

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

Dear Sir/Madam

The Social and Economic Impact of Rural Wind Farms

During my time at Keppel Prince, I have worked on wind farm sites in Victoria and South Australia and am amazed at how quite the wind turbines really are. I ask that the Senate Committee to come out to an operating wind farm and stand underneath a wind tower and hear it for themselves. Whilst I am working out on site, sometimes I have to look up in the sky to see if the blades are actually turning to reassure myself that I am working on a wind farm that is running and producing clean and green electricity.

I have worked at Keppel Prince for 12 years and have worked on the wind towers since the Codrington project that dates back to 2001. The wind tower contracts that have been won by Keppel Prince are an important source of employment for many Portlanders and this has a positive flow-on effect for shops and local businesses in town.

The small businesses such as shops and cafes that are located near the wind farms have all benefitted by extra customers who either work at the wind farm or tourists who are attracted to the wind farms. During construction, tourists stop on the side of the road for hours on end taking photos and videos of construction activities. Also, when the wind farms are running, there are still heaps of tourists taking photos and videos of the wind farms.

I have not heard any locals talk negatively about the wind farms and I think that the wind farms have been great for the Portland community and those other rural communities that have been ravaged by the drought and the global financial crisis.

Carey Wakely
09/02/2011