



QUOIN HILL VINEYARD

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Submission Re: **Renewable Energy (Electricity) Amendment
(Excessive Noise from Wind Farms) Bill 2012**

Dear Senators

We have a property literally in the middle of the Waubra Wind Farm, near Ballarat Victoria. We were never against the wind farm; in fact as we have a winery restaurant on the property, we hosted the Minister and guests to the official opening of the farm. We were also on the wind farm community reference group, and played a large role in the first wind farm festival held at Waubra.

From our residence we have 30 turbines within 2 km, 13 within 1.5 km, and 5 within 1 km, with the closest 600 metres. We are surrounded by turbines on 3 sides. So no matter which way the wind blows we experience it.

Since the turbines were turned on in 2009, we have had on average 3-4 nights per week of disrupted sleep. As you can imagine this is not the safest thing for anyone, let alone someone working with farm machinery on the property by themselves? The house has 4 bedrooms and I spend most nights going from one to the other looking for respite. My wife sleeps with industrial earplugs and some nights is still woken.

People say it's no different to living near a rail line, or freeway. People who state that are naive about the situation. Rail and trams and airports shut down at midnight, freeways have light traffic and each of these moves on which the body can adapt to. However, the turbines are stationary and constant.

So you can understand what its like, it's like a party down the street with the music going, all you hear is the 'doof doof' noise. But in your case you can call the police to shut it down, and you know that it does not go on all night and all day, but for us that is what it's like. Also with wind from different direction the noise can sound like a jet rumble, or a whoosh noise like swinging a stick quickly through the air. Some days and nights we hear the generator noise, similar to a fridge starting up. If there was a 300 hp tractor parked out the front of people's house in the city, and left there to idle all night and day, they would call the police or EPA, but we don't have that luxury.

Our dream was to have our family take over the business, but no one wants to live or work in that situation. To add insult to injury, our property valuation has decreased, and we have been told that the likelihood of selling is very doubtful. Therefore our superannuation held in our property has gone.

We met with representatives from the wind farm company in April 2010 to raise our concerns, only to be advised that the noise levels were compliant. We have been monitoring the noise levels with our own calibrated decibel monitor since March 2010 and have found the readings most times, to be far in excess of the permit conditions. We have grave concerns about the accuracy and integrity of the monitoring carried out by the Acoustic Company who conducted the noise monitoring and strongly urge an investigation of the entire process be carried out. We continue to monitor and have rung the Waubra Wind Farm complaints phone line and email noise complaints only to be given receipt numbers, with no further action on their behalf.

We have reported the excessive noise to the EPA, only to be advised that wind farms are not considered as industrial and therefore do not come under their jurisdiction.

Our recommendations are:

1. That the government carry out annual noise auditing (funded by the wind companies).
2. That action is taken against non compliant wind farms.

Yours sincerely

Steve Coleman