

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Government admits climate casualties will mount as global warming intensifies, so we must act faster say former Australian defence and security leaders

In his annual climate statement today Federal Energy Minister, Chris Bowen, highlighted national and regional security risks, arguing it will help fuel further global “political instability”. As the 28th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP28) begins this week in AU-nited Arab Emirates today, the Australian government has declared runaway global heating is a national security threat.

The minister’s statement today in part echoes the government’s still-secret national climate-security risk assessment which has been under lock-and-key for the past year.

Acknowledging the threat now means that the government must change the course of its climate policy, says the Australia Security Leaders Climate Group (ASLCG).

“The climate casualties will mount and mount unless Australia stops supporting new coal and gas projects”, says ASLCG Executive Member and Former Defence Force Chief Admiral Chris Barrie (Retired).

“Planet warming emissions from coal and gas projects backed by the Albanese government will outweigh emissions cuts from the government renewable energy policies by 7-to-1.”

After a succession of record-breaking months of record heat including 1.8°C in September, global warming for 2023 as a whole will likely tip 1.5°C, with 2024 even hotter as the effect of the building El Nino is felt more fully. Already hundreds of thousands have died and millions displaced, primarily in countries least responsible for climate change.

“The government’s refusal to share the full findings of its own climate security risk assessment, means there is no informed public debate on the greatest threat to this nation and its people.” says Admiral Barrie.

Air Vice-Marshal John Blackburn (Retired), a former Deputy Chief of the Royal Australian Air Force and an ASLCG Executive member, reiterated the call for the government to release the National Climate Risk Assessment: “At the very least, a declassified version of the climate risk assessment should be released without delay. How can our decision-makers act in the nation’s best interest when the government is deliberately keeping us in the dark ”.

ASLCG is calling for the establishment of an Office of Climate Threat Intelligence within the Office of National Intelligence, with an annual, de-classified briefing to Parliament, as highlighted in the ASLCG’s [Climate & Security Action Plan For Australia](#).

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*The [Australian Security Leaders Climate Group](#) is a non-partisan network of Australian security and policy professionals working to reframe the climate debate and make climate an immediate security priority in Australia. ASLCG works to assist the assessment of risk posed by climate change, and support mobilisation for local and global protection.*