



**Planning &
Infrastructure**



**Community Consultation
associated with
Compliance Audits of Cullerin Range,
Woodlawn and Capital Wind Farms
February 2013**

Cover Photograph: Cullerin Range Wind Farm

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Executive Summary

In response to a request from the Minister, the Department of Planning and Infrastructure recently undertook community consultation in association with compliance audits of wind farms located in Cullerin Range, Woodlawn and Capital. The compliance audits were undertaken to evaluate compliance of the wind farms with their respective approval conditions.

The consultation process involved:

- Providing information about the audits on the Department's website, including copies of the Minister's media releases, an explanation of the audits and a list of responses to frequently asked questions;
- Distributing 144 survey questionnaires to all land owners within a 4km radius of the wind farms;
- Conducting face-to-face meetings; and
- Reviewing responses to the surveys and reporting on the outcomes of the consultation.

This is the most extensive community consultation undertaken by the Department in association with compliance audits.

This report describes the community consultation process, summarises the responses to the community surveys and discusses the information provided to the Department in the surveys and face-to-face meetings.

A wide range of issues were raised by the community, some falling within the scope of the audits and others outside. Issues that fell within the scope of the audits were addressed by the audits. The remaining issues are addressed in this report.

The Department's analysis of responses identified two key issues:

1. Noise emissions and views expressed regarding impacts on the health and wellbeing of some community members; and
2. Community consultation by proponents before, during and after construction.

With regards to the impacts on the health and wellbeing of community members, the Department works to ensure wind farms comply with their conditions of consent, however acknowledges that some residents are concerned about impacts which may not be directly regulated by existing consents. The issue of low frequency noise, for example, is being addressed in the *Draft NSW Planning Guidelines: Wind Farms*, which aim to deliver improved consistency, transparency and rigour in the planning assessment process.

With regard to community consultation by proponents, this report considers the nature of consultation by proponents of major projects can have a significant effect on the level of community acceptance of a project, and concludes that community consultation at all stages of a project is critical for wind farm projects built within local communities.

The Department wishes to acknowledge those residents who engaged with the Department during this process, including those who responded to the community survey questionnaire and those who spoke candidly with the auditors about the wind farms.

The Compliance Audit Reports for Cullerin Range, Woodlawn and Capital wind farms are available at www.planning.nsw.gov.au.

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1 INTRODUCTION

In 2012, the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure conducted three compliance audits of the State's operational NSW government approved wind farms, all in southern NSW. The wind farms audited under this campaign were Cullerin Range, Woodlawn and Capital.

Due to significant community interest and concern about wind farming, the Department delivered a range of community consultation initiatives in association with the audits.

This report describes the community consultation methods undertaken, the means of delivery and engagement of community members, the issues raised by the community and how these issues were addressed by the Department under the audit process.

The compliance auditing process

For projects approved by the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, the Department is responsible for monitoring and enforcing the Minister's conditions of approval.

Compliance auditing is one of a number of methods used by the Department to monitor approval conditions. The Department's audits are carried out in accordance with established environmental auditing practice and standards.

Other compliance monitoring methods used by the Department include routine inspections, reviewing independent audits and reports provided by proponents, liaising with proponents, local and State agencies and local communities, and responding to complaints concerning potential non-compliance.

The Department's compliance activities are carried out in accordance with its Compliance Policy and associated guidelines, available on the Department's website.

2 WIND FARM COMPLIANCE AUDITS

2.1 Scope

In February 2012, the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure asked the Department of Planning and Infrastructure to commission independent compliance audits of the State's three government-approved wind farms currently in operation at, Cullerin Range, Woodlawn and Capital in southern NSW. A copy of the Minister's press release is provided at **Appendix A**.

Although previous investigations conducted by the Department have found these projects to be complying with their noise limits, the Department has continued to receive a number of noise complaints from nearby residents.

The purpose of the audits was to evaluate compliance of the wind farms with their respective approval, in particular with conditions relating to noise. As the audits were focussed on operational conditions, pre-operational conditions such as design and construction of the wind farms were outside the scope of the audits.

The Department engaged the services of a specialist, independent acoustical consultant to audit compliance with the noise criteria.

The audits also addressed compliance with other conditions relating to wind farm operation, including visual amenity, flora and fauna impacts, community contributions, shadow flicker and television reception.

2.2 Community consultation and the wind farm audits

A community consultation process was conducted in association with the compliance audits, the results of which are listed in **Table 2** of this report.

Matters raised which are within the scope of the audits were further addressed by the audits, and any issues outside the scope of the audits are further discussed in this report.

For example, some community members reported reduced television reception following construction of the wind farms. As proponents are required to assess television reception following commissioning of the wind farms, this is an operational matter **within** the scope of the audits. This matter was therefore addressed in the audits.

As a further example, a community member reported that sightseers are coming onto private property to look at the wind turbines. Trespassing by sightseers on private property is an issue **outside** the scope of the audits and is therefore discussed further in this report.

In addition, the auditors provided responses to all matters raised by community members during the face-to-face meetings.

3 THE COMMUNITY CONSULTATION PROCESS

3.1 Objective

The Department's objective was to consult with all residents who were potentially impacted by the three wind farms, to obtain information that was representative of the range of views within those communities.

3.2 Design

In order to encompass all those residences which may be directly impacted by the operation of the wind farms, the audit involved residents living within a 4km radius of the wind farms.

The primary means of communication utilised was through survey questionnaire mailed to each resident, with the auditors making themselves available for follow up meetings where requested by survey respondents. This was supplemented by providing the survey questionnaire online on the Department's website.

Alternate methods of consultation considered by the Department included public meetings, face-to-face meetings, seeking input via the internet and sending questionnaires to residents.

The Department considered that holding public meetings may have favoured those residents who were available to attend, had the strongest views, or were the most confident at public speaking. It was considered that face-to-face meetings with all residents would have been resource-intensive and would have involved interviewing people without strong interest in the issue. Further, the Department considered that a purely web-based approach would favour those with access to the internet and/or who were skilled in internet use.

This is the first occasion in which the Department has conducted such extensive community consultation associated with compliance auditing and the methodology may be useful for future audits of projects associated with significant public concern.

