

## NEWS

14 June 2023

### ***Review of Nuclear Industry Regulation by Macquarie University Research Centre***

**CENRIT** (the Centre for Energy and Natural Resources Innovation and Transformation at Macquarie University) is undertaking a review of the regulation of Australia's nuclear industry.

**CENRIT** is a specialist legal and policy research centre established in 2022 by Australia's Macquarie University. **CENRIT** is led by its Director, Professor Tina Soliman Hunter.

**CENRIT** is supported by the Energy Policy Institute of Australia.

Australia, with the rest of the world, is now going through the 'Energy Transition', a period in which the global community is aspiring by 2050 to achieve full decarbonisation. It is also a period in which global tensions are rising.

All countries need to review their energy systems and regulations in the light of new and changing energy technologies, developments, strategies, processes and practices.

For over 20 years, Australia has had a legislative ban on the development of nuclear facilities. The lifting of the ban has been the subject of a Royal Commission in South Australia and Parliamentary Reviews at federal and state levels but the ban has remained in place. This has been due in part to the absence of a modern nuclear regulatory regime.

In 1996, Australia became a party to the international Convention on Nuclear Safety (CNS). This required Australia to implement six main safety principles:

- i. Separation of the regulatory body
- ii. Policies to prioritise nuclear safety
- iii. Site-related safety procedures
- iv. Defence-in-depth against radioactive releases
- v. Safe operational procedures
- vi. Minimisation of waste

The Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA) is Australia's independent regulatory agency for the purposes of compliance with the CNS.

Australia has been deeply challenged by the war in Ukraine and by rising strategic tensions in the Indo-Pacific. Australia's main strategic response has been the establishment of the AUKUS security pact. This has highlighted the need to review and dovetail the regulation of the nuclear industry for both military and civil purposes.

All energy options must be kept open as an incentive for innovation. In December 2022, the head of the International Energy Agency, Dr Fatih Birol, emphasised there was no way of the world getting to Net Zero by renewables alone – nuclear energy had a role to play.

EPIA believes there will be a continuing need in Australia and almost all other countries to utilise all energy forms, including fossil fuels, and that there could not be any more important time to undertake the **CENRIT** review.

***The CENRIT review will provide Australian policymakers, industries and communities with a template for a modern, fit-for-purpose regulatory regime for the Australian civil nuclear industry, building on best international practice, and dovetailing military and civil regulation as necessary.***

International nuclear energy collaboration is becoming more and more important. In February 2023, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Hungary, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia committed to cooperating across the nuclear supply chain and promoting common industrial projects. **CENRIT** may be able to collaborate with like-minded overseas partners.

**CENRIT** may also be able to address the concerns of energy-related industries such as agriculture, health, transport, mining, maritime, space, defence, hydrogen production, the digital economy and, more broadly, the decarbonisation industry.

*Further enquiries: Robert Pritchard, Executive Director, Energy Policy Institute of Australia (M) 0413 755 616.*