

457 Eckersleys Road,
PENSHURST, Vic. 3289

3rd May 2015

Dear Senators,

We wish to make a supplementary submission to the Senate Inquiry, further to our initial submission of 17th March 2015, as there is additional information which we feel is of utmost importance to this Inquiry.

1 REDUCTION of BAT POPULATION due to IMPACT OF TURBINES at
MACARTHUR WIND FARM

The Macarthur wind farm is directly under the flight path of the Southern bent-wing bat, between caves at Tower Hill near Warrnambool, and caves at Naracoorte in South Australia. During the Planning Panel for the Macarthur wind farm in 2006, we expressed our sincere concern for this species but this was ignored, and in fact denied by the supposed "expert witnesses" appearing before the panel.

Unfortunately, since the commencement of the 140 turbines at the Macarthur wind farm in October 2012 we and others living in the vicinity of the wind farm, have noticed a severe reduction in the number of bats on our properties. We used to see them in the sheds, but sadly no longer do we see evidence of any bats.

The AGL bat and avifauna report of 2013, of which you all have a copy, reports that there has not been any evidence of bat carcasses found by the once monthly collection of dead birds etc.

Of course no bat carcasses would have been collected, as the lungs of the poor little bats EXPLODE due to pressure, and their carcasses disintegrate in a very short amount of time, so with monthly collections, there would be NO evidence of bat kill.

The AGL Bat and Avifauna report was carried out by Dr. Matthew Wood, of Australian Ecological Research Services in Portland, Victoria.

Dr. Wood recommended to increase the frequency of carcass search to WEEKLY rather than every FOUR weeks, as he informs that most carcasses are removed by scavengers within ONE week.

I'm not aware of AGL having accepted this recommendation, nor the Victorian government having enforced such.. On 22nd September 2014 I initially wrote to the Mayor of Moyne Shire (this Shire being the Responsible Authority for enforcing permit conditions for the Macarthur wind farm) and he responded informing me AGL's bat and avifauna report was with Dept. of Environment, Planning and Infrastructure, and he wouldn't be acting upon such

until DEPI had responded to the Shire. Since then I have written a further five requests (unanswered) to the CEO of Moyne Shire, and finally on 10th April 2015, I was given the courtesy of a reply. This was as follows "Council is still working with DELWP regarding the reports submitted by AGL regarding bats and avifauna". Of course DEPI is now the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning. Matthew Wood's report undertaken for AGL was from March, 2013 to February, 2014, that is OVER TWELVE MONTHS AGO. In the meantime, the massive SLAUGHTER of bats and birds, (no doubt in particular raptors, such as Wedgies which we also no longer see, after 34 years of regular sightings) is allowed to continue.....

This autumn we have had the most severe cricket infestation we've experienced in the thirty-five years we've lived here.

We wonder if this immense cricket problem – crickets eat every new blade of grass which germinates – can be attributed, in part, perhaps a very large part, to the destruction of the southern bent-wing bat population by the turbines at the Macarthur wind farm, right alongside our property. After all, bats eat crickets, and if the bat population has been decimated by the turbines, then there is nothing to eat the crickets, as they have for the past 35 years, and years and years before we arrived here.

So with one of the driest seasons on record here (no spring and hardly any autumn rains) perhaps we can attribute this bat infestation in plague proportions, also in part, to the Macarthur wind farm - yet another enormous cost to our severely suffering business, due to this industrial development on our boundary.

2 DISPLACEMENT of BREEDING PAIRS of BROLGAS due to TURBINES at MACARTHUR WIND FARM

Our next issue which is of great concern to the residents in this Macarthur district, is the threat to the brolga population. The AGL bat/avifauna report, of which Senators have a copy, in addition to Hamish Cumming's interpretation of such, indicates that whilst the wind turbines, as yet, have not chopped brolgas (not observed as yet with four weekly carcass search, that is,) they have definitely DISPLACED breeding brolga pairs. It has been established that brolgas enter the wind farm to feed far less regularly, once the turbines are operating above 16% capacity. Hence the brolgas are literally not feeding and will waste away, therefore not mating/not breeding, due to lack of nutrition.