3.3 Implementation

3.3.1 *Information on Department's website*

Prior to commencement of the audits, the following information was provided on the Department's website to inform the community and proponents about the audit process:

- The Minister's media release announcing the wind farm audits;
- The Professional Services Brief for the acoustic specialist;
- A Frequently Asked Questions fact sheet;
- Copies of the letters sent to the proponents advising them of the audit; and
- Copies of each of the surveys that were sent to residents within 4 km of a turbine.

3.3.2 *Survey questionnaires*

The survey questionnaires directly related to compliance with the conditions of approval relating to wind farm operation consistent with the scope of the compliance audits.

Whilst the approvals for all three wind farms are similar, there are some differences in detail between their respective conditions, and a separate questionnaire was therefore prepared for each of the three catchments, to reflect the specific conditions of approval for each wind farm. The questionnaire was also accompanied by a copy of the relevant conditions of approval.

The questionnaires addressed operational aspects including noise, visual amenity, flora and fauna, shadow flicker and telecommunication reception. Respondents were able to provide additional comments in response to each question or to make general comments. Respondents were also able to indicate if they wished to have follow-up meetings with the auditors.

Prior to distribution, the surveys were reviewed by the Department, and wind farm operators were also given an opportunity to review the draft surveys.

Copies of the final three survey questionnaires are provided at **Appendix B**. These documents include summary statistics of the responses received.

3.3.3 *Distribution of survey questionnaires*

A total of 144 survey questionnaires were mailed out in collaboration with Upper Lachlan, Palerang and Goulburn-Mulwaree Council, including 17 for Cullerin Range, 49 for Woodlawn and 78 for Capital.

3.3.4 *Face-to-face meetings*

The Department's auditors arranged to meet with all those survey respondents who requested a meeting.

The Department conducted 4 meetings with residents in respect of Cullerin Range, 2 meetings with residents in respect of Woodlawn and 16 meetings with residents in respect of Capital. In addition, 4 meetings were held with residents in respect of Woodlawn and Capital combined.

It is noted that one of the residents arranged for their noise consultants to be present for the face-to-face meeting.

4 COMMUNITY RESPONSES

4.1 Survey questionnaire responses

A total of 58 survey responses were received by the Department, 40% of surveys initially mailed out. Of the responses received, 11 were in respect of Cullerin Range, 12 in respect of Woodlawn and 35 in respect of Capital. A summary of the survey responses is provided at **Table 1**.

Table 1: Analysis of survey responses

Wind Farm	Number of surveys distributed	Number of surveys returned	Percentage returned
Cullerin Range	17	11	65
Woodlawn	49	12	24
Capital	78	35	45
Total	144	58	40

Of the responses received, the response data in respect of each question was entered into a “master” survey for each wind farm and copies of these data summaries are provided at **Appendix B**.

An analysis of the survey data found that respondents appeared to be fairly evenly divided in terms of those who considered they were being negatively impacted by the wind farms and those who considered they were not impacted or impacted to a degree that wasn’t a concern.

4.2 Issues raised by residents

Members of the community raised a number of issues directly related to compliance with conditions of approval, however a considerable number of issues were also raised that were outside the scope of the audits. A summary of the issues raised by residents is provided in **Table 2**.

4.3 Issues addressed by the audits

Issues raised by community members that were addressed by the audits are identified in Column 4 of **Table 2** and fall into the following categories:

- Noise from turbines and substation;
- Off site landscaping;
- Television and radio interference;
- Public safety from turbine operation;
- Complaints management;
- Bird and bat monitoring;
- Community contributions

Full detail on these issues is provided in the Department’s Compliance Audit Reports for each individual wind farm.

4.4 Additional issues further discussed in this report

Those issues raised by community members that are outside the scope of the audits are indicated in Column 5 of **Table 2** and fall into the following categories:

- Health and wellbeing;
- Proponent consultation with residents;
- Off-site landscaping;
- Animals and livestock;
- Property values;
- Public safety;
- Water and air quality;
- Turbine relocation during EA process;
- Aircraft movements;
- Turbine stability under severe weather;
- Structural design and certification of turbine towers;
- Shadow flicker and light flicker;
- Lighting;
- Traffic and property access

4.4.1 **Health and wellbeing**

A number of residents reported that since commencement of the wind farms, they had suffered from discomfort and a range of other medical conditions, which they attributed to the wind farms. Whilst sympathetic to the concerns expressed, the auditors were not in a position to verify these claims.

It is noted, however, that the issue of low frequency noise is being further addressed in the *Draft NSW Planning Guidelines: Wind Farms*, which aim to deliver improved consistency, transparency and rigour in the planning assessment process.

4.4.2 **Proponent consultation with residents**

Some residents reported dissatisfaction with the consultation by one of the proponents during environmental assessment and post approval. In particular, a number of residents indicated that following the environmental assessment they were of the understanding the turbines would not be audible at their residences.

Concern was further expressed that statements in one of the proponent's written responses to submissions on the environmental assessment (the Submissions Report) supported such a view. The auditors' review of the Submissions Report found a number of statements including:

52: "...there will be no annoying noise impact on neighbouring residents."

53: "The distance to neighbouring residences is more than adequate to prevent any noise nuisance."

65: "In short, there is no noise impact."

69: "...the development will comply with the SA noise guidelines and will not impact upon neighbouring residents."

71: "...there will be no detectable noise from the wind farm."

Notwithstanding the above statements, the auditors wish to clarify that the wind farms operating in compliance with the approved noise limits would be audible at some residential premises under certain conditions. Attended monitoring conducted during the compliance audits confirmed that turbines operating in compliance with the noise limits remained audible at some monitoring locations.

It is, however, important for all proponents to treat their local communities with respect and provide open, honest and factual information during project formulation, at the environmental assessment stage and at all times thereafter. Effective consultation is recognised as a key component of wind farm proposals and is further addressed in the *Draft NSW Planning Guidelines: Wind Farms*.

4.4.3 Off-site landscaping

Complaints from some residents related to extended times for negotiating landscaping agreements or dissatisfaction with the landscaping provided by the proponent. Other comments related to the small size of plants used in some of the landscaping.

