big upgrades in infrastructure and public services in communities selected by the Coalition because they are home to or close to existing or former coal-fired power stations and transmission infrastructure.

Mr Stokes, the son of billionaire Kerry Stokes, said last week that people living near nuclear power plants could be offered [incentives such as free electricity](#) to build community support.

The Seven Group chief executive said offering free power was one way to deal with nimbyism and to encourage people to live in the communities.

“To deal with the nimbyism, that’s easy ... you can find ways to incentivise people to want to live around a nuclear power environment where they get a benefit – free energy, free power, or whatever the mechanism,” he said.

Mr O’Brien said he had not encountered a high degree of nimbyism in his travels to the communities.

“I’m finding a high level of understanding about energy and industry. These communities have high energy IQ. They get it because the locations we are considering for nuclear energy have a history of powering the Australian economy for decades,” he said.

A Labor-dominated parliamentary committee started its inquiry into the Coalition’s energy policy last week, with debate focusing on how long it might take to have the nuclear power plants up and running. The Coalition has said the first plant could be rolled out by either 2035 or 2037.

TRENDING



Nomad owner's horrifying anti-Semitic slur revealed

Al Yazbek's elderly Jewish landlords – the targets of the slur – were appalled but not surprised when the high-profile restaurateur was revealed to have brandished a Nazi symbol at a pro-Palestine rally.

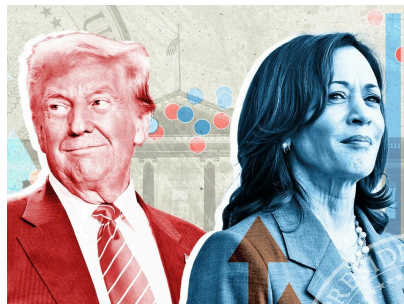
By STEPHEN RICE



An unpopular opinion in the wake of Upgradegate: pay our pollies more

If nothing else, this past week has shown us just how shallow the talent pool in Canberra is – so shallow you could pass out drunk in it and be at no risk of drowning. But what do we expect?

By GEMMA TOGNINI



The WSJ's verdict on Kamala Harris

At home, she's no centrist. Abroad, she seems unprepared for the dangers ahead. If she does win, Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping will quickly test her mettle.

By THE WSJ EDITORIAL BOARD



The speech King Charles III should have given to CHOGM

Challenging the Pacific's 'song and dance act' on rising sea levels: The Mocker drafts an alternate address for the King.



Pauline Hanson racially vilified Mehreen Faruqi, court finds

The One Nation leader racially vilified the Greens Senator when publishing a tweet telling her to 'piss off back to Pakistan', a Federal Court judge has found, saying the One Nation leader has a tendency to make 'hateful' statements against migrants.



Fear and voting in Las Vegas: Trump ramps up migrant rhetoric, Harris urges Nevada to polls

Donald Trump has told supporters at a rally outside Las Vegas that he's confident he can win the key swing state while repeating his vow to deport illegal migrants. Kamala Harris, meanwhile, tells a Reno, Nevada rally 'it's time to turn the page on a decade of Donald Trump'.

By STAFF WRITERS

By ELLIE DUDLEY

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