

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

10 February 2011

Dear Senators

The Social and Economic Impact of Rural Wind Farms

I write from England so some of my comments may not apply to Australia.

My 9 February 2011 letter was written in haste and I now understand a time extension will allow me to add to it.

This statement is written by a British couple who accepted generalisations about the benevolent nature of having wind turbines near their rural home. They have lived to regret that mistake bitterly.

Please see **GENERAL STATEMENT BY JANE & JULIAN DAVIS** at <http://www.epaw.org/victims.php?lang=en&article=t1>

I draw particular attention to the nursing status of Jane Davis; numerous serious health problems experienced by family members; reference to the absence of proper, peer reviewed, medical trials before the nationwide wind turbine (WT) installation programme commenced; regulatory inadequacy to protect victims; the heartlessness of the developer; the need for the Davis family to abandon there now unsaleable house and rent another in order to be able to sleep.

The serious damage to health caused by prolonged sleep deprivation is well understood. The financial damage here is all too clear.

This statement by a German rural couple, supported by pictures, speaks for itself. <http://www.epaw.org/victims.php?lang=en&article=t6>

The experiences of 'Victims of Industrial Wind' can be found at <http://www.wind-watch.org/ww-victims.php>

A 2007 quote from a UK Guardian newspaper article.

"We were told by someone who used to be an MD for a turbine manufacturing company that wind turbine developers target areas they regard as NGAs - naive, gullible and apathetic. He advised me to look carefully as I drove around the country to see which counties have wind farms and which do not. This has nothing to do with being near the coast - Germany, France, Denmark and Sweden have many inland turbines. It is to do with the ease of being able to push a planning application through."

Cripplingly subsidised, unreliable, and inadequately performing wind energy is being kicked out by Holland, the first of surely other European countries that have seen the light. Wind isn't working.

This 10 February 2011 article suggests the writing is on the wall for a fatally flawed industry.

Holland says it cannot afford to be Green any more. Wind and solar subsidies are too expensive.

It can be seen from the Register that Holland has become the first country to abandon the EU-wide target of producing 20 per cent of its domestic power from renewables.

"This is a remarkable turnaround from a state that took the Kyoto Agreement seriously and chivvied other EU members into adopting renewable energy strategies. The FT reports that instead of the €4bn annual subsidy, it will be slashed to €1.5bn....." As the article says, critics of wind turbine expansion have found it difficult to get figures to judge whether the turbines really are value for money - particularly since last month Ofgem actually refused to disclose the output of each Feed-In Tariff (FiT) location. Even though some onshore turbines cost more in subsidies than they make from electricity, the UK is still expected to urge the installation of 10,000 new onshore turbines.

The article concludes: "Holland's policy U-turn means the EU renewable targets aren't set in stone - and there are more cost-effective ways of hitting the targets."

The full article is at http://www.theregister.co.uk/2011/02/10/holland_energy_switch

When reading an article in today's Daily Mail at <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1355419/UKs-useless-wind-turbine-Cost-130k-raise-electricity-worth-100k.html> under the heading "**Is this the UK's most useless wind turbine? It cost £130,000 in subsidies last year... to raise electricity worth just £100,000**" I was reminded of the quote by Professor Dieter Helm, Oxford energy economist "*We would need to have more conventional power stations to allow us to have 'windmills'. What an Alice-in-Wonderland world'!*"

UK wind developers are on record admitting that without the very high consumer-sourced subsidies not a single commercial wind 'farm' would have been built.

Energy is the lifeblood of our economy and way of life. It's high time it was treated as such, and green tokenism put firmly in its place.

Sincerely

Brian Gallagher