NO OFFSHORE TURBINES PORT STEPHENS ASSOCIATION
INC2400484

Mr Alan Raine
Committee Secretary
Select Committee on Information Integrity on Climate Change and Energy
Email: climateintegrity.sen@aph.gov.au

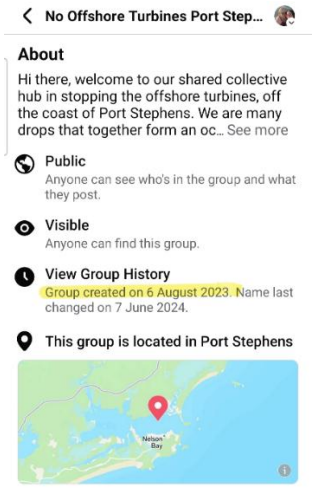
12th December, 2025

Dear Committee Secretary,

No Offshore Turbines Port Stephens (NotPS) wishes to clarify the following points discussed at the senate inquiry hearing on 13th November, 2025.

NotPS was formed July, 2023

At the hearing one of our witnesses, Mr Abbott, incorrectly stated (on pg. 27 of the Hansard Record) that the NotPS group was formed in early 2023. The NotPS group was formed in late July, 2023 in response to the declaration of the Hunter Offshore Wind Zone on 11th July, 2023. Before the July zone declaration, the majority of the Port Stephens Community was unaware of the proposal for an offshore wind zone off our coastline. As can be seen in the picture over the page the NotPS Facebook page was created on 6th August, 2023.



On page 34 of the Hansard Record Senator Darmanin then correspondingly repeats Mr Abbott's incorrect evidence of the NotPS group starting in early 2023 and then wrongfully assumes that the group must have formed before the initial consultation period began in February, 2023. As has been outlined above this is incorrect with both the NotPS group and the Facebook page being created after the initial consultation period and the zone declaration.

<u>The East Maitland Bowling Club Meeting was Organised by National Rational Energy Network (NREN)</u>

On pages 28 – 30 of the Hansard Record the Committee Chair implies the East Maitland Bowling Club meeting was organised by NotPS and was a Nuclear for Australia and Advance event. That is incorrect. NREN organised this meeting and the speakers. At no point was it billed as a Nuclear for Australia or Advance event. No Advance representatives spoke at the meeting.

It was held out of Port Stephens on the other side of our federal electorate. In an effort to raise greater awareness of the offshore wind turbine issue affecting Port Stephens on that side of our electorate, NotPS agreed to assist with this meeting by promoting it and offering volunteer assistance on the day. We were told that Sandra Bourke would be there in her role as a representative of NREN and not in her Advance spokesperson

role. NotPS had previously advised Ms. Bourke that we would not publish Advance material on our group Facebook page as we strive to keep our narrative largely focused on the offshore wind issue in our area. NotPS was alarmed and disappointed when Advance pamphlets appeared on the seats at the venue and resolved not to work with outside groups again to prevent our narrative from being co-opted and to ensure our group remains independent.

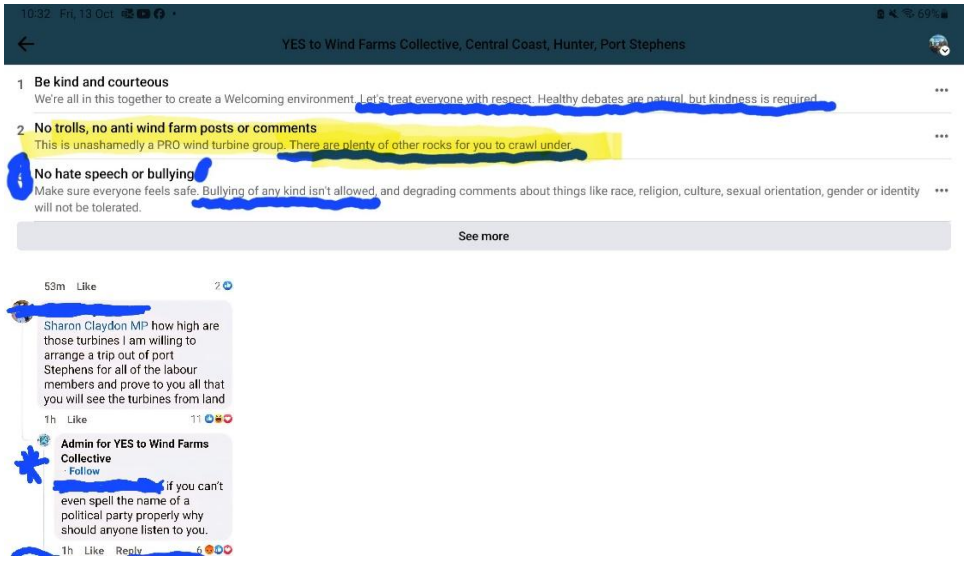
The NotPS Facebook Page Does Not Squash Open Debate and Sensible Fact-Based Discussion

On pages 30 – 31of the Hansard Record Senator Ananda-Rajah implies that one of our Facebook group rules squashes open debate and sensible fact-based discussion of the offshore wind issue. This rule states, "By coming to this page you must know by the name, we are diametrically opposed to the government's plans to place 300+ wind turbines in the ocean just off Port Stephens, it's in the name. Therefore, if you want to be a troll or spread your agenda against this on the page, you will be banned but if you want sensible discussion please stay and join us."

