

September 2025

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications
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Re: Additional material to the Senate Inquiry into Greenwashing — *Lies of Emission: The Australian Government as a source of climate misinformation and disinformation*

Dear Committee Secretary,

Further to The Australia Institute's primary submission and supplementary submission to this Inquiry, we attach a report titled *Lies of Emission*, which we respectfully submit as relevant additional evidence.

Our initial and supplementary submission demonstrated how the Australian Government both enables and engages in greenwashing. This report complements and extends that analysis by highlighting a closely related but distinct problem: the Commonwealth as both a source and a beneficiary of climate disinformation.

Why this paper is highly relevant to a greenwashing inquiry

- Greenwashing and disinformation are mutually reinforcing: The fossil fuel industry promotes misleading narratives, including claims that suggest LNG reduces emissions or that CCS makes gas clean. When the Australian Government repeats those same claims in its own communications, it legitimises industry messaging. In turn, industry then cites government statements as evidence, giving their claims the weight of official endorsement. This creates a feedback loop where misleading narratives move back and forth between government and industry, becoming harder for the public to distinguish from fact.
 - Regulatory implications are the same: The tools needed to reduce greenwashing (truth standards, substantiation duties, transparency of modelling/data, conflict-of-interest rules, platform ad libraries, and effective enforcement) are the same tools that curb government-originated climate disinformation.
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- Causation and incentives: Government messaging confers credibility on private claims and shapes media narratives, creating incentives and cover for corporate greenwashing. Recognising the government’s catalytic role helps the Committee design remedies that address not just symptoms (misleading ads) but upstream drivers (official narratives, data opacity, institutional conflicts).
- Complements the record: Whereas our current supplementary submission mapped how greenwashing occurs and is enabled, this report provides additional rationale for why it persists—because government narratives and institutional settings lower the bar for accuracy, legitimise “false solutions,” and shift accountability offshore.

Accordingly, the structural reforms we recommend—truth standards for political and government communications, mandatory transparency of data and modelling, guardrails for policy naming, stronger conflict-of-interest and revolving-door rules, enhanced whistleblower protections, and targeted platform and advertising transparency—would simultaneously reduce government-driven misrepresentation and corporate greenwashing in the climate domain.

We would welcome the opportunity to appear at a hearing to further discuss the findings of this paper and their relevance to the Inquiry’s remit.

Yours sincerely,



Polly Hemming
Climate and Energy Director
The Australia Institute



Dr. Richard Denniss
Executive Director
The Australia Institute