

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee
Answers to questions on notice
Environment and Energy portfolio

Question No: 219
Hearing: Supplementary Budget Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 2
Program: International Climate Change and Energy Innovation Division (ICCEID)
Topic: Criticisms of the Noise Assessment Bulletin
Hansard Page: N/A
Question Date: 28 October 2016
Question Type: Written

Senator Back, Chris asked:

Are you aware of a number of criticisms of the Noise Assessment Bulletin (Draft Wind Energy Planning Framework)? Namely:

1. The draft noise guideline will not protect the health and well-being of the people neighbouring the developments. Current wind turbine noise guidelines are not protecting 90% of the people 90% of the time.
2. The guideline only measures audible noise and does not include an acceptable measurement of low frequency noise, infrasound and vibration all of which are known to cause harm to health in neighbouring residents.
3. The guideline does not incorporate the important findings of the world first pilot study undertaken by accomplished acoustician, Mr Steven Cooper, on behalf of the developer, Pacific Hydro, that has found that wind turbine noise has a unique sound signature which contains characteristics that have known adverse effects on human health.
4. The wording of the bulletin misrepresents the findings of the NHMRC's literature review.
5. The methodology to measure wind turbine noise and vibration is flawed. The only recourse for affected people will be through taking actions against the host landowner or through civil disobedience to stop the source of the disturbance/nuisance.

Please provide comment on each of these problems with the draft bulletin.

Answer:

No, the Commissioner has not been made aware of the criticisms listed in the question of the Noise Assessment Bulletin (Draft Energy Planning Framework).

Assuming the criticisms listed above are in relation to the NSW Government's draft planning guidelines for wind farms, the matters should be raised directly with the NSW Government