

9th February 2011

Department of the Senate
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Sent by email: community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Sir,

Subject: Inquiry into the Social and Economic Impact of Rural Wind Farms

Ladd Electrical Pty Ltd was founded in 2002 and established to provide specialist electrical contracting, engineering and switchboard manufacturing services to industry. These services are delivered by our 100 (approx) employees across Australia.

We are a multi-disciplined business that provides switchboards, electrical contracting, electrical engineering, software engineering, automation and installation across a diverse range of businesses including mechanical services, water and wastewater treatment plants, power reticulation, power generation and renewable energy, throughout Australia and overseas.

Services to the wind industry

Ladd has been designing, manufacturing and supplying complex electrical bottom cabinet switchboards for installation inside the towers for the wind turbine generators since 2008. These cabinets are essential to the power distribution, control and operation of the turbine and have a value in excess of \$100,000.00 per tower.

We have a very close working relationship with Suzlon Energy Australia, one of Australia's leading provider of grid connected wind farms. As a direct result of this relationship we have been able to grow as a business and increase our number of employees.

We have successfully entered into contracts to the value of \$30,000,000.00 (approx) to date for the supply of over 200 bottom cabinet switchboards for 5 windfarms, as well as supplied various other panels, parts, engineering and on site labour for these and other windfarms.

Impact of wind industry to our business

Since we commenced providing services to the wind industry, we have invested in a dedicated manufacturing facility specifically for the wind industry, and all the support, infrastructure and training associated with such a venture.

When we are in full production approximately 20 employees are directly involved in the manufacture of these cabinets, and more employees are engaged in the other support and engineering services we offer to the industry.

As a result of the wind industry work we undertake, we have been able to upskill many employees and engage in-house apprentices to perform the works. Further to this we have worked closely with Suzlon to provide an opportunity for their electrical apprentices to be rotated through our manufacturing facility in 2 week blocks, providing these apprentices with specific training and upskilling that would not otherwise be available to them, allowing them to carry out servicing and maintenance in a more efficient and safer manner.

Economic impact of our business to rural communities

When Ladd Electrical staff travel to wind farm sites the local communities benefit from our staff staying in local accommodation and using local services for food, fuel and other miscellaneous items.



None of our staff have experienced any negative effects to their health as a result of working on wind farms and nor am I aware of any of our electrical subcontractors being adversely impacted in any way whatsoever.

In summary, wind farms have contributed significantly to our business and we in turn provide benefits to communities local to wind farms as well as significant employment and training. We are proud to be associated with the industry and trust that our services will continue long into the future.

Yours sincerely

Rod Ladd

Managing Director