

Productivity in Australia: energy / digital / circular economy / encouraging innovation

deadline: Sept 15th, 2025 (extension granted)

Dear PC staff:

I have limited time to provide a detailed submission to all the topical areas you have listed in your website. I am only going to provide some general comments which reflect my deep concerns for the downward projectory this country is heading. Australia has deviated from a sovereign-first approach to domestic affairs to one of openly welcoming 'foreign influence' and that influence is dismantling our economy and culture. As a result, living expenses are beyond what the average Australian can cope with; people with jobs are being forced to live on the street; divisions between ideologies are reaching aggressive stages; small businesses - and even big businesses such as mining companies - are failing. The writing on the wall is screaming loudly that the internal 'structure' of this country is imploding. You will not be able to fix it if you continue to allow foreign influence.

The first suggestion I have for you is to cancel Australia's participation in the Lima Accord, the WHO's Pandemic Treaty and your involvement in the GAVI Alliance. We need to be making decisions on what is best for this country from within this country without any outside directives from un-elected bureaucrats whose *modus operandi* is more control over other countries' governments and more wealth transfer from their populations.

The Lima Accord set the stage for the dismantling of any manufacturing capabilities this country had. We have relinquished a lot of what we used to create and export. This needs to be reversed. New industries need to be created to produce what is needed elsewhere on the planet such as organic food, recycling facilities, hemp products, producing other products from cane and other agriculture waste fibres (perhaps fuel, clothing, building materials).

Energy:

With regards to "cleaner energy" and "net zero" - the latter is completely a foreign construct and sadly a lot of our population has been gaslighted. If Australia switched entirely to renewables for all our energy production needs, it would not make ANY difference to the global climate. Pushing it on the grounds of "saving the environment" is fraudulent. The process of manufacturing renewables and decommissioning them (if they actually 'live out' their full lifespan of 20 years) is NOT cleaner. Their manufacture overseas and transport to Australia for assembly actually uses more fossil fuels than the other options of coal and nuclear. Their lifespan is short and the solar panels at least will leach toxins into the environment when they are dumped (and *in situ* if they are hit by hail). It remains to be seen what will happen with all those giant turbine blades but, at the moment, they are dumped in the landscape.

The poor placement of these projects and the lack of due process and environmental assessment means that the "environment" these projects are allegedly justified to protect is being bulldozed to put them in (and farmland is being lost too). At the same time, the government is saying that it needs to strengthen the EPBC Act, protect more habitat, and stop the rate of species extinctions here. The left hand does not even know what the right hand is doing and each of them are cancelling the other. What remains at the end of the day is that you will achieve neither.

When it comes to making renewables cheaper, who do you mean 'cheaper' for? -- the multi-billion dollar corporations who build them here with subsidies from the taxpayer and who then export the profits overseas (and in the case of the Singapore project, even the power itself will be exported)? -- or the over-burdened taxpayer who foots the bill (AND gets slugged with excessive power bills) because the minister decided to underwrite any losses those projects suffer? A company needs to do proper due diligence before investing in a project and they need to make sure they will regain their investment and profit by it. That is what creates and drives a culture of productivity and efficiency. The Australian government has taken away all incentives to be productive by committing to reimburse those companies with taxpayer money if their projects are poorly managed and post a loss. That is actually gross financial mismanagement and needs to be investigated.

Digital:

Let's move on to digital methods which relate to productivity. The hackers are moving faster than your 'security' options and have already penetrated the systems of the Indian government, the Pakistani government, the US government and countless businesses (Qantas, Optus, Medibank, Adobe, Amazon AWS (which by the way is the server some Australian government departments are using), etc.). According to the PM, there is a 'hack' in Australia every six minutes. So the more digital options you try to force on the population and infuse into government functionality, the more you are putting people's data at risk (and wasting taxpayer money). There will be no 'productivity' when individuals' information has been stolen and everything else in their lives has to stop so they can close accounts, open new ones, deal with financial losses, deal with the consequences when their ID's are stolen and used for scams, etc.

Digital ID is one of the more revolting ideas floating around as is digital currency. All it takes is for a device to fail or be stolen and that person's life is turned upside down. Most electronic goods these days - including so-called 'smart' phones - are only manufactured to last a year. When they start to malfunction, code can do weird things before the device actually fails. When the user finally recognises that something is wrong, the devices are replaced by new ones while most of the old ones end up in landfill.

Even if the phone still works, outages due to 'natural' disasters or cyber incidences can mean the 'system' is out. (If you don't have cash, you will buy nothing and go nowhere!) And what about rural Australia where the telcos left a lot of locations high and dry when they shut off 3G? That's fine if you have a \$1,000 phone to use your digital ID and currency but the telcos didn't replace your 3G service with adequate 4G so your phone doesn't get enough signal to do dependable financial transactions.

