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## THE AUSTRALIAN

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# Want a nuclear reactor in your backyard? Step this way

GRAHAM LLOYD THE AUSTRALIAN 12:00AM November 28, 2017

Volunteer communities are being sought for Australia's first small nuclear reactors, which developers hope could be in operation by 2030.

SMR Nuclear Technology has set a timeline for the development of Australia's nuclear power industry, which would require a site to be identified within three years. Building nuclear power stations in Australia would require changes to state and federal laws and overcoming deep community objections. SMR director Robert Pritchard said the company had adopted an aggressive approach to nuclear development in Australia based on small reactors.

"We now realise that politicians will follow the community view," Mr Pritchard said. "We have to get out and spend a year getting the community on side."

He said interest had been widespread.

In a submission to the Energy Security Board, Sydney-based SMR said small modular reactors had become a game-changer. "It would be imprudent not to factor SMR nuclear generation into Australia's energy security plan at this time," SMR said.

The company claims nuclear offers the prospect of safe, affordable energy free of greenhouse gas emissions. "Nuclear may be the only reliable, low-emissions source of electricity generation technology that is suitable for you, unless your area has an unlimited supply of water for hydro electric," the SMR pitch says.

"The construction of any nuclear power plant is currently prohibited by Australian law but there is a growing realisation that maintaining the reliability and affordability of our electricity supply whilst lowering emissions will require all low-emissions technologies to be considered."

SMR said small modular reactors were compatible with renewables, factory built and affordable.

It said despite the billions of dollars spent on renewables, Australia had not yet been successful in significantly reducing emissions from electricity generation.

The company said the most recent cost analysis by the UK Energy Options Network showed the levelled cost of electricity for nuclear was an average of \$US60/MWh and as low as \$US36/MWh. It said at the lowest level, new nuclear plants could be the lowest-cost generation available.

The construction and operation of a nuclear power plant in Australia is prohibited by two commonwealth acts: similar prohibitions exist in state law. SMR said these prohibitions were put in place at a time when there was no real appreciation of the contribution that modern, safe nuclear power plants could make to energy security, affordability and emissions reduction.

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