The auditors raised these concerns with the proponents and were advised that in some cases negotiations had been lengthy because of residents seeking additional landscape treatments such as sheds and verandas. In all cases the proponents advised that all agreed landscaping would be completed.

With regard to plant size, the proponents advised the auditors that the landscaping consultants had recommended the use of tube stock to provide more effective screening over time as plants from larger pots tend to be pot bound which results in reduced plant growth.

4.4.4 Animals and livestock

A number of community members advised the auditors they run horses on their properties with some also operating equestrian based businesses. These community members indicated their horses have been, and continue to be, spooked by the turbines. These concerns have not been verified by the auditors.

Local enquiries by the Department with a veterinary surgeon who specialised in equine matters found the surgeon had no knowledge or experience of horses acting in this manner.

A number of community members advised the auditors that since the construction of the wind farms, ewes had abandoned newborns more frequently than before the wind farms appeared. The auditors were also unable to verify these statements.

Again, a veterinary surgeon local to Capital and Woodlawn had no knowledge of behavioural or medical issues with livestock near wind turbines.

4.4.5 Property values

A number of residents alleged that property values had fallen since the wind farms were constructed. This matter, being outside the scope of the auditors, was not further investigated by the auditors; however it was found to have been considered during the assessment of the wind farm projects.

4.4.6 Water and air quality

One resident claimed that the local creek had silted up during construction of the wind farm and remains silted up. Also that dust levels were elevated during construction.

A resident also alleged that dust from the local road had increased due to extra traffic relating to wind farm use and the road not having been sealed. The Department raised this issue with the wind farm proponent who advised Council would be sealing a further section of the road in question shortly.

4.4.7 Relocated turbine positions following public exhibition

One resident raised a concern that the turbines had been relocated from the positions described in the Environmental Assessment without further consultation.

For wind farm proposals, the Department's exhibition of project applications may include options for turbine locations with final locations determined following community and other stakeholder input.

Following consideration of submissions, the proponent proposed some minor alterations to the turbine layout however these alterations were not considered to be a significant enough change to warrant further public exhibition.

4.4.8 Aircraft movements

One resident expressed concern that their use of a private airfield had been curtailed by the construction of one of the wind farms. This issue was discussed with the resident during a face-to-face meeting and further investigated. The issue was found to have been addressed by the Department and the proponent during the Environmental Assessment for the project, and reported comprehensively in the Director General's report on the project assessment.

4.4.9 Turbine stability under severe weather

One resident expressed concern that the turbine may not have been designed to withstand strong winds, such as tornadoes, in the area. This issue was discussed with the resident during a face-to-face meeting and further investigated. The issue was also found to have been addressed in the environmental assessment of the project, with the Director General's Report indicating that all structures need to be designed to relevant standards (in this case the Building Code of Australia) and that the Department was satisfied re measures were in place to ensure turbine design would adequately take account of such conditions.

4.4.10 Structural design and certification of turbine towers

One resident expressed concern about whether the structural integrity of the turbine structures had been properly certified. Again, this issue was discussed with the resident during a face-to-face meeting and further investigated. As above, the issue was also found to have been addressed in the environmental assessment of the project, with the Director General's Report indicating that all structures needed to be designed to relevant standards (in this case the Building Code of Australia) and that the Department was satisfied there were measures in place to ensure turbine design would adequately take account of such conditions.

4.4.11 Shadow flicker and light flicker

Some residents were concerned about shadow flicker (when the turbine blades are between the sun and a residential property when the sun is low in the sky). Other residents expressed concern about light flicker when the sun reflects off the turbine blades towards a residence. When these issues were discussed with residents it appeared that the incidence of shadow flicker and light flicker were all below the number of hours per year for these phenomena that were considered acceptable by the Department's assessment of the wind farm projects.

4.4.12 Traffic and property access

Some residents were concerned that traffic had increased in the area due to visits to the wind farms by school groups, tourists, staff, etc. and that some sightseers were coming onto properties to view and photograph turbines. These issues were discussed with residents at face-to-face meetings and whilst the Department is mindful of the concerns expressed, residents who have ongoing concerns about traffic or trespassing are encouraged to further discuss those concerns with the wind farm operators and the relevant local council.

4.4.13 Summary of further actions by the Department

Whilst a number of the above issues of concern to residents were found to have been addressed during the environmental assessment of the wind farm proposals, the feedback from residents during this community consultation initiative has been valuable to the Department for future environmental assessments of wind farm proposals and post approval compliance monitoring.

The Department's initiatives in these areas include the following:

- Production of the *Draft NSW Planning Guidelines: Wind Farms* which address concerns including high quality community engagement by wind farm proponents during the project formulation and environmental assessment stages and the addressing of low frequency noise emissions from wind farm operation;
- Reviewing approval conditions used by the Department to ensure consistency of requirements across the wind farm sector and enforceability of conditions;
- Increased post approval compliance monitoring and enforcement capacity within the Department; and
- Ongoing engagement with communities including investigation of concerns raised in respect of approved projects.

Table 2: Views expressed during community consultation
(CR= Cullerin Range; W= Woodlawn; C=Capital)

Topic	View expressed	Applicable wind farm	Addressed in audit	Addressed in this report
Noise amenity	Noise is worst when the wind is at the height of the turbines and little or no wind at the receiver locations and when wind is very strong	C	✓	
	Sometimes a “thumping” noise can be heard from the turbines	C	✓	
	Noise is annoying outside but OK inside	C	✓	
	A “hum” can be heard from the substation depending on wind direction, and is louder in higher winds	C	✓	
	The noise is constant and can’t be escaped from	All		✓
	Turbines noisy at a property 7km away			✓
Visual amenity	The turbines are an eyesore	All		✓
Off-site landscaping	Landscaping not completed satisfactorily	CR, C		✓
	Agreement on a landscaping plan took too long	C	✓	
	Planted trees are too small and will take too long to shield view of turbines	C, W		✓
Proponent consultation with residents	Lack of adequate consultation from proponent during and after approval	C		✓
	Proponent has little consideration for residents	C, W		✓
	Proponent told residents they wouldn’t hear the turbines	C		✓
	No feedback provided by proponent between the proposed turbine locations and final locations	W		✓
	Noise monitoring done on the property on request, but monitoring results not provided	W		✓
	Wind Farm operator good to deal with and most helpful	CR		✓
Animals and livestock	Horses are spooked by the turbines	All		✓
	Concerned that ewes have abandoned newborns following construction of the wind farm	CR		✓
	Lost higher number of calves following construction of the wind farm – now have to rotate cattle through paddock near turbines	CR		✓