Using AI for communications is another frustrating process for anyone who calls a government department or business and tries to make it through to a human being on the other end of the line. AI call direction systems are dragged out and often disconnect the caller. Compared to a human being who can instantly transfer you to the section/department you need, AI systems are unwieldy and complicated to trouble-shoot when they don't work properly.

AI is also a very power-hungry beast and runs on 'super computers' which will greatly increase demands for energy while the government is eliminating the baseload power options and going with intermittent renewables. You can't have both dwindling energy production and increased demands for power. If you expect business to be productive, you have to choose to retain baseload sources because business and everyday life will shut down when there isn't enough power to run all the 'machines'.

Still with the digital topic, I notice that the government is now using Microsoft for its IT systems. Since that contract started, I have noticed that I can't look at any member's pages in the APH.gov.au website. It

took trying three different browsers to get any of the members pages to display. Is this the direction the government wants to go in - not allowing anyone to see or contact their local member or senator?

Additionally, I have been trying to place an order with an Australian business but not getting any response. I found out this morning that they are using Microsoft for their IT and it has been deleting incoming sales orders and dropping customers out of the phone queue. A company that performs as badly as that does not deserve any government business. What will it take to get the government to review the poor performance of Microsoft and cancel the contract?

Circular economy and Innovation:

This is desperately needed in Australia. We cannot keep importing, consuming and dumping everything in landfill. We cannot keep mining all the base materials that are manufactured into goods with short shelf lives and then dump them. Such waste is not sustainable and it is polluting. I like to remind decision makers: what will the archeologists of the future find when they dig? Layers and layers of garbage. What does that say about our civilisation? I used to have televisions that lasted 20 years and now I recently bought one that lasted a week before it started playing up. I have bought computer keyboards that already have keys that don't work on them having just been removed from the box. Such contempt for the consumer and lack of respect for the resources that were extracted to produce all that "stuff" we use is nauseating.

Instead of handing over gobs of taxpayer money to foreign companies to build short-lived, intermittent power at the behest of foreign billionaires, why don't we invest in domestic recycling methods for the majority of products we purchase:

- * soft and hard plastics
- * all electronics (eWaste outfits won't take dvd players or non-computer electronics)
- * building materials
- * clothing
- * organic waste
- * agricultural by-products

We need to take on a national attitude that "nothing should go to waste" and allow that attitude to filter down through government, business and individuals. One of the reasons why my previous tv's lasted 20 years was that somebody could repair them when something went wrong. How to repair/fix things needs to be taught again in schools including clothing repairs, electronics, building repairs and renovation, etc. I'm not sure if home economics, cooking and gardening are still taught in schools but they should be. People got along just fine, were much healthier, and a lot less stuff went to waste before technology came along. While technology can do some neat things, it has made the quality of life, mental health, and the environmental pollution worse - not better. It has also worsened the financial position of most people because everybody now needs multiple devices and they have been produced using 'planned obsolescence' to only last a year and then you throw it out and buy another one. The computer industry and the telcos are absolutely out of control on this matter and they hold us all hostage to their money making strategies.

One of your inquiries/reports was to ask about ways to increase innovation. I've spoken to people who wanted to create new businesses and they said the "red tape" will choke you to death so they gave up on the idea. One of the groups I am associated with wanted to allow small numbers of people to visit its facility for education and to promote the group's work. As a bit of value-adding for their visit, it was intended to provide coffee/tea and perhaps a piece of cake. However, the group was informed that if it intended to sell them a cuppa, it would need to install a stainless steel restaurant kitchen. Who makes up

these rules and what is the point? So the group decided not to open its facility at all. The opportunity to provide education to interested people and encourage more support for the group's work was lost. If you want new opportunities to open up and more innovations to enter the marketplace, you will have to stop putting up ridiculous barriers and make the 'business climate' more friendly.

The processes for small business in Australia are so buried in unnecessary red tape that an entrepreneur might suspect that new business is something the government *doesn't* want. And contrary to that, the government under new minister Murray Watt (who does NOT belong in the environment portfolio) wants to reduce red tape for renewables projects. Such projects are already by-passing appropriate due process and public consultation and he wants to eliminate what little scrutiny they do get. Not acceptable.

Our tax load here and levels of excise are worse than the UK which is supposed to be one of the highest taxed countries in the world. Perhaps the taxes and excise wouldn't need to be so excessive if the government stopped wasting so much money on unproductive pursuits like underwriting business losses of big corporations and producing nuclear submarines for wars 40 years from now (and building expensive roads to the PM's new house)!

Thank you for reading my thoughts.
sincerely,
Deborah P.

(full details provided elsewhere)