

17 October 2012.

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Senators,

Renewable Energy (Electricity) Amendment (Excessive Noise from Wind Farms) Bill 2012

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on this Bill. I have been involved in the wind industry since June 2002 following an application by Bald Hills Wind Farm Pty Ltd to erect over 80 turbines near our home.

Over the past decade I have met numerous neighbours to existing facilities at Toora and Waubra who have been materially affected by excessive noise from turbines. I was actively involved in the Bald hills planning panel hearing when the concept of the “van den Berg effect” of night time noise from turbines was scientifically detailed and became part of the planning conditions for the Bald Hills facility.

At Toora, where there are 12 turbines erected, I have seen how the developer paid compensation to _____ for the noise impacts and devaluation of their home. The developer also purchased the home of a turbine host, _____, who ran a guest house on the site. Her visitors’ book was full of comments from guests complaining of the noise. The developer also purchased the property of _____.

The wind industry is at pains to emphasise that most complaints come from objectors. They do not highlight the plight of _____, formerly of Toora, who signed a petition in favour of the wind farm three times. The developer bought _____ house after significant number of complaints from him. His house, post-purchase, is pictured below.



The problems of excessive noise levels at Toora are documented in the following link

http://www.acoustics.asn.au/conference_proceedings/AASNZ2006/papers/p91.pdf

In this fully referenced paper clear evidence from qualified engineers shows that noise levels were consistently exceeded at Toora.

The problems at Waubra have been documented extensively. We have seen evidence that the developer, Acciona have purchased homes (seven at last count) and evidence from impacted residents has been given under oath.

I have travelled to Waubra and attended a meeting, called by the Victorian Dept. Of Health, where local residents detailed the noise and health impacts they were experiencing. What was particularly striking as an observer was the number of people who lived more than 1km from the nearest turbine who were affected. Many of them could not see a turbine from their homes. Many of them supported the development when it was first announced. Yet they suffer the noise impacts. They also suffer the commentary of people such as Simon Chapman PhD FASSA, Professor in Public Health at the University of Sydney who happily forms an opinion without ever visiting or interviewing these people.

Closer to home my concerns also lie at Bald Hills. The developer, a subsidiary of Mitsui & Co, has presented documentary evidence to the Victorian Government to show that their proposed facility will **NOT** be compliant with the permit noise conditions. Yet they are allowed to commence with full knowledge they will be impacting those affected residents. There is a tonality report on the Bald Hills facility that has not been made public. This report will show that the facility is even less compliant. The developer knows this and yet continues to press on.

Of great concern is the system supporting these non-compliant developers via the Renewable Energy Target subsidy. The Parliament of Australia created this subsidy and it should protect those who become victims of the people and companies that seek to enrich themselves.

Yours faithfully

Tim Le Roy