Topic	View expressed	Applicable wind farm	Addressed in audit	Addressed in this report
Property values	Property has devalued since wind farm installed	All		✓
Television/radio interference	Reduced TV reception and lost radio reception since wind farm installed	All	✓	
	New TV antenna installed by wind farm but has lost reception from Canberra	C	✓	
Health and wellbeing	Can't sleep at night and wake up in a panic – sleep better when staying away	CR, C		✓
	Sleep deprivation has caused medical issues	CR, C		✓
	The house vibrates from the operation of the turbines causing sleep disturbance and anxiety	C		✓
	Concerned about raised blood pressure, dizzy spells and ulcers	CR		✓
	Feeling of pressure in the body when turbines running – affecting balance	CR, C, W		✓
	The wind farm has destroyed the family business	C		✓
	Concerned that the wind farm may have contributed to other illnesses	CR, C		✓
Aircraft movements	Concerned that turbines have inhibited aircraft movements and led to the shutdown of a local airstrip	CR		✓
Structural integrity and public safety	Turbulence from wind turbines upsets stability of aircraft	CR		✓
	Concerned about turbine failure under tornado conditions	CR		✓
	Concerned about geotechnical stability of turbines constructed in an area subject to disused mine shafts	CR	✓	
	Concerned about the risk of fire in a turbine resulting from "overspin"	CR		✓
	Concerned about ice from blades falling on traffic	CR	✓	
	Setback from main road appears inadequate	CR		✓
Shadow flicker and light flicker	Shadow flicker at morning or evening during some parts of the year and most of the day at some locations	All		✓
Complaints management	Light reflects off the blades	CR		✓
	Difficult to find the 24-hour hotline	C, W	✓	
	Have submitted many complaints and they are not all responded to	C	✓	

Topic	View expressed	Applicable wind farm	Addressed in audit	Addressed in this report
Flora and fauna	Concerned about bird strike – seen diminishing numbers of birds of prey and bats	All	✓	
	Heard that 6 or 7 wedge tailed eagles killed	CR	✓	
	Results of operator's bird and bat surveys never provided	C	✓	
Water and air quality	Local creek silted up during construction and dust levels were elevated	C		✓
	Creek has remained siltier since construction	C		✓
	Dust due to road not having been sealed	C		✓
Community contributions	Concern over council's alleged use of community contributions on a single project	CR	✓	
Environmental Assessment	Concern over separation distance between turbines	CR		✓
	Concern over turbine fatigue resulting from turbine shudder	CR		✓
	Concern that structural certification of turbines is from manufacturer and not independent; also concerned structural integrity not independently checked during the Department's assessment	CR		✓
	Proponent's response to public submissions incorrectly states the turbines will not be heard	C		✓
	There was no opportunity to comment on relocated turbine positions during assessment process	W		✓
Lighting	Lights at night when maintenance carried out on nacelles	C		✓
Economic benefit	Proponent uses local services and staff use local businesses providing economic benefit to local communities			✓
Community perception survey	Was not contacted as part of the recent ' <i>Research Report to Community perceptions of wind farms</i> ' conducted by QDOS (dated May 2012).	C, W		✓
Traffic	Traffic has increased in area due to visitors to the wind farm such as school excursions, tourists, staff etc.	C, W		✓
Access to private property	Sightseers are coming onto private property to look at, and photograph, turbines	C, W		✓

5 CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Methodology

The Department's methodology for this consultation process included publicising the wind farm audits in the media, provision of information on the Department's website, survey questionnaires and face-to-face meetings with the auditors.

The general feedback from residents has been positive, particularly for being given the opportunity to meet with the auditors and discuss their concerns. Even residents who were critical still expressed appreciation for the opportunity to meet with the auditors.

5.2 Key issues raised by residents

The Department's analysis of responses identified the two key issues as:

- Noise emissions and concerns expressed regarding impacts on the health and wellbeing of some community members; and
- Community consultation by proponents before, during and after construction.

With regard to concerns about impacts on health and wellbeing, reports by some residents of a wide range of impacts caused by wind farms were noted but no conclusions can be drawn from this project.

The Department acknowledges the need for ongoing monitoring to ensure wind farms comply with their noise-related conditions of consent, however also acknowledges that some reported impacts may be due to a range of issues not directly regulated by existing consents. The issue of low frequency noise, for example, is being addressed in the *Draft NSW Planning Guidelines: Wind Farms*, which aim to deliver improved consistency, transparency and rigour in the planning assessment process.

With regard to community consultation by proponents, this report considers the nature of consultation by proponents of major projects can have a significant effect on the level of community acceptance of a project and concludes that community consultation at all stages of a project is critical where wind farm projects are built within local communities, particularly in the project formulation stage.

5.3 Ongoing engagement with communities

The Department wishes to acknowledge those residents who engaged with the Department during this process, including those who responded to the community survey questionnaire and those who spoke candidly with the auditors about the wind farms.

The Department welcomes information from the community concerning potential breaches of consent. Any suspected breaches brought to the Department's attention are assessed in accordance with the Department's Compliance Policy and further addressed if they fall within the Department's area of responsibility.

APPENDIX A: Minister's announcement of wind farm audits

20 February 2012

INDEPENDENT WIND FARM NOISE AUDIT ANNOUNCED

The NSW Government will commission an independent noise audit of three wind farms to ensure they are meeting their approval conditions, Minister for Planning and Infrastructure Brad Hazzard said today.

"I asked the Department of Planning and Infrastructure to undertake this audit, following continued resident complaints about noise issues," Mr Hazzard said.

