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Victoria

Susan Pascoe AM,
Commissioner
Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission

Open Letter

via email; susan.pascoe@acnc.gov.au

8.2.2015

Dear Commissioner Pascoe,

I write to you regarding the removal and review of the charities status of the Waubra Foundation.

<http://stopthesethings.com/2015/01/31/top-canadian-energy-engineer-eric-jelinski-slams-the-great-wind-power-fraud/>

Extraction from the above post on the Stop These Things website by Mr. Eric Jelinski, P. Eng., a Canadian engineer specialising in energy production i.e. gas plants, nuclear plants, wind & solar energy.

"We also have the government using engineers from wind developers making recommendations on health impacts. As a P. Eng. I can say that engineers are not the authority on health. The conflict of interest between the engineer being paid for engineering work, vs. the same engineer as proponent and key advisor to the government is quite apparent. The set-back of 550 meters has no scientific basis. Noise from wind turbines has been measured up to 10 kilometres away in some locations... Medical doctors have noted the health impacts, yet they are being ignored by the Ontario government".

Engineers, CEO's, of wind developments in Australia make similar self-interested recommendations and define the boundaries of operations to the Government on health and noise impacts on people and environments near their turbines. We have the Greens Leader, Prof. Chapman, a sociologist, the Australian Medical Association, the Department of Health and the Minister of Health and including 21 clinics in South West Victoria making the same mistake dismissing concerns about wind farm health impacts. When Government bodies take the advice and recommendations from the wind industry rather than heed the warnings by GP's, Specialists and experts of evidence of ill-health and negative impacts experienced by residents being exposed to wind farm noise and vibration emissions something is very wrong in our society; started and maintained by wilful blindness and greed.

"Where there's hope, there's life. It fills us with fresh courage and makes us strong again." - Anne Frank

I don't mind if the Waubra Foundation has charity status or not, I'll donate time, money or support to them in any way I can for all the assistance they have freely and sensibly provided my family over the past four years. They give us hope. There is no question they deserve charity status and

government funding also, for the service and assistance they offer and provide to so many isolated rural families coping with no aid whatsoever the consequences from building these harmful energy industries too close to homes.

The service and assistance the Waubra Foundation team provides when no other is provided or available at all, is immeasurable and we are grateful to them.

The Waubra Foundation globally assists so many isolated rural people suffering the many and varied consequences from building this harmful industry, wind farms and turbines too close to homes. They assist by being an easily accessed source of information and reports; and advocate on behalf of the impacted by submissions and attendance at Inquiries into wind farms. They are dedicated in their efforts to assist when asked, by taking very distressed telephone calls, answering emails, writing letters and they work voluntarily entirely on our behalf so our experiences are validated and heard. We get off the phone grateful someone is out there who cares. We can access documents and information, previously unavailable. They hold valuable information that previously, would be lost, missing or inaccessible.

The Waubra Foundation give many hours of voluntary work to provide a community service to raise awareness of the public community health issues near wind farms and even in the face of denigration and dismissal of the industrial emissions impacting me and my neighbours and the many people in diverse 'noisy' situations around Australia.

When we feel unheard or misrepresented in the community, the Waubra Foundation are the voice of reason and support so lacking in our small communities either tied up with the industry or blinded by openly acknowledged company tactics used to manage community opposition. We impacted neighbours cope with no government aid, intervention or support whatsoever and this neglect is criminal by omission.

Apart from a few Senators and Acoustician and Experts and the Waubra Foundation absolutely dedicated to having our stories of utter misery heard, mostly, we are disgracefully ridiculed and dismissed as liars and nutters.

What I object to is the ruling based on the statement by ACNC Assistant Commissioner David Locke as follows.

"to date there has been no rigorous independent scientific evidence that finds that the ill health complained of is caused by the physiological effects from wind turbines nor that there are human diseases called "wind turbine syndrome" or 'vibroacoustic disease'".

The Cape Bridgewater Wind Farm has for 6 years been having detrimental effect on my family health and well being and has damaged the quality of our lives. The first couple of years I felt so intimidated, threatened and unsupported that I coped with the trauma quietly on my own. I actually wanted the wind farm to be a good thing for our community and suppressed the reality of the conditions by minimising and dismissing them myself, thinking that what I was experiencing was impossible and just didn't make sense according to the wind industry responses.

The truth is we are unable to adapt to the negative impacts nor able to live in our home because of the noise and vibration emissions from the wind farm that are amongst the worst rated in the world.

These industrial turbine emissions have been proven recently in an Acoustic study at Cape Bridgewater, Nov 2014, the first of its kind in the world with a collaborative effort between impacted residents, the wind farm operator and an independent acoustician.

