

Noise Watch Australia Inc.

Protecting our rights to QUIET

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications

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Re; Renewable Energy (Electricity) Amendment (Excessive Noise from Wind Farms) Bill 2012

http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate_Committees?url=economics_ctte/wind_farms/report/index.htm

Dear Committee members, this submission is made on behalf of people living in our community in many parts of Australia, who have suffered significant interference from intrusive noise from a range of sources outside of their control, disrupting peace and productivity in their lives. Environment Protection Authorities and Councils, charged through existing legislation to see this noise controlled, fail to evaluate it and ensure legislative compliance. Most people cannot afford acoustic engineers and legal representation, so they carry the stress and cost to our health system. The existing system of regulatory noise control doesn't work. Unwanted noise is a risk to health and social wellbeing. It is a moral intrusion in places we live and work. Relying on this regulatory system as the way Government and regulatory authorities might manage fallout from industrial wind turbines, is not going to deliver any different outcome than noise from other sources. In the legislative proposal you make, you point cautiously to reliance on the limited financial impact the bill will have by relating costs to existing regulatory authorities. Expecting compliance evaluation to be met from the existing resources of the Regulator is hazardous. There is a need for an auditing process to encourage necessary evaluation. We have never had such an audit in South Australia.

We commend the intent of this legislation and the committee comments. It is a step in the right direction. Thank you too for inviting public interest. Your proposal regarding lesser noise as a guideline is the best we have seen, after demanding such interest from State Governments for over a decade. But noise guidelines are just that; *not mandatory*.

I further relate communications we have had with *enHealth*, a section of the national department of health. This after no further steps were taken to introduce a national approach to noise policies, post the 2004 report on *The health effects of environmental noise - other than hearing loss: May 2004*;

http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/health-publth-publicat-document-metadata-env_noise.htm Also see; [Fw: Enquiry re the implementation of the National Environmental Health Strategy 2007-12 \[SEC=UNCLASSIFIED\] 2](#)

It is now November 2012 and we have not been further contacted despite assurances in 2009 that something would be acted upon by 2011. I attach some correspondence that is relative to this. It is provided for your committee to explore avenues within Government that has already allocated priority to better noise evaluation at a national level.

As per your comments and suggestion of change to sampling noise to include 10dBA, we put to you that consideration of lower frequency is also very relevant. **We suggest a measure of linear acoustic waves**, more relevant to evidencing a full spectrum of low frequency noise, and most relevant to the generation of biological effects including that associated with autonomic stress responses; . [Social neuroscience: Autonomic, neuroendocrine, and immune responses to stress](#), JT Cacioppo, Psychophysiology, 2007. Accepting this article doesn't relate directly to noise, I assure you it does put some very relevant dimension on the effects of noise. I am able to provide further reference relating more directly to noise for you if you would like.

Other parliaments and regulatory authorities have defined "noise" only related to the hearing range, (dBA), not vibration in the full acoustic range *that can be measured*. As indicated in relation to stress, linear noise measures have far greater relevance to biological risk and intrusion. Such a changed interpretation of noise relates to all sections you have pointed to already in the schedule one changes.

The reference Hon members have made to the relevance of human rights is also very commendable. We suggest consideration be given to seeing the introduction of an ethics committee, as in medical research, where projects can have a broader evaluation than is available for planning departments within existing legislation. Where issues such as vulnerability and risks can take a real dimension.

Time has ran out in putting these suggestions together. I will endeavour to provide further information on your specific request, and would welcome opportunity to present a more extensive reference to the committee.

Thanking you, Gary

Reference to Infrasound – symptoms beyond the ears;
<http://www.lowertheboom.org/trice/infrasound.htm>