

# Wind farm experts ‘not qualified’ to link turbines to health

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**ACOUSTICS experts who claimed a link existed between wind turbines and the health of some nearby residents at Cape Bridgewater in southwestern Victoria were not qualified to make the connection, wind farm operator Pacific Hydro said yesterday.**

Pacific Hydro said it had never accepted that a cause-and-effect link had been established between its wind farm and the health of some residents, despite years of complaints and the findings of a detailed investigation by acoustics expert Steven Cooper.

Mr Cooper will present the findings of his report — which ranked reported “sensations” experienced by six residents against the operation of the wind farm — to a special meeting in Cape Bridgewater tonight.

[Media Watch ‘just skimmed my report’](#)

The report has been praised internationally as a “first-of-its-kind test” by some of the world’s most respected and experienced acoustics experts, with firsthand knowledge of wind farm noise.

They said it was the first study of effects on people that included a co-operating wind farm operator in conjunction with a researcher who did not work exclusively for wind farms.

Pacific Hydro has been widely applauded for initiating the study to address residents’ complaints.

A peer review by Paul Schomer, the standards director of the Acoustical Society of America, and George Hessler, principal consultant for US acoustics specialist Hessler Associates, said that up until now, wind farm operators had said there were no known cause-and-effect relations between wind farm emissions and the response of nearby residents.

The Cooper research had established other pathways that affect people, such that the wind farm operator simply cannot say there is no known effect and no known people affected.

Pacific Hydro has declined to comment on the Schomer and Hessler peer review.

A spokesman for Pacific Hydro, Andrew Richards, said the report “was not a scientifically robust study, not a medical study and that no cause-and-effect relationship is demonstrated by the study”.

“We would also note that both Paul Schomer and Steven Cooper are acousticians, not medical professionals, nor have they been participants in medical studies on the subject, so (they) can’t possibly claim that wind turbines are harmful to health,” Mr Richards said.

A National Health and Medical Research Council statement issued last week said there was no consistent evidence that wind farms caused adverse health effects but further high-quality research was needed.

The Schomer peer review said “the results had been presented in a 218-page report augmented by 22 appendices spread over six volumes so that every single detail in the study has been documented for all to see and examine”.

“The methods and results are totally transparent,” the review said. Dr Schomer said “the very nature of a longitudinal study provides for a finding of cause and effect.”

View the original report at: <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/health-science/wind-farm-experts-not-qualified-to-link-turbines-to-health/story-e6frg8y6-1227220617654>