See the findings of Steven Cooper's report: **The results of an acoustic testing program Cape Bridgewater wind farm** here: <http://www.pacifichydro.com.au/english/our-communities/communities/cape-bridgewater-acoustic-study-report/?language=en>

Dr Bob Thorne's report: **The perception and Effect of Wind Farm Noise at two Victorian wind farms, an objective assessment June 2012, rev-issued 2014** including at Cape Bridgewater and in my home.

Concluded from the results of this study:

'when exposed to wind farm noise and wind turbine generated air pressure variations, some will more likely than not be so affected that there is serious harm (also termed 'significant adverse effect) to health. By health it is meant the definition given by the World Health Organisation, "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity". Health refers not only to physiology functioning but also well-being, quality of life and amenity. By serious harm it is meant harm that is more than mere annoyance and that can be quantified in terms of reported illness, sleep disturbance and other effect. A measure of serious harm is if the exposed individual is adversely affected to the extent that he or she is obliged to remove themselves from exposure in order to mitigate harm.

Our home is so inundated with constant energy pulsations, even when the wind farm is turned off, (shut down turbines still vibrate in the wind), and I cannot live there in good health.

In May 2004 a document was released by EnHealth entitled: **The health effects of environmental noise – other than hearing loss**. Part of the executive summary advises:

'Strategic alliances with key sectors are also needed to advance necessary research on noise issues and advocate on behalf of sensitive groups within the population'.

It is a thorough document investigating the health impacts of noise on communities and should be looked at and taken into account when assessing the public health impacts of current industrial noise impacts.

Prior to the wind farm being built 800 meters from our house I enjoyed good health and a history of good health, with no constant episodes of very high or low blood pressure, headaches, earaches or pain etc.. No medications prescribed for sleep or pain, and no doctors advised me to take (never had need), or prescribed anxiety pills.

My family lived in 'the country' enjoying the peace and quiet and all the health benefits of a good lifestyle. That lifestyle has been destroyed by the presence of the wind farm. After spending time away from home within 30mins and less of being in the house, even when the turbines are 'quiet' and with quieter SE winds; I have a headache and within 4 hours aching ears, eyes etc. When the noise and vibration are at the extreme levels of nuisance the impacts are more extensive and torturous and leaving the house is the only option to finding relief from the symptoms currently described and grouped as 'wind turbine syndrome'.

The only advice I have received from the Department of Health has been to go see my GP with any problems. What do you do when most GP's follow the directives from above that there are no known health impacts from wind farms? What do you do when your GP's or Specialists advise you

to leave your home to restore good health? What do you do if GP's refer you to the wind farm company responsible for inflicting torturous conditions? What do you do when your home becomes unsellable due to the proximity of the wind farm? When you are disturbed frequently through the night, every night and day for years on end by a rumbling and vibration that could send you literally mad, what do you do? What do you do when you cannot afford legal advice?

There is no-one in the Government that can tell me the answer.

But my government agrees there are problems and agreed that proper testing should be conducted at the Cape Bridgewater Wind Farm to discover exactly what occurs acoustically there.

My government agrees that the proper and independent epidemiological health studies should be conducted as recommended in the Senate Inquiry of 2011. My government has not stopped or prevented the damage being done to my family and community but they have committed to doing the independent epidemiological health studies they recognise are required.

My own story makes me weep. The Waubra Foundation literally helps me and thousands of others survive the impacts of industrial noise and vibration and the sensations and health impacts experienced because they care. Lifeline and Beyond blue are good services for people, like myself, in dire need. They don't understand that getting out of the house in the countryside for a coffee is difficult when you live many kilometres from a coffee shop, or a cinema and lack nearby friends or neighbours whom aren't also impacted by symptoms described as 'wind turbine syndrome'.

The Waubra Foundation is the hub of support for those of us living in isolation, fear and in torturous conditions. They are acting and representing those whose stories make you weep.

Senator DiNatalie is right to question anyone's entitlement to charity status but he is wrong to dismiss the valid health complaints near industrial wind energy plants. He is wrong suggesting the nocebo nonsense explains what is occurring inside my home when he has never been near it and neither has he has the knowledge of my medical history to dismiss my symptoms. He is totally ignorant in the field of acoustics which is the key discipline in uncovering the cause and effect of our problems.

Avoid exposing the limitations of human thinking and please read the information provided on the Waubra Foundation website; the legal, professional and resident inputs and understand how vital their service is to educating and providing resources on the many aspects as they do.

Acknowledge and support the vital contribution the Waubra Foundation make to rural society in their work to defend the basic human right of (rural) people to sleep in their own homes. Deserving full recognition for it, restore the Charity Status to them as granted by the Australian Taxation Office.

Sincerely,

Melissa Ware.