

09 February, 2010

To the Senate Committee of Inquiry:

-The Social and Economic Impact of Rural Wind Farms.

Honourable Senators,

I make the following submission as a person residing in the Glenelg Shire and in close proximity to wind farms:-

1. European Settlement of Australia **occurred because of "Wind Driven" ships; a great use of one of natures great gifts -i.e. "Wind"**.
2. In the early Twentieth Century any electricity which residents of rural areas were able to obtain was through wind powered machinery e.g. the **"Wind light"**.
3. Today, wind mills still provide power in some remote areas and right throughout Australia, wind power is still by far the cheapest form of power for pumping water for household and stock use.
4. Wind does not have a polluting capability.
5. There is no conclusive proof that noise from wind turbines causes disease or illness. One needs to remember that many people seem to place blame on anything to which they are opposed politically or aesthetically as the cause of mental or physical health issues. On the occasions I have been in close proximity to turbines, the noise to me does not seem to be intrusive. I would suggest that the noise emanating from busy metropolitan roadways through residential areas would be far more intrusive, and yet it is well documented that residents become used to this.
6. There is no proof that wind turbines cause distress to farm animals. As a farmer for nearly 50 years, I have been interested in exploring the allegations that wind turbines have an unsettling effect on sheep, cattle and horses. From many ad hoc observations I have made, the contrary seems to be the case. Animals are actually comforted by the low hum of the turbines.
7. The economic benefit of rural wind farms to the Glenelg Shire is substantial. Keppel Prince Engineering employs in excess of 150 persons, most of whom are employed in the production of wind farm components. There is further job creation in the erection and maintenance areas. This is vital to a Shire which has a total of some 19,000 residents. Retention of young people is vital for the ongoing economic and social structure of the Shire and employment is one area which is necessary for this to occur. Close proximity of good educational facilities is another. Attracting people from outside the area to relocate is another necessity and again, jobs are needed for this to occur.