

Bill Rogerson

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### **To the Australian Senate Select Committee on Wind Turbines**

I have been approached by people concerned with the Mt Emerald Wind Turbine Development and the Lotus Glen Correctional Centre Dog Squad to give to the Senate a more detailed account of the effects of wind turbines upon our sheep dogs.

Before the turbines were constructed 2.5kms from our home, we had no idea that the noise and vibration from the 32 turbines could impact so adversely on us and our farming operations.

Our five kelpie/border collie-cross sheep dogs have been an asset to our farming enterprise as well as part of our family. We had the mother (Karla) born 2001, and her 4 pups (Lily, Scotty, Bloss & Sammy) born 2006. They have always been excellent hard workers, obedient and beautifully natured. Bloss and Sammy were housed at the woolshed (1.7kms from the nearest turbine), and the other three at the house (2.5 kms from the nearest turbine).

The four pups are our third generation of dogs with excellent pedigree blood lines that we have had from our original 'Elfinvale' Kelpie bitch (1983) crossed with an 'Avenel' Kelpie dog. A dog from that mating was then crossed with an "O'Kanes' Border Collie Bitch (Karla) - whose mother was an Australian Sheepdog Champion four times - giving us the dogs we have today.

Whilst all our dogs have worked hard, they have been well looked after, treated with respect, properly fed and housed and we have never begrudged them necessary veterinary treatment. My belief is a good sheep dog is **'worth two men'**. To date they have all experienced longevity - living 15 to 17 years - dying of just old age.

When the turbines began operating (August 2011), the five dogs barked at them day and night. However within a few weeks of the turbines commencing operation, the two dogs housed at the woolshed changed remarkably. The female (Bloss) would not come out of her kennel especially when the wind was blowing in a southerly, south easterly or easterly direction. Once finally coaxed

to come, she would run around scattering sheep everywhere like her brain was scrambled. The male dog (Sammy) would just hide.

We notified AGL (the wind farm operator), and they asked for a veterinarian to examine her and issue a certificate of health status. At huge expense AGL paid for our dog kennels to be replicated and those two dogs (Bloss & Sammy) were moved to the house with the other three dogs.

Since then we have noticed all our dogs are different - they are timid, lethargic and definitely anti-social. There are days especially if the wind is southerly, south easterly or in an easterly direction, Bloss and Sammy will still not come out of their kennels (at the house). And if they are out and someone comes, they will run back to their kennels and hide. At the woolshed we have seen all the dogs actually sleeping whilst sitting up, when they are supposed to be pushing sheep up. And further at the woolshed, where the walls of the shed now vibrate and where the turbine noise seems to collect under the covered yards, the dogs will take any chance they can to go to the old kennels and sit in them.

However last year, we lost Lily – she died. She had a plate in her leg from ruptured tendons caused by jumping off the motor bike in 2009, whilst I was moving sheep. Her leg was excellent to begin with - she could jump on the ute and the motor bike as she had previously and ran around almost the same as before the injury. But her leg started to bother her, we are even sure the plate vibrated once the turbines started and we used to keep a wool jersey brace on her leg. Lily became more and more stressed and began to suffer to constipation. Despite all efforts to treat her (with veterinary assistance), Lily eventually died July 2014, aged 8 years.

The effects of the turbines continue. Over the past 2 weeks we have been battered with southerly, south easterly and easterly winds day and night. The four remaining dogs have barked incessantly at the turbines and thus they lack interest or ability to do anything.

Whilst we know our dogs are aging, this generation of dogs definitely displays different working ability and behaviour to prior to the inception of the wind turbines and of the past two generations at the same age. It saddens me to think that we may have to face a future without the help of sheep dogs in the equation of our farming enterprise – for it may be nothing but a cruel exercise to subject any more dogs to such circumstances.

Yours Sincerely  
Bill Rogerson.