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The Social and Economic Impact of Rural Wind Farms

Submission to Senate Inquiry,

Re:

The social and economic impacts of rural wind farms, and in particular:

- (a) Any adverse health effects for people living in close proximity to wind farms;*
- (b) Concerns over the excessive noise and vibrations emitted by wind farms, which are in close proximity to people's homes;*
- (c) The impact of rural wind farms on property values, employment opportunities and farm income;*
- (d) The interface between Commonwealth, state and local planning laws as they pertain to wind farms; and*
- (e) Any other relevant matters.*

I would like to make a submission to the above Senate Inquiry as a professional consultant who provides services to the wind farm industry. I believe the issue in my submission relates to (e) above as it does not specifically relate to matters (a) – (d). The specific issue of the impacts of wind farms on domestic TV and radio reception and on radio-communication systems in the surrounding areas is the advice I have provided for over 10 years. This advice is based on experience with both desktop studies and wind farm pre and post construction field surveys at residences in the proximity of the wind farms. My conclusions are based on involvement on a large number of wind farm proposals and on actual projects in Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales. I have also extensively followed the overseas literature on this subject.

On this specific environmental aspect of wind farm projects my conclusions are:

- TV reception interference issues can sometimes occur at residences close to and in specific areas around some wind farm
- The TV issues have been investigated by the proponents and solutions found including alternative delivery methods including satellite. Some interference issues are due to faulty TV antenna or poor installation issues.
- No domestic AM or FM Radio interference issues have been reported.
- Interference to microwave and other professional radiocommunications have been avoided by proper pre-planning and siting of wind turbines to avoid any physical obstruction of radio paths.

The conclusion is that from a number of years experience the wind industry has managed this potential problem in an effective way and as long as the current guidelines are followed the potential for on-going interference issues to be created is very small.

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