The audit will cover the Capital, Cullerin Range and Woodlawn wind farms in southern NSW, which are the State's three operational NSW Government approved wind farms.

"Although investigations conducted by the Department to date have found the wind farms are complying with noise limits, the Department is continuing to receive noise complaints from nearby residents," Mr Hazzard said.

"To address this, the NSW Government will engage an independent, specialist noise consultant to determine the issue.

"The audit will also provide information on low-frequency noise from these wind farms to provide input into the finalisation of Statewide wind farm guidelines."

Mr Hazzard said the Department's compliance unit will also assess other issues covered in consent conditions, including visual amenity, flora and fauna impacts, blade flicker, community contributions and electromagnetic interference.

The final audit reports will be made publicly available on the Department's website at www.planning.nsw.gov.au

Key stakeholders will be consulted as part of the audit including residents, local councils, the Environment Protection Authority and wind farm proponents.

"The audit process will include a questionnaire, meetings and a public information line. It is expected to begin this month and take until August to complete," Mr Hazzard said.

"Wind farms will play an important part in the State's energy future. However, it is important the community has confidence these installations are operating in line with their consent conditions and they are not diminishing a local community's lifestyle."

APPENDIX B: Survey questionnaires summaries of responses

Summary of responses

Community Survey

Cullerin Range Wind Farm Compliance

Of the seventeen (17) surveys forwarded to residents living within 4 km of a Cullerin Range wind farm turbine, eleven (11) were returned; a response rate of 65%.

Two surveys were received for one dwelling. While the feedback/comments provided in both surveys were taken into consideration, the two responses were considered as a single submission for the property.

The summarised responses are indicated under each survey question below. Note that not all questions were answered in every survey response; hence the number of responses to each question may not total eleven.

Distance from wind turbine

1A. How far away is the closest wind turbine belonging to Cullerin Range Wind Farm from your dwelling?	Less than 1 km	Between 1 km and 2km	Between 2 km and 3 km	Between 3 km and 4 km	Not sure	Not provided
Number of responses	1	6	1	1	1	1

It was noted that one respondent's dwelling was located further from a turbine than indicated in their survey response. The respondent's indication of 1 to 2 km may have applied to the property boundary rather than the dwelling, which is located approximately 2.4 km's from the nearest turbine.

1B.

Is your property host to one of the turbines for the wind farm (please circle)?

YES **NO**

2	9
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1C.

How many years/months have you lived at this address?

Less than 12 months	1 to 4 years	5 to 9 years	10 to 14 years	15 years and over	Not provided
Number of responses		1		8	2

Operational Noise (Conditions 35, 36, 37, 41, 42, 44 & 46)**2A.****Do you hear noise from the wind farm turbines (please circle)?**

YES NO No response or N/A

7	2	2
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	Nil	Lowest						Highest			
2B. If you hear noise from the wind farm turbines during the <u>day</u> (i.e. between 7.00 am and 10.00 pm), are you satisfied there is no interruption or distraction or would you say there is a degree of interruption or distraction? Please rate from 0 (no distraction/interruption) to 10 (highest) (please circle)?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Number of responses	3					2		1			2

	Nil	Lowest						Highest			
2C. If you hear noise from the wind farm turbines during the <u>night</u> (i.e. between 10.00 pm and 7.00 am), are you satisfied there is no interruption or distraction or would you say there is a degree of interruption or distraction? Please rate from 0 (no distraction/interruption) to 10 (highest) (please circle)?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Number of responses	3					1	1	1			2

2D. How would you characterise the 'noisiness' of the wind farm turbines (please circle)?	Nil	Low	Moderate	High
Number of responses	3*	2	3	1

*One respondent advised greater noise audible from the highway.

	No Impact	Negligible Impact	Neutral	Minor Impact	High Impact
2E. If you hear noise from the wind farm turbines does it have any impact on your <u>day time activities</u> ?	1	2	3	4	5
Number of responses	3		1	3	1
2F. If you hear noise from the wind farm turbines does it have any impact on your <u>night time activities</u> ?	1	2	3	4	5
Number of responses	3		1	3	1

2G. If you hear noise from the wind farm turbines does it have any impact on your sleeping patterns?	1	2	3	4	5
Number of responses	3		2	1	2

2H. Have you felt the need to contact the wind farm operator to discuss measures to reduce noise at your residence?

YES	NO	No response or N/A
2	7	2

2I. Did the wind farm operator propose measures to reduce noise from the wind farm at your residence?

YES	NO
1	6

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Unsatisfied	Very unsatisfied	No response or N/A
2J. If you accepted any measures, were you satisfied with the measures implemented at your property?	1	2	3	4	5	
Number of responses					1	10

Air Quality (condition 74)

	No Impact	Negligible Impact	Neutral	Minor Impact	High Impact
3. Has dust from the wind farm site impacted on your property since the turbines commenced operation?	1	2	3	4	5
Number of responses	9	1			1

Flora and Fauna (Conditions 62 and 99(a))

4. Do you have any evidence of the wind turbines impacting on birds or animals (for example, evidence that bats, birds or other animals have been struck by turbine blades) or any other impacts on flora or fauna?

YES

NO

2	9
Evidence (if ticked yes)	
1. One stated former Origin employee advised 6 wedge tailed eagles killed	
2. No evidence provided	

Community Information and Consultation (Conditions 88, 90, 92 and 93)

5A. Have you requested documents from the wind farm operator relevant to the approval?

YES

NO

6	5
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5B. If you requested documents, were they provided to you satisfactorily?

YES

NO

No response or N/A

3	2	6
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5C. Are you aware that there is a 24-hour telephone number, postal and email address for complaints?

YES

NO

4	7	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Unsatisfied	Very unsatisfied	No response or N/A
5D. If you have made a complaint were you satisfied that your complaint was followed up by the proponent?		1	2	3	4	5	
Number of responses		1	1			3	6
5E. Were you satisfied by the way your complaint was handled?		1	2	3	4	5	

<i>Number of responses</i>		2			3	6
5F. Are you satisfied that the wind farm operator has taken steps to inform you of activities at the wind farm site that may impact you?		1	2	3	4	5
<i>Number of responses</i>	1	1	2		2	5

Visual Amenity (Conditions 21-23 and 99(d))

6A. Are any wind turbines visible from your residential dwelling?

