

Senators, thank you for the invitation to appear here today. I am speaking as a private individual though I am also a board member of the Waubra Foundation and a member of the local group Residents Against Jupiter wind turbines.

Members of that group have had extensive dealings with the NSW Planning Department, as well as other NSW government agencies, in relation to Jupiter and also other wind farms.

While I am critical of the way the system currently operates, I acknowledge that the current NSW Minister for Planning, Rob Stokes, and his predecessor Pru Goward, as well as the Secretary of that Department, appear to be trying to improve the process. But institutional inertia is powerful and the changes are slow. Meanwhile innocent people are being badly harmed and that will continue under current arrangements.

I have worked for more than 30 years as a management consultant to private and public sector organisations, normally advising the CEO and other senior executives on matters of corporate strategy and organisation design. While my first degree was in physics and maths, my PhD relates specifically to organisation design, and subsequent research was on corporate change and performance. I also taught on executive programs at the Australian Graduate School of Management.

It is clear to me that the current processes for approving and regulating wind farms in NSW are excessively complex and neither economically efficient nor socially just.

They are essentially a tick-the-box planning exercise, with little integrity, conducted at large public and private expense, to produce an outcome favourable to developers.

As you have already discovered, conditions imposed by wind farm approvals are quite deficient. And unlike some industries such as coal mining, compliance testing and enforcement is virtually non-existent. Without effective compliance enforcement, in any field, conditions will be regularly breached.

It is possible to add some integrity to the current approval system in various ways, such as:

- relying only on data provided by parties with no association with the proponent;
- **not** accepting judgements made by consultants hired by the developer to support their case; and
- imposing decommissioning funding conditions **guaranteed** to **not** leave the taxpayer or local community on the hook.

Alternatively, it is possible to remove most of the inefficiency, subjectivity and injustice by replacing the current regulatory process by a standards-based one that forces developers to absorb externalities through fair commercial transactions and imposes genuinely rigorous ongoing noise monitoring with material costs for breaches.

Such an approach would be far more transparent and much less exposed to the risks of corruption than the current process. Our local group provided the previous NSW Planning Minister with advice on how that could be done but have heard nothing further. Hopefully this committee will have more success.

Thank you.
Dr Michael Crawford