

9 February 2011

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

Dear Sir

Submission: to the Social and Economic Impact of Rural Wind Farms

The development of wind farms in Australia presents an exciting opportunity to deliver considerable benefits to the Australian economy. Already well entrenched in global economies as an effective generator of clean, low emissions, renewable energy, the growth of the wind energy industry must be supported so that it can continue to contribute to the reduction of emissions from our own stationary energy sector and the carbon footprint of goods and services produced here.

The wind energy industry is already governed by very stringent planning and environmental regulations applied at a State and Commonwealth level. More onerous constraints will serve only to detract from the attractiveness of Australia as an investment destination for renewable energy firms who largely operate on an international scale. At a community level, for example Hepburn Wind farm where **pitt&sherry** is currently engaged, more onerous planning constraints will unnecessarily impede the burgeoning growth of bespoke wind farms, developed, owned and operated by relatively smaller, grass roots enterprises that represent communities' dedicated to taking real action on climate change and Australia's unsustainable emissions profile.

Complaints about noise impacts on amenity are unsupported by scientific evidence. The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) supports the statement that "*there are no direct pathological effects from wind farms and that any potential impact on humans can be minimised by following existing planning guidelines*"¹. Research by Adelaide consultancy Sonus² has recently shown that low frequency noise levels at the beach and in the CBD are typically higher than near wind farms. These scientifically based conclusions should guide the deliberations of the Senate Review, rather than emotive claims from wind farm detractors.

The development, construction and operation of wind farms requires input from numerous trades and professional expertise and results in a direct economic benefit to the rural community in which the wind farm is based and also the broader regional area. Land owners who host wind farms benefit from the income that can then be injected into the regional economy. The Hepburn Wind project is expected to provide more than \$1,000,000 to the local community over the next 25 years³.

¹ National Health and Medical Research Council (2010): Wind Turbines and Health, A Rapid Review of the Evidence pg 8

² Sonus Pty Ltd (2010): Wind Farms Technical Paper S3387C6

³ <http://hepburnwind.com.au/blog/speak-up-for-wind-energy/>



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Our own business is committed to delivering engineering and other professional services to the wind energy industry, and to particularly assisting the many rural communities who are keen to develop wind farms. We strongly believe that rural communities dedicated to such worthwhile goals should be provided with abundant encouragement and support so that their own vision for economic and environmental sustainability can be realised.

Yours sincerely

(...)



John Pitt
Managing Director