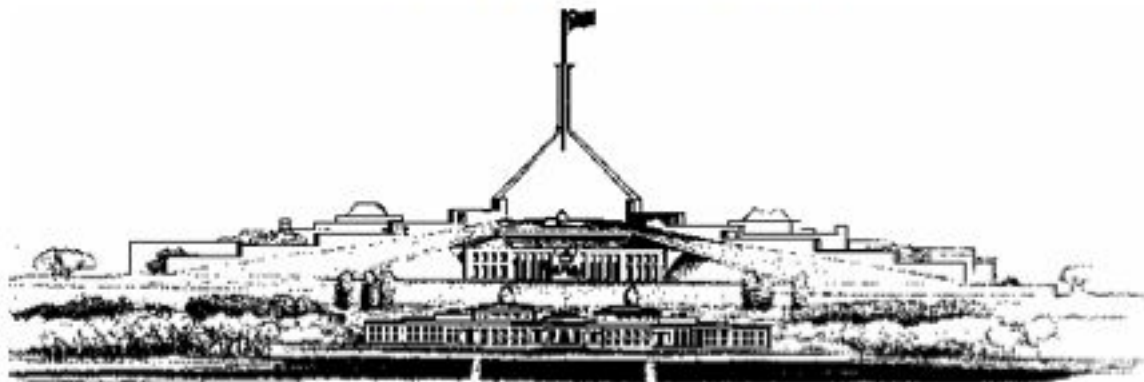




COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**PROOF**

**Federation Chamber**

**BILLS**

**Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2013-2014,  
Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2013-2014,  
Appropriation (Parliamentary  
Departments) Bill (No. 1) 2013-2014**

**Second Reading**

**SPEECH**

**Thursday, 30 May 2013**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

**Date** Thursday, 30 May 2013  
**Page** 100  
**Questioner**  
**Speaker** Schultz, Alby, MP

**Source** House  
**Proof** Yes  
**Responder**  
**Question No.**

**Mr SCHULTZ** (Hume) (11:48): I rise in this Appropriation Bill debate once again to make a contribution to the parliament in this Federation Chamber. I refer to a speech in February 2013 in this chamber, where I described the wind turbine industry as the biggest government sponsored fraud in the history of this country. Fraud is just the tip of the iceberg: the modus operandi of wind turbines is also centred around intimidation, manipulation of fact, character assassination, lies and cover up. This multi-headed industrial Hydra is aided and abetted in its plundering of the public purse by incompetent governments, friendly pro-wind bureaucrats and a variety of individual parasites living off the taxpayer pot-of-gold renewable-energy-certificate process. I might add that the Clean Energy Regulator's office agrees that if any company participating in the REC scheme intentionally offers false or misleading information to the regulator that this should be recognised as having defrauded the Commonwealth. Yet, because of the lack of due diligence by the Clean Energy Regulator itself, it has been complicit in distributing RECs to the value of \$80.6 million to the non-compliant Waubra wind farm in Victoria, in contravention of subsections 30E(3) and (4) of the Commonwealth Renewable Energy (Electricity) Act 2000, which it is required to abide by.

It does not stop there. Public safety is being compromised at a state and federal government level by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority and the New South Wales Rural Fire Service, which to date have ignored the warning signs of serious potential accidents caused by wind turbines during bushfires and normal aerial agricultural activities on farms. This refusal to act on serious safety issues raised by agricultural aircraft pilots is putting the lives of rural firefighters and aerial agricultural pilots at serious risk.

I now refer to an email to Premier O'Farrell, dated Tuesday, 30 April 2013, from Mr Jim Hutson of Crookwell, who has 55 years of aviation experience. The email refers to problems associated with the Gullen industrial wind turbine complex. It says:

I now call on 55 years of Aviation experience and I tell you that my considered opinion, if you allow the building and operation of those turbines, then this message along with my previous correspondence will be an exhibit at a coronial inquest.

CASA's inability to come to terms with the safety aspects of wind turbines, not for the want of trying. Pilots are not warned of the danger and I believe no one has ever been so complicit as to install them so close to an aerodrome. The wind direction on the day, with the turbulence and velocity deficit blowing across the landing approach and the take-off path.

The first thing a pilot will experience will be a sudden wing drop due to the rotating nature of the plume followed by an instant decrease in airspeed as he enters the plume resulting in an instant stall spin at minimum altitude.

The above extract speaks for itself.

Let me now acquaint the House with a number of comments from emails in my possession, which I will read and seek to table at the finish of this contribution. This disturbing refusal at a senior level of government and departmental level to even acknowledge the warnings from well-credentialed organisations and individuals is a damning indictment of the lack of due care for public safety. A Civil Aviation Safety Authority, or CASA, report submitted by experienced agricultural pilot Ted McIntosh reads as follows:

Date: 18-03-2013

Local time: 0730

State: NSW

Location: 9kms WNW of Gunning Wind Farm, Gunning NSW. Damage to aircraft: nil Most serious injury: nil

Summary:

Whilst on descent to my operating airstrip near Biala NSW, I suddenly experienced severe turbulence at about 500-600ft AGL. The wind at this time had been approx. 5-8 knots from the SE. After landing I ascertained that there was only a slight breeze at ground level. I suspected that the turbulence was caused by the wind turbines at the Gunning Wind Farm but was amazed that the effect could be felt 9kms away.

After the next take-off I confirmed that the turbulence was indeed caused by the turbines.

There are many fixed wing & helicopter aircraft which operate at or below 500 ft AGL legitimately from hundreds of airfields around Australia.

CASA & the Dept. of Infrastructure & Transport have released a study, the National Airports Safeguarding Framework Guidelines D (Wind Turbines) to protect major airports, but it should be apparent that the greater threat to air safety from wind turbine turbulence lies around country airports, both public & private, which threat CASA & the Dept of Infrastructure & Transport have glossed over or ignored.

Could the ATSB please investigate this report & the future ramifications of authorities ignoring it.

Let me now read the reply:

... we have no jurisdiction over strictures of this nature. The only advice I can offer is that as pilot in command you need to take any environmental conditions, including mechanical turbulence, into account when planning your flights. As the wind turbine may be causing turbulence you will need to plan your flight path carefully taking into account the turbulence that may be experienced downwind of these turbines.

CASA do not care about aerial agricultural safety, nor understand that crops need to be attended to where they lie and that turbines will render vast areas of the countryside as commercially unviable.

I now refer to the emails that I mentioned before. I will commence by reading from an email which was forwarded to the General Manager, Aviation Environment, Department of Infrastructure and Transport in Canberra. Mr Phil Hurst, the CEO of the Aerial Agriculture Association of Australia, wrote:

Hi Scott

Further to our previous discussions regarding windfarms and the likelihood of turbulence from them that may affect the safe operations of aerial application aircraft, I write to formally request that the Commonwealth commission or otherwise facilitate further research into the issue and the likely safety impact of wind turbines on legitimate low-level aircraft operations.

My renewed concern has been prompted by anecdotal evidence from pilots that they have experienced moderate to severe turbulence significant distances downwind from turbines (eg several kilometres). Obviously, if there are safety concerns from pilots due to their own experiences, it would make sense to at least conduct some research to see if these anecdotal reports are indicative of a more widespread threat to aviation safety. In addition, these experiences raise concerns as to lack of appropriate guidance for pilots in regards to advisory buffer distances that might be applied to operations around wind farms.

I also understand at least one windfarm developer is now selectively quoting from the meeting that you chaired regarding wind farm safety issues to try and claim that AAAA had no safety issues with wind turbines. I think you would certainly be aware that AAAA has consistently stated the safety case for better regulation of wind farm development as they pertain to aviation safety because of the clear safety impacts more hazards in aerial application treatment areas will create.

I note that the NASAG Guidelines (Guideline D.43) refer to the issue of turbulence from turbines and the lack of certainty regarding the size of the problem.

Of particular concern to AAAA is the potential impact longer distance turbulence from wind farms may have on existing and future agricultural / firefighting airstrips as well as operations that may require buffers to avoid turbulence. This is potentially a significant safety, operational and economic issue that warrants further investigation, independent research and perhaps monitoring.

Also of concern is the difficult situation this lack of research creates for existing land users and aviation companies in considering their responses to wind farm development proposals that could potentially have significant impacts on their businesses.

I would be happy to meet to discuss further our concerns, but have included links to a number of papers and websites as a starting point for further research and preferably real world monitoring to inform the development of an improved safety policy dealing with wind turbine turbulence and low-level aviation safety. I have included a CASA safety feature article on wake turbulence which I think is a legitimate concern for windfarms given the turbine blades act like aerofoils (which they are) and consequently will have tip vortices and significant displacement that could be considered commensurate with a heavy jet impact – which require specific safety responses from pilots and others.

There has been a response to that email, but time does not allow me to read it. However, I will table it. In fact, it is basically a fob off by the General Manager, Aviation Environment, Department of Infrastructure and Transport. It is a serious indication of the way in which people in CASA and other government agencies are ignoring the potential for pilots, ground crews and rural firefighters to be placed in serious danger. I will read one small extract from the information sent to me—and, incidentally, I have permission to table this:

I have similar concerns about wind monitoring towers at Adjungbilly and Gundagai—they are nearly impossible to see—it's just a matter of time before some agricultural aircraft hits one—there have been fatalities in the USA.

It is widely accepted that aerial firefighting is not available in the immediate vicinity of turbine clusters, therefore placing at risk many rural residents and townships, not to mention the lives of volunteer firefighters. Whilst New South Wales turbine developers enjoy exemptions from compliance with existing EPA legislation, including exemption from bushfire-prone-zone mitigation strategies and buffer zones, in the interests of public safety all exemptions should be removed and an immediate moratorium enacted until appropriate bushfire studies are commissioned and completed. Where is the New South Wales minister responsible for police and emergency services on this issue?

When I commenced this contribution to the debate today, I referred to the multi-headed Hydra and its sympathisers living off the taxpayers' pot of gold. I note with some interest that the Clean Energy Finance Corporation has confirmed that it is in active discussion regarding 50 projects, with a further 119 projects on the table. No names have yet been mentioned, but it does not take much imagination to work out who they might include. The great fear is that the CEFC will be used by Labor as a giant slush fund to mete out money on favourable terms to both its and the Greens' fellow travellers. None of this money should be deployed this side of the election. Pacific Hydro, which is wholly owned by the IFM Australian Infrastructure Fund, which is in turn wholly owned by Industry Super Holdings, under the strong influence of the unions. In the interests of transparency, it is incumbent on the CEFC and the government to confirm at the earliest possible opportunity whether Pacific Hydro is in the running to benefit from substantial concessional loans from the \$10 billion CEFC, which is to be funded by future generations of Australians with borrowed money.

I make the final point that we in this country are going through some very, very difficult times. We have created, through bad governance, a very significant pressure on the ability of future generations of Australians, let alone the older generation now, to cope with the day-to-day expenses that they are experiencing. I cannot for the life of me understand why any government or, indeed, any opposition could not yet have grasped the very, very serious issues centred around the wind turbine industry, what it is doing, unprofessionally, and, more importantly, how is wasting valuable taxpayer resources—in this case, about \$52 billion under the renewable energy target process.

Earlier, I mentioned the intimidation going on. I can assure you, Madam Deputy Speaker Vamvakinou, that different groups of people have tried to intimidate me. They got the usual response from me, and they have moved back. But I do not think that sort of behaviour is conducive to what we are trying to do in the environment today. I seek leave to table the document. (*Time expired*)

Leave granted.