On our property, since we purchased here in 1980, we have regularly seen and heard brolgas, in the early morning and late evening when they return to the large manmade wetland in the middle of the wind farm, on the property Moyne Falls, the property which hosts at least 80 turbines. At dawn and dusk we regularly heard the distinct call of the brolga, a wonderful experience, but NO LONGER. We also frequently observed a pair of brolgas feeding on our property, whether it just be in the paddocks, or whether it be on the trails where we've fed our sheep with grain. Brolgas are territorial, but sadly, after all these years of annual visits by these magnificent birds, once they've returned to the district around April for their breeding season, they just don't not return here any more, after the same pair feeding and breeding here for more than 30 years. The Senators will observe (in our initial submission) magnificent photographs taken by the Herald Sun photographer, of brolgas feeding on our property, amongst our sheep.

At a Brolga Recovery Group meeting on Sunday 26th April 2015, in Lismore, Victoria, it was determined that DNA testing on brolgas in this district should proceed. This DNA testing is to determine if there is any relationship between the brolgas in south-west Victoria and south-east South Australia, and the Sarus Crane in northern Australia.

I have been informed that the Glenelg Nature Trust is facilitating and collecting for the DNA project.

It will have a board or steering committee of which two Brolga Recovery Group members will be on, as well as CMA (Catchment Management Authority) representatives.

If the project does show that the SOUTHERN BROLGA is a separate species, or a genetically different sub species, then they will go through the process to have the Status of the SOUTHERN BROLGA raised to CRITICALLY ENDANGERED, because the fact that there are only about 200 breeding pairs left, will mean it is near extinction, and will become EXTINCT if nothing is done to protect its habitat. There is a certain level, and obviously it is around 200 breeding pairs, under which brolgas will become extinct.

The threat of wind farms killing Brolgas, as shown in Texas studies on cranes, and displacing breeding pairs from nest sites, as shown has occurred n AGL's Macarthur wind farm Post Completion Studies, should be enough for State and Federal governments to exclude wind farms from any Brolga breeding and flocking areas, and home range areas should be given a buffer of at least 6 kilometres from Macarthur wind farm-size turbines.

