



Dr Ian Holland
Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Dr Holland

Re: submission to the Inquiry into the *Renewable Energy (Electricity) Amendment (Excessive Noise from Wind Farms) Bill 2012*

NHMRC wishes to respond to comments made about NHMRC by the Waubra Foundation in their submission to the Inquiry regarding the NHMRC Public Statement and Rapid Review (2010).

The Waubra Foundation has stated that “the Australian Government’s National Health and Medical Research Council are still standing by their Public Statement of(2009) and Rapid Review (2010)”.

We take this to imply that we should not stand by it.

I am concerned therefore, that the Foundation may misunderstand the nature of NHMRC Publications. We issue many statements, guidelines and other documents each year. They are all dated to show when they were issued. However, health and scientific research around the world is continuous, with new publications appearing each year. We therefore review the research for our documents on a periodic basis and re-issue statements and guidelines with new dates after reviews are completed.

We are currently in the process of doing this with our Public Statement on the possible health effect of wind farms. We have commissioned an independent systematic review of the scientific literature to consider published peer reviewed publications, Government reports and emerging evidence submitted by the public, on the potential impact of wind farms on human health.

In 2009, on the basis of the research evidence at that time, we concluded that:

- there is currently insufficient published scientific evidence to positively link wind turbines with adverse health effects;
- relevant authorities should take a precautionary approach; and
- people who believe they are experiencing any health problems should consult their GP promptly.

Any new statement will be based on all the evidence since then, to time of closure of our new literature review.

Following NHMRC consultation and clearance processes, the final systematic review and a new Public Statement are expected to be released to the public in mid-2013.

In short, we stand by our view that the 2010 statement accurately reflected the situation at the time of the review of the literature. Our Statement next year will reflect the evidence to this new date.

Yours sincerely

Professor Warwick Anderson AM
Chief Executive Officer

12 November 2012