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PUBLIC STATEMENT

The Waubra Foundation is delighted with the revelations yesterday in the article in the Australian by Sean Parnell and Pia Akerman that the Federal Minister for Health, the Hon Peter Dutton, has moved to address the growing public health problem of serious damage to human health from wind turbine noise. We are also delighted that the Victorian Minister for Health, the Hon David Davis has offered financial resources, acknowledged the need for a national research project and acknowledged that Victorian residents are suffering.

However we point out that progress has been very slow since the first Medical Practitioner in Australia, Dr David Iser, blew the whistle on the health damage from wind turbine noise, and alerted the then Victorian Labor Government Ministers and Premier Steve Bracks. Dr David Iser was also the first medical practitioner in the world to conduct a small population survey in the vicinity of the Toora wind project in 2004.

It is two and a half years since the Australian Senate inquiry into the Social and Economic Impact of Rural Wind Farms recommended research "as a priority".

It is 28 years since Dr Neil Kelley and his large US funded research project established that wind turbine generated infrasound and low frequency noise **directly caused** the symptoms the residents nearby were complaining of, which included symptoms such as severe sleep disturbance. Sleep deprivation has been well known for centuries to be damaging to health, and is used as a method of torture.

Dr Kelley and his team established what they considered to be evidence based health protective limits for chronic exposure to infrasound and low frequency noise. These guidelines were never adopted, despite the importance of the research, which resulted in a major change to wind turbine design, and despite the longstanding acoustic knowledge of the damage to health from exposure to infrasound and low frequency noise.

The Foundation considers that the following conditions must be met to avoid the problems previously encountered by the Victorian Health Department and the NHMRC, which both Minister Dutton and Minister Davis are responsible for, with undisclosed and unacknowledged conflict of interest issues which have led to dangerously flawed scientifically incorrect documents being issued.

1. The research must be conducted by researchers with appropriate qualifications in acoustics, psychoacoustics and the various branches of clinical medicine which are relevant to the health problems being reported. They must be considered to be of impeccable integrity, and be independent from the wind industry, with a proven track record of consistently acting ethically in accordance with professional ethical codes. They must all be publicly identified.
2. The research must be guided and also peer reviewed by those with no financial or ideological interest in the outcome. Peer reviewers and advisory experts must all be publicly identified.
3. Potential or perceived conflict of interest issues must be fully and publicly disclosed.
4. The research must involve data collection from those who are reporting the harm to health.

The practice of not naming authors, and refusing to disclose the identities of peer reviewers as happened with the National Health and Medical Research Council 2010 Rapid Review and the recent Victorian Health publication about wind turbine noise, is unacceptable.

To do anything else is akin to having Big Tobacco involved in the clinical studies into the effects of cigarette smoke and smoking.

We are particularly concerned at the comments made by the Industry Minister Macfarlane that he is consulting with the wind industry. The wind industry have known about the direct causation of harm from infrasound and low frequency noise generated by wind turbines since 1987 when Dr Neil Kelley presented his research results to the American Wind Energy Association conference in California.

Further evidence of the wind industry's longstanding knowledge of the harm to human health is suggested by the confidentiality agreements the wind industry has used for years to silence sick people. Such practices were described as "industry required" by Slater and Gordon's then General Manager in a letter to the Australian on 4th May, 2012.

Such confidentiality agreements have also been used to silence sick people at Tara gas field in Queensland, at Uranquinty gas fired power station in New South Wales, and at Wollar in the upper Hunter region in NSW for people affected by coal mining noise and vibration.

Knowledge of the harmful effects of environmental noise and the need for research is not new. A comprehensive report issued by the Federal Health Department in 2004 clearly highlighted both the range of health problems resulting from environmental noise, and the need for research across a range of different noise sources, and population groups, which the Waubra Foundation strongly supports.

The noise polluting industries and those who have helped to hide or deny the damage to health have no place in conducting such research, and must be kept at arms length from it.

The Waubra Foundation is currently working together with international and national independent researchers to develop the details of a comprehensive research project, based on our detailed field knowledge of the health and acoustic problems.

<https://www.wind-watch.org/news/2014/01/07/health-check-on-wind-power/>

<http://waubrafoundation.org.au/resources/dr-david-iser-2004-conducts-first-survey-patients-living-near-wind-project/>

<http://waubrafoundation.org.au/resources/senate-inquiry-social-economic-effect-rural-wind-farms/>

<http://waubrafoundation.org.au/2013/explicit-warning-notice/>

<http://waubrafoundation.org.au/resources/nhmrc-wind-turbines-health-rapid-review-evidence-july-2010/>

<http://waubrafoundation.org.au/resources/wind-farms-sound-health-victorian-dept-health-report/>

<http://waubrafoundation.org.au/resources/slatter-gordon-acknowledge-confidentiality-clauses/>

<http://waubrafoundation.org.au/resources/rich-land-waste-land-how-coal-killing-australia-sharyn-munro/>

<http://waubrafoundation.org.au/2013/report-tara-gas-field-health-survey-released/>

<http://waubrafoundation.org.au/resources/health-effects-environmental-noise-other-than-hearing-loss/>