YES **NO** **No response or N/A**

8	2	1
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6B. Have you requested measures to minimise the visual impacts of wind turbines at your property?

YES **NO**

3	8
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6C. Has the wind farm operator notified you about the On-Site Landscape Sub Plan to minimise the visual impact of the wind farm at your residence?

YES NO No response or N/A

7	2	2
---	---	---

6D. Have you accepted an offer from the wind farm operator to minimise the visual impact at your property?

YES NO

5	6
---	---

If you answered NO to 6D please proceed to question 7A.

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Unsatisfied	Very unsatisfied	No response or N/A
6E. Are you satisfied with the measures implemented to minimise the visual impact at your property?	1	2	3	4	5	
Number of responses	1	1		2	1	6
6F. Are you satisfied with the landscaping completed on the wind farm site?	1	2	3	4	5	
Number of responses	2	1			2	6

Aviation (condition 69)

5.3.1.1 Please answer the following two questions if you have aircraft used in association with your property.

7A.

Has the operation of the wind farm impacted on any local aircraft movements associated with your property?

YES NO No response or N/A

2	5	4
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7B.

If you answered yes to 7A above, has the wind farm operator adequately dealt with the impacts caused?

YES

NO

	2
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Television and Radio Communication Interference (Condition 77 – 79)

8A. Have you experienced television or radio interference associated with the operation of the wind farm.

YES

NO

No response or N/A

6	4	1
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If you answered no please proceed to question 9A.

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Unsatisfied	Very unsatisfied
8B. Are you satisfied that the wind farm operator has installed suitable measures to restore your television and/or radio reception.	1	2	3	4	5
Number of responses	2	1			3*

* One respondent did not answer question 8A however answered question 8B.

Shadow Flicker (Condition 27)

9A. Does your residence experience shadow flicker at any time during the year (please circle)?

YES

NO

3	8
If yes, where?	
Residence – 0	
On farm - 2	
No location provided - 1	

If you answered no please proceed to question 10A.

9B. Have you contacted the wind farm operator to discuss measures to reduce shadow flicker at your residence?

YES

NO

No response or N/A

	2	1
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9C. Did the wind farm operator propose measures to reduce shadow flicker from the wind farm turbines at your residence?

YES NO No response or N/A

	2	1
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	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Unsatisfied	Very unsatisfied	No response or N/A
9D. If you accepted any measures, were you satisfied with the measures implemented at your property?	1	2	3	4	5	
Number of responses						3

Traffic and Transport (Conditions 48 and 57)

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Unsatisfied	Very unsatisfied	No response or N/A
10A. Are you satisfied that heavy vehicles associated with the project only use the Hume Highway, Lerida Road North and the portion of the Old Hume Highway (Cullerin Road) between Lerida Road North and the site access point?	1	2	3	4	5	
Number of responses	3	2	4		1	1
10B. Are you satisfied with any works done to rectify any damage caused by heavy vehicles that used the roads during construction?	1	2	3	4	5	
Number of responses	3	3	2		1	2

Waste Management (condition 76)

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Unsatisfied	Very unsatisfied	No response or N/A
11A. Are you satisfied that waste generated from the wind farm site is managed well?	1	2	3	4	5	
Number of responses	3	2	3			3

Summary of responses

Community Survey

Woodlawn Wind Farm Compliance

Of the 49 surveys forwarded to residents living within 4 km of a Woodlawn wind farm turbine, 12 were returned; a response rate of 24%.

The summarised responses are indicated under each survey question below. Note that not all questions were answered in every survey response; hence the number of responses to each question may not total 12.

Distance from wind turbine

1A. How far away is the closest wind turbine belonging to Cullerain Range Wind Farm from your dwelling?	Less than 1 km	Between 1 km and 2km	Between 2 km and 3 km	Between 3 km and 4 km	Not sure	Not provided
Number of responses		3	4	5		

1B.

Is your property host to one of the turbines for the wind farm (please circle)?

YES **NO**

1 11

1C.

How many years/months have you lived at this address?

Less than 12 months	1 to 4 years	5 to 9 years	10 to 14 years	15 years and over	Not provided
<i>Number of responses</i>	2		2	8	

Operational Noise (Conditions 49, 50, 51, 55 & 56)

2A.

Do you hear noise from the wind farm turbines (please circle)?

YES **NO** **No response or N/A**

5 **4[#]** **3***

- One respondent stated they are deaf

* - One respondent stated they could hear the wind farm in the right weather conditions however they could not hear the wind farm inside the house.

	Nil	Lowest					Highest				
2B. If you hear noise from the wind farm turbines during the <u>day</u> (i.e. between 7.00 am and 10.00 pm), are you satisfied there is no interruption or distraction or would you say there is a degree of interruption or distraction? Please rate from 0 (no distraction/interruption) to 10 (highest) (please circle)?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Number of responses	4	2						1			2

	Nil	Lowest					Highest				
2C. If you hear noise from the wind farm turbines during the <u>night</u> (i.e. between 10.00 pm and 7.00 am), are you satisfied there is no interruption or distraction or would you say there is a degree of interruption or distraction? Please rate from 0 (no distraction/interruption) to 10 (highest) (please circle)?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Number of responses	4	2				1	1				2

2D. How would you characterise the 'noisiness' of the wind farm turbines (please circle)?	Nil	Low	Moderate	High
Number of responses	3	2	1	4

	No Impact	Negligible Impact	Neutral	Minor Impact	High Impact
2E. If you hear noise from the wind farm turbines does it have any impact on your <u>day</u> time activities?					
Number of responses	6			2	2
2F. If you hear noise from the wind farm turbines does it have any impact on your <u>night</u> time activities?					
Number of responses	6		1	1	2
2G. If you hear noise from the wind farm turbines does it have any impact on your sleeping patterns?					
Number of responses	5		1	2	1

2H. Have you felt the need to contact the wind farm operator to discuss measures to reduce noise at your residence?