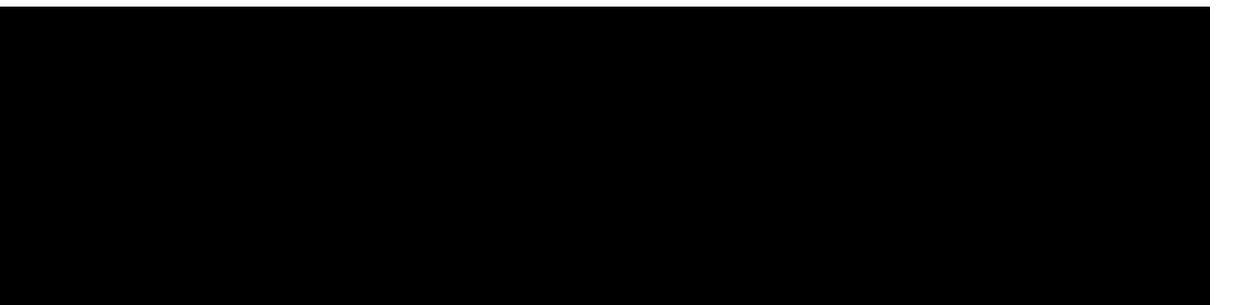
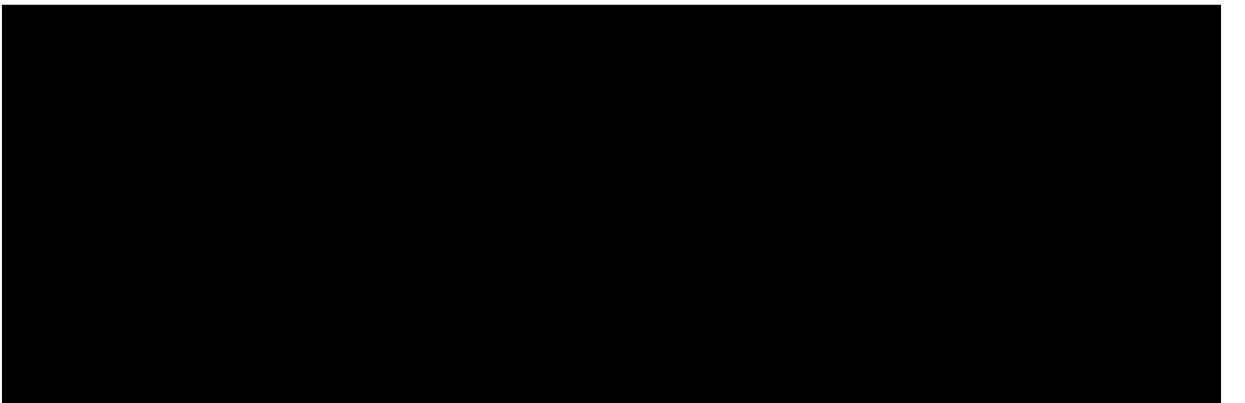
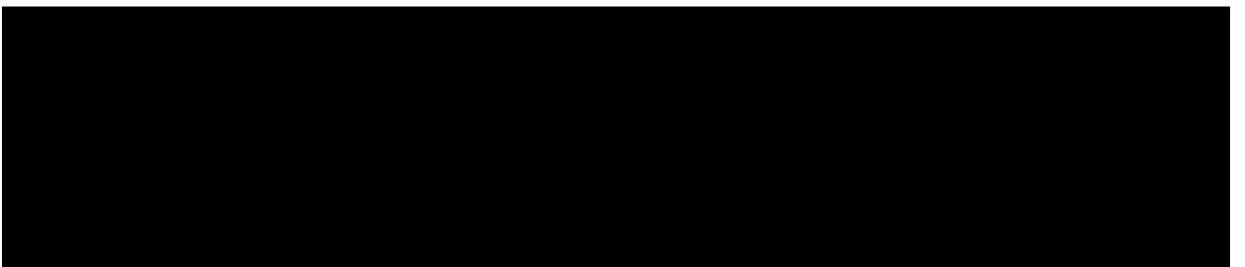
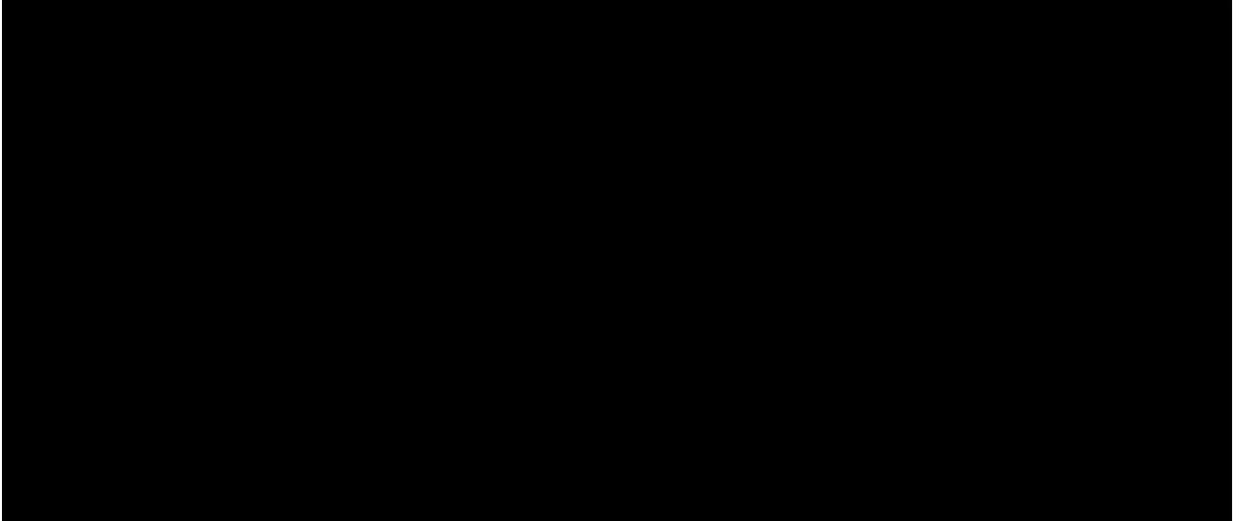
3. TURBINE HOSTS MOVING AWAY from their properties on which the 140 turbines are sited at the Macarthur Wind Farm.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



With thanks once again for your attention to our plight, and the opportunity to give evidence at the

hearing at Portland on 30th March 2015.

ANN and ANDREW GARDNER