The purpose of this rule is to promote sensible fact-based debate and discussion whilst making it clear that nasty trolling behaviour that has an agenda of discrediting the group, rather than speaking to the issue, through the use of personal attacks and blatant mistruths will not be tolerated.

We have spent many hours in discussion with people who have differing views to ours and answering questions as well as clearing up misconceptions to the point where we have received criticism from others that we give too much airtime to opposing viewpoints. Despite this we continue to support sensible debate and discussion as it makes the page a more engaging place where we can all learn from each other but we will rightfully exercise our right to not tolerate those who come to the page with a nasty agenda that has no interest in honest debate and who are only there to launch personal attacks on others or to try to discredit the group with mistruths. We take our duty to protect our page members and participants seriously.

This is in stark contrast to some other Facebook pages that support offshore wind farms. The page set up for the Hunter Area to support wind farms would not allow anyone who didn't support wind farms to even make a comment on their page never mind engaging in rational discussion with them. Personally, I was banned from their page the one time I attempted to make a comment advising them they had published a comment based on hearsay that was misinformation and defamatory. Beyond squashing healthy debate this group were actively nasty and petty towards anyone who didn't share their views (including on other Facebook pages discussing the issue) with one of their group rules advising those people that "there are plenty of other rocks for you to crawl under." This group has since changed its name and rules but still boasts that it will only accept posts that promote wind farms and practises true censorship by squashing any form of opposing viewpoint. Please see examples in the pictures below.



On some other Facebook pages that support offshore wind, group members pile en masse to personally attack anyone who presents an opposing viewpoint. I've

personally been told to "jump in my grave already" and that my children were the "devil's spawn who would grow up to hate me" all for asking questions about claims made on those pages. NotPS acknowledges that poor behaviour and nasty comments can exist on both sides of this issue and we request that this committee acknowledges this too rather than trying to imply that these behaviours only exist on one side of the issue. We object to Senator Ananda-Rajah wrongfully implying that our group censors open debate by making statements such as, "the ethos on your side is profoundly silencing to people who have legitimate questions" when as shown above historically in our local area it has been the pro wind farm Facebook group who practises this.

The NotPS Facebook Page is not Riddled with Dead Whale Pictures

On page 31 of the Hansard Record Senator Ananda-Rajah states that our website (should read Facebook page as we don't have a website) is "riddled with lots of pictures of dead whales." We request that the Senator corrects this false claim for which she has supplied no supporting evidence.

One of our Facebook group rules is that we do not publish dead whale claims or images. We are aware there has been controversy surrounding an image that has been used in our local area on billboards, signs etc that depicts an illustration of a beached whale with turbines in the water in the background. We are not the creators of this image, we do not use it in our own signage or strive to promote it on our page. We would like to point out though as it does not contain any written claims linking the turbines to the beaching of the whale and instead is an artistic representation, open to individual interpretation, (it is not established whether the whale is deceased, what has caused it to beach -if the turbines are directly or indirectly involved or was it another cause such as ship strike), of a yet to be tested concern, (we accept there is no current verified evidence of wind turbine installations causing whale beachings or deaths but we also equally accept that scientists are still investigating the impacts of floating offshore wind turbines on marine life and are yet to do so on a large scale basis in a whale migratory zone as is proposed in our local area), held by some residents and we respect their individual right to express that concern if they choose to

do so. In that capacity it may have appeared incidentally on our page e.g. in photos from our rally where residents have chosen to hold a sign depicting that image but it is not an image we choose to actively promote as a group.

We also wish to highlight the following point from the senate inquiry hearing on 30th September, 2025 and request a correction.

Capital Climate Forum have not Corrected their Statement that Community Billboards are being Funded by the Atlas Network

At the hearing in Canberra on 30th September, 2025 the following was stated and recorded on page 32 of the Hansard Record: -

"Senator ANANDA-RAJAH: That's fine. Who is behind the funding of this? Billboards don't come cheap. I doubt a community group could raise the money for a billboard, and neither could Facebook campaigns. So what can you tell us about the players behind these sorts of activities?

Ms Tanner: I know from the work of Dr Jeremy Walker that it's linked back to the Atlas Network. He's written papers on that and I believe he's possibly put in a submission to this inquiry as well."

No evidence has been supplied by either Ms. Tanner or Senator Ananda- Rajah to support these statements. Despite community groups asking Senator Canavan to seek a correction on that statement during the hearing, as we have raised all our own funds to erect billboards via community fundraising and also since supplied evidence to the committee of this, these statements have not been corrected by Capital Climate Forum or Senator Ananda-Rajah. We request that they are.

Regards,

Leonie Hamilton

Secretary

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