



Wide Bay Burnett Environment Council

12 April 2023

## Senate Rural & Regional Affairs & Transport Committee Inquiry: **Iron Boomerang**

To: Senate Standing Committee on Rural & Regional Affairs & Transport Secretariat  
From: David Arthur  
President, Wide Bay Burnett Environment Council (WBBEC)  
Date: 12 April 2023  
Subject: Supporting information for WBBEC submission to the Inquiry into the Project  
Known as the Iron Boomerang.

Further to the provision to the Senate Standing Committee on Rural & Regional Affairs & Transport (the Committee) on 11 April 2023 by Wide Bay Burnett Environment Council (WBBEC) of supporting information as pdfs of articles downloaded from the Renew Economy website ([www.reneweconomy.com.au](http://www.reneweconomy.com.au)), the following explanation is proffered.

Articles dated 23 March 2023 and 24 March 2023 respectively are under the headings: "BHP to pilot green smelting furnace using electricity, hydrogen and Pilbara iron ore" and "Fortescue hails "green iron" breakthrough as own coal-free tech moves to pilot phase" refer to plans by BHP and Fortescue Metals to progress smelting of iron ore using hydrogen in place of metallurgical coal.

These articles are provided to the Committee as further evidence in support of my response to the question put by Committee chair Senator Canavan: "...I don't believe there's any large-scale production of steel from hydrogen at this stage. What's your view, though, of how long that is away and what it might mean for a project of this kind?"



The articles were downloaded as pdfs on 11 April 2023 from webpages <https://reneweconomy.com.au/bhp-to-pilot-green-smelting-furnace-using-electricity-hydrogen-and-pilbara-iron-ore/> and <https://reneweconomy.com.au/fortescue-hails-green-iron-breakthrough-as-own-coal-free-tech-moves-to-pilot-phase/> respectively.

The view of myself and WBBEC remains that large-scale production of steel using hydrogen in place of metallurgical coal is likely to be developed and implemented before investments in either “Iron Boomerang” railway or new metallurgical coal mines and blast furnaces is recovered. As such, a decision to invest in the “Iron Boomerang” railway should not be based on cost recovery through transport and use of metallurgical coal.

Yours sincerely,

David Arthur

President, Wide Bay Burnett Environment Council