YES **NO** **No response or N/A**

2 **10**

21. Did the wind farm operator propose measures to reduce noise from the wind farm at your residence?

YES **NO**

11

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Unsatisfied	Very unsatisfied	No response or N/A
2J. If you accepted any measures, were you satisfied with the measures implemented at your property?	1	2	3	4	5	
Number of responses					1	10

Air Quality (condition 25)

	No Impact	Negligible Impact	Neutral	Minor Impact	High Impact
3. Has dust from the wind farm site impacted on your property since the turbines commenced operation?	1	2	3	4	5
Number of responses	9	1	1	1	

Flora and Fauna (Conditions 35, 37 and 38)

4. Do you have any evidence of the wind turbines impacting on birds or animals (for example, evidence that bats, birds or other animals have been struck by turbine blades) or any other impacts on flora or fauna?

YES

NO

2[#]*	9
<i>Evidence (if ticked yes)</i>	
# - One respondent advised they witnessed an eagle being hit by a turbine	
* - One respondent advised bird and bat numbers have decreased	

Community Information and Consultation (Conditions 41, 44 and 45)

5A. Have you requested documents from the wind farm operator relevant to the approval?

YES **NO**

2	10
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5B. If you requested documents, were they provided to you satisfactorily?

YES **NO** **No response or N/A**

1	2	9
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5C. Are you aware that there is a 24-hour telephone number, postal and email address for complaints?

YES **NO**

4	8						
		Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Unsatisfied	Very unsatisfied	No response or N/A
5D. If you have made a complaint were you satisfied that your complaint was followed up by the proponent?		1	2	3	4	5	
Number of responses		1				2	5*
5E. Were you satisfied by the way your complaint was handled?		1	2	3	4	5	
Number of responses						2	5
5F. Are you satisfied that the wind farm operator has taken steps to inform you of activities at the wind farm site that may impact you?		1	2	3	4	5	
Number of responses		2	1			2	2

Visual Amenity (Conditions 40 and 46)

6A. Are any wind turbines visible from your residential dwelling?

YES

NO

No response or N/A

11	1*	
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** - While they provided a 'No' response, one respondent advised the turbines are visible from the drive.*

6B. Have you requested measures to minimise the visual impacts of wind turbines at your property?

YES NO

4	8
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6C. Has the wind farm operator notified you about the On-Site Landscape Sub Plan to minimise the visual impact of the wind farm at your residence?

YES NO No response or N/A

9	3	
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6D. Have you accepted an offer from the wind farm operator to minimise the visual impact at your property?

YES NO

4	8*
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* - One respondent stated they did not apply due to having missed the deadline.

If you answered NO to 6D please proceed to question 7A.

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Unsatisfied	Very unsatisfied	No response or N/A
6E. Are you satisfied with the measures implemented to minimise the visual impact at your property?	1	2	3	4	5	
Number of responses	3*	1	2	1	1	4 [#]
6F. Are you satisfied with the landscaping completed on the wind farm site?	1	2	3	4	5	
Number of responses	2		3		1	3

- One respondent indicated they did not accept the offer however they were happy with the measures that were implemented.
 * - One respondent stated their property is subject to a Conservation Agreement and therefore they were not in a position to be able to accept landscaping.

Aviation (condition 62)

5.3.1.2 Please answer the following two questions if you have aircraft used in association with your property.

7A.

Has the operation of the wind farm impacted on any local aircraft movements associated with your property?

YES

NO

No response or N/A

	8	4
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7B.

If you answered yes to 7A above, has the wind farm operator adequately dealt with the impacts caused?

YES

NO

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Television and Radio Communication Interference (Condition 68 – 71)

8A. Have you experienced television or radio interference associated with the operation of the wind farm.

YES

NO

No response or N/A

9#*	3	
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- Two respondents indicated their reception was subject to interference however they acknowledged they could not confirm the cause of the interference.

* - One respondent advised they had not contacted the wind farm operator for assistance as only free to air was affected and the respondent used Austar.

If you answered no please proceed to question 9A.

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Unsatisfied	Very unsatisfied
8B. Are you satisfied that the wind farm operator has installed suitable measures to restore your television and/or radio reception.	1	2	3	4	5
Number of responses	2			2	

Waste Management (condition 73)

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Unsatisfied	Very unsatisfied	No response or N/A
11A. Are you satisfied that waste generated from the wind farm site is managed well?	1	2	3	4	5	
Number of responses	3	3	2	1*		3

* - One respondent stated they are uninformed but assumed the operator was doing the wrong thing.

Summary of responses

Community Survey

Capital Wind Farm Compliance

Of the 78 surveys forwarded to residents living within 4 km of a Capital wind farm turbine, 35 were returned; a response rate of 45%.

The summarised responses are indicated under each survey question below. Note that not all questions were answered in every survey response; hence the number of responses to each question may not total 35.

One response received from a resident of Bungendore, outside the 4 km zone, was not included in these results.

Distance from wind turbine

1A. How far away is the closest wind turbine belonging to Capital Wind Farm from your dwelling?	Less than 1 km	Between 1 km and 2km	Between 2 km and 3 km	Between 3 km and 4 km	Not sure	Not provided
Number of responses	5	15	3	5		1

It was noted by the auditors during the site inspection that some respondent's dwellings appeared to be located further away than indicated.

1B.

Is your property host to one of the turbines for the wind farm (please circle)?

YES **NO**

7 27

1C.

How many years/months have you lived at this address?

Less than 12 months	1 to 4 years	5 to 9 years	10 to 14 years	15 years and over	Not provided
1	4	3	7	19	

Operational Noise (Conditions 53, 54, 55, 59 & 60)

2A.

Do you hear noise from the wind farm turbines (please circle)?

