

Impact of Renewable Energy Zones (REZ) on rural and regional communities and industries in New South Wales –

Emma Bowman, Dunedoo – Answers to Supplementary Questions

(1) Can you elaborate on the social/community impact of the Renewable Energy Zones and associated projects, particularly with regards to the relationships and connections with neighbouring farmers.

The social/community impacts of the Renewable Energy Zones and associated projects are varied, far reaching and, in some cases, irreparable. Broadly, large scale renewable energy infrastructure projects are causing division, stress and tension – fracturing once generally cohesive and cooperative communities and families.

While farmers, like everyone else, are human and do not always get along with everyone, there is generally cooperation between farming neighbours and communities. These relationships are often generational adding another layer to their depth and complexity. Tough times, natural disasters and devastating events are what brings rural communities together and often makes them shine – the generosity, selflessness and compassion that is shown during these times is hard to understand and even more difficult to explain. Without this tight knit volunteerism, the hard times would be much more difficult to weather and rural and regional NSW and Australia would not be as productive or strong. What we have seen eventuate following the influx of renewable energy developers, and NSW Government authorities, into our region has been the fragmentation of these relationships. We have witnessed neighbour pitted against neighbour, brother against brother, friend against friend, father against son and/or daughter, and industry against industry.

It has become an accepted practice within the renewable energy development industry that prospecting for potential wind and solar project sites is kept “on the down low” – need to know basis only. This is proven by the expectation that “host” landowners sign non-disclosure agreements early in the piece. This adds to division as it is preventing discussions between “hosts” and neighbouring landowners or members of the general public.

During early “consultation” for the CWO REZ transmission project landowners in one region (Cassilis) were told by EnergyCo “employees” that landowners in another region (Birriwa/Dunedoo) were “all on board”. There are also renewable energy developer staff telling landowners that others have signed the next stage agreement when that wasn’t accurate.

I believe there are countless stories of deceit and disingenuous tactics used to “get landowners on board”. Divide and conquer has been on display at all times! And, in the case of transmission, where compulsory acquisition is on the table, landowners have been reminded of that at every opportunity – “just remember, if you don’t agree we will compulsorily acquire the easement”; if that is not coercion, I don’t know what is? Yet we hear the narrative that 90% of landowners have signed a negotiated agreement. What we don’t hear is that they had a metaphorical gun to the head.

Without community cohesion and cooperation rural and regional areas will not function to the best of their ability. As mentioned, we rely on volunteers for almost everything in the regions – from junior sports to the local agricultural society, the School P & C to the Lions Club and the Rural Fire Service. What happens when Mr Smith and Mr Jones, who have both been pillars of the community for years, and volunteer on multiple committees, can no longer be in the same vicinity as one another? What happens when a young couple, who have been volunteering on every committee where their children are involved, no longer want to go to town because it is too stressful for them? What will happen when these projects are built and people move away from the area – our volunteer numbers will be ravaged and we will lose essential services due to funding cuts? What happens when the next catastrophic bushfire event scorches the region, or drought takes hold – who will farmers and small business owners lean on for support?

(2) Has the proliferation of energy developers in the area had an adverse impact on property values, and if so how has this impacted agri-business viability?

Personally, I cannot evidence a decrease in my property value at this time. I believe the full impact on property values will not be evidenced until construction, and/or operation, of some of the large scale renewable energy infrastructure projects in the Dunedoo district.

A property near Wellington that neighbours a wind project (Bodangora) has been on the market for more than 6 months. The property was passed in at Auction in October 2024, no bids were offered and has had, to my knowledge, very little interest since that time.

<https://raywhiterichardsonandsinclair.com.au/properties/rural/nsw/wellington-2820/mixed-farming/3154348>

While there could be multiple reasons this property has not sold it is my belief that neighbouring the Bodangora Wind project is one of the major ones. Maybe the Committee could contact the selling agent and enquire as to their opinion? How many inspections were carried out prior to the auction? What feedback did they hear from the potential buyers?

If property values are impacted negatively by the encroachment of industrial developments in rural areas there is a possibility that some businesses who rely on backing from a financial institution (which a lot of farm businesses do) will end up financially unviable due to a lack of equity. What happens when your land is suddenly not worth enough to provide security over your loan? This will mainly impact family farming enterprises as opposed to corporate type businesses.

(3) If landholders are forced to leave the area due to these zones and associated projects, what would be some of the socioeconomic impacts on the community from your perspective?

As discussed above seeing landowners leave the district will greatly impact the community from a volunteer perspective – rural and regional communities only thrive where there is an active and engaged volunteer base.

We will also lose skilled workers – many landowners are also professionals. Maybe a husband runs the farm and his wife works as a teacher or a nurse in the local town? Or maybe the wife runs the farm full time and her husband does part time work as a builder, plumber or agronomist? Maybe the property is smaller so both partners work in town in the hospitality or customer service industry?

Rural towns, especially the smaller ones, prosper when the agricultural industry is thriving. If landowners are lost, and agricultural productivity slips local businesses, eg. rural merchandise stores and the local supermarket and pub/clubs, will also lose income creating flow on effects to the local community.

(4) Do you believe there is a significant power imbalance with regards to landholders responding to renewable energy projects?

YES! Communities and landowners impacted by large scale renewable energy infrastructure projects, transmission especially given it is classed as Critical State Significant Infrastructure (CSSI), are generally steamrolled during the “consultation” and “engagement” phases of the planning process regardless of the validity of their concerns.

As evidenced in my submission there are countless examples of potential negative impacts raised and “brushed off” or intentionally ignored due to the inability of the developer or Government authority to respond. Unfortunately for landowners and community members the planning process does not require these issues to be solved, or even acceptably mitigated, prior to approval, then construction and operation. The “rapid transition to renewable energy” is overpowering rural and regional communities

and industries without appropriate and genuine consideration of the potential negative impacts and their bearing on the future of agriculture and Australia's ability to feed and clothe itself – not to mention being able to keep the lights on.

Any studies carried out as part of the planning process are paid for by developers or Government authorities – landowners have long raised concerns about contamination of soil and water (just an example) as a result of large scale renewable energy infrastructure yet there is no allowance for these studies to be undertaken and made publicly available. There are also concerns about potential impacts to the health and productivity of farm animals yet we haven't seen any research into those issues. While landowners could potentially commission studies and assessments themselves the cost is prohibitive – that is not a problem for a multi-million-dollar international company. Finding a consultant to carry out that work that does not have a conflict of interest (ie. also works for renewable energy developers) is another issue entirely.

We, landowners, are also facing the issue of using our volunteer time to research, comprehend and respond to developments – some only one, others multiple (consider the time it takes to get your head around 50 plus projects in the CWO REZ alone!). The CWO REZ transmission EIS documents totalled thousands of pages, all which are meant to be digested and responded to within 28 days (then extended to 42 for that project after community backlash) – imagine the toll that is taking on mental health, family relationships, small businesses, agriculture and productivity, and then times it by 10 or 20!!! And it all seems to be in vain – what changes have been made to accommodate our concerns? What support is available for those attempting to protect their homes, lives, families, businesses, communities and regions? Developer and Government staff are often trained for their role (unlike the jack of all trade farmers and community volunteers) and paid handsomely to undertake the position – if that isn't imbalance I don't know what is?!?

(5) Can you elaborate on concerns regarding local road impacts from these developments outside of the concerns expressed regarding major highways like the Golden Highway?

Local roads can generally be described as quiet, rural roads – obviously some are more heavily utilised than others, and some still maintained as dirt roads whereas others are sealed. The CWO REZ transmission traffic and transport technical paper states that most local roads are classified as “bidirectional two-lane road (one lane in each direction) 100km/h (rural speed limit)”. Local roads were also allocated a lane capacity of 1,000 vehicles per hour per lane (vph/l) (that is equal to one vehicle every half second – 33 vehicles every minute) even though current peak traffic levels per hour on those counted were from 6 to 27 vehicles per hour (one vehicle every 2 to 10 minutes). I believe the classification of local roads was massively overstated to allow the increase in traffic to be deemed negligible – not impacting local landowners and community members. 1,000 vehicles per hour per lane would soon see our local roads destroyed!

Birriwa Bus Route South (pictured below) is an example of one such local road. This is a single lane road on which you would be in grave danger driving at 100km/hr!!



Tucklan Road – another local, rural road running south of Dunedoo (some sealed, some gravel) (another road classified as “bidirectional two-lane road (one lane in each direction) 100km/h (rural speed limit)” and capable of carrying 1,000 vehicles per hour per lane) was said to have a construction peak hour movement threshold of 50 vehicles per hour. The current traffic volume when the document was published was 6 vehicles per hour. I think everyone can imagine what eight times the traffic per hour (733% increase!) will do to our local roads.

The concerns around local roads are not limited to the road surfaces themselves – what about the safety of local road users (including school buses), CWCT pushbike riders, landowners crossing livestock across roads and the livestock themselves, the environmental impacts of tree removal for road upgrades, congestion causing delays - the potential for increased road rage and risk taking, impacts that road accidents have on other private infