

9th February 2011

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

By email: community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Sir / Madam,

Subject: Inquiry into the Social and Economic Impact of Rural Wind Farms

I have been employed in the wind farm industry for the past six years and appreciate this opportunity to provide a submission to the Senate Committee's Inquiry .

As part of my role with a leading provider of utility scale wind farms in Australia, I have frequently visited wind farms in regional South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales and participated in numerous open days or information sessions related to wind farms, which have attracted hundreds of attendees. I have developed close relationships with many individuals, plus a number of businesses and community organisations from towns located close to wind farms.

I therefore feel well qualified to state that in my experience, the overwhelming majority of people who live and work in these rural areas are very supportive of the wind industry, and recognise that it provides many social and economics benefits to their local communities.

These benefits include:

- Employment opportunities during both the construction and operational phases of wind farms that enable locals to develop new skills and follow a career path that allows them to stay in their local areas, close to home and family;
- Investment in a wide range of local businesses that has allowed them to expand and employ additional resources;
- Support for the local community through sponsorships of local events, sporting clubs, educational institutions, etc;
- Provision of a secure source of income for farmers to assist them to "drought-proof" their businesses, and diversify their farming interests;
- Improvements to infrastructure and access roads – particularly appreciated by the local country fire authorities, plus local residents

I am unaware, nor have I ever come across anyone in the wind industry who has had any adverse health effects as a result of living or working in the vicinity of an operating wind farm. I am also unaware, nor seen any evidence to support the theory that windfarms have an adverse impact on property values.

Whilst recognising that wind turbines do make some noise, they are certainly not as noisy as many other forms of mechanical or industrial equipment, and I am not aware of anyone suffering any adverse hearing or health effects as a result of the noise or vibration of the turbines.

Wind energy is an important resource that will help Australia transition to a low carbon economy. As a mature, proven and cost effective renewable energy technology, wind energy has an important role to play in not only reducing the greenhouse intensity of our energy system but to achieve the government mandated 20% renewable energy target by 2020.

I am proud to be involved in this industry, which needs to continue growing for the benefit of future generations.

I trust the Committee will undertake a factually-based assessment of the issues associated with wind farms and come to the conclusion that the positive benefits of wind farms far outweigh the emotive and misleading claims of anti-wind energy groups and individuals who have made submissions to this Inquiry.

Yours faithfully

Deiny Peterson