YES NO No response or N/A

27	7	
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	Nil	Lowest						Highest			
2B. If you hear noise from the wind farm turbines during the <u>day</u> (i.e. between 7.00 am and 10.00 pm), are you satisfied there is no interruption or distraction or would you say there is a degree of interruption or distraction? Please rate from 0 (no distraction/interruption) to 10 (highest) (please circle)?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Number of responses	13	2			1	2	2	1	1	3	6

	Nil	Lowest						Highest			
2C. If you hear noise from the wind farm turbines during the <u>night</u> (i.e. between 10.00 pm and 7.00 am), are you satisfied there is no interruption or distraction or would you say there is a degree of interruption or distraction? Please rate from 0 (no distraction/interruption) to 10 (highest) (please circle)?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Number of responses	13	2			1	2				4	9

2D. How would you characterise the 'noisiness' of the wind farm turbines (please circle)?	Nil	Low	Moderate	High
Number of responses	6	11	4	11

	No Impact	Negligible Impact	Neutral	Minor Impact	High Impact
2E. If you hear noise from the wind farm turbines does it have any impact on your <u>day time activities</u> ?	1	2	3	4	5
Number of responses	16		1	7	8*
2F. If you hear noise from the wind farm turbines does it have any impact on your <u>night time activities</u> ?	1	2	3	4	5
Number of responses	15	1	1	3	12

2G. If you hear noise from the wind farm turbines does it have any impact on your sleeping patterns?	1	2	3	4	5
Number of responses	16[#]		2	2	11

* = One respondent advised they are deaf however they have been advised the turbines are noisy.
 # = One respondent stated they can hear traffic from the highway which is 7 km's away.

2H. Have you felt the need to contact the wind farm operator to discuss measures to reduce noise at your residence?

YES	NO	No response or N/A
12	21	1

2I. Did the wind farm operator propose measures to reduce noise from the wind farm at your residence?

YES	NO
2	26

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Unsatisfied	Very unsatisfied	No response or N/A
2J. If you accepted any measures, were you satisfied with the measures implemented at your property?	1	2	3	4	5	
Number of responses		1		1	2	30*#+

* = One respondent stated noise monitoring had been undertaken at their property however the results were not made available (including upon request)

= One respondent stated no contact number had been provided.

+ = One respondent stated landscaping had been proposed for their property however they declined the offer as they preferred the views of the turbines.

Air Quality (condition 23)

	No Impact	Negligible Impact	Neutral	Minor Impact	High Impact	No response
3. Has dust from the wind farm site impacted on your property since the turbines commenced operation?	1	2	3	4	5	
Number of responses	24	2	4		3[#]	1

= One respondent did not clarify the nature of the alleged impact.

Flora and Fauna (Conditions 32 and 34)

4. Do you have any evidence of the wind turbines impacting on birds or animals (for example, evidence that bats, birds or other animals have been struck by turbine blades) or any other impacts on flora or fauna?

YES	NO	COMMENT PROVIDED	NO RESPONSE
3^>	26	3#*+@	2
Evidence (if ticked yes)			
<p>^ = One respondent just stated 'bats'</p> <p>> = One respondent stated horse spooked by turbines</p> <p># = One respondent stated access to the sites are not available however many birds have been killed (auditors note: no actual evidence provided)</p> <p>* = One respondent advised there is no access to the turbine locations</p> <p>+ = Three respondents stated there appeared to be a decrease in fauna numbers</p> <p>@ = One respondent advised there are more deer than before the wind farm.</p>			

Community Information and Consultation (Conditions 37, 40 and 41)

5A. Have you requested documents from the wind farm operator relevant to the approval?

YES	NO	No response or N/A
13	20	1

5B. If you requested documents, were they provided to you satisfactorily?

YES	NO	No response or N/A
6	7	21

5C. Are you aware that there is a 24-hour telephone number, postal and email address for complaints?

YES	NO	No response or N/A
11	22	1
	Very satisfied	Satisfied Neutral Unsatisfied Very unsatisfied No response or N/A
5D. If you have made a complaint were you satisfied that your complaint was followed up by the proponent?	1	2 3 4 5
Number of responses	2	3 2 7 20

5E. Were you satisfied by the way your complaint was handled?	1	2	3	4	5	
Number of responses	2		3	2	6	21
5F. Are you satisfied that the wind farm operator has taken steps to inform you of activities at the wind farm site that may impact you?	1	2	3	4	5	
Number of responses	6	4	3		8	13

Visual Amenity (Conditions 42, 43, 44 and 45)

6A. Are any wind turbines visible from your residential dwelling?

YES NO No response or N/A

32	2	
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6B. Have you requested measures to minimise the visual impacts of wind turbines at your property?

YES NO

15	19	
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6C. Has the wind farm operator notified you about the Off-Site Landscape Sub Plan to minimise the visual impact of the wind farm at your residence?

YES NO No response or N/A

19	12	3
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6D. Have you accepted an offer from the wind farm operator to minimise the visual impact at your property?

YES NO No response or N/A

16	16	2
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If you answered NO to 6D please proceed to question 7A.

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Unsatisfied	Very unsatisfied	No response or N/A
6E. Are you satisfied with the measures implemented to minimise the visual impact at your property?	1	2	3	4	5	
Number of responses	3	3	1	7	5	15
6F. Are you satisfied with the landscaping completed on the wind farm site?	1	2	3	4	5	
Number of responses	3		5	3	3	20

Aviation (condition 68)

5.3.1.3 Please answer the following two questions if you have aircraft used in association with your property.

7A.

Has the operation of the wind farm impacted on any local aircraft movements associated with your property?

YES

NO

No response or N/A

2[#]*

20

12⁺

= One respondent stated aircraft now fly closer to their dwelling

* = One respondent stated aircraft noise is louder now

+ = One respondent (host) stated aerial spraying by helicopter has not been affected.

7B.

If you answered yes to 7A above, has the wind farm operator adequately dealt with the impacts caused?

YES

NO

2

Television and Radio Communication Interference (Condition 72 – 75)

8A. Have you experienced television or radio interference associated with the operation of the wind farm.

YES

NO

No response or N/A

17

12

5[#]

= One respondent did not provide an answer to 8A however they provided a response for 8B.

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Unsatisfied	Very unsatisfied
8B. Are you satisfied that the wind farm operator has installed suitable measures to restore your television and/or radio reception.	1	2	3	4	5
Number of responses	4	4	2	3	5
# = One respondent stated there was no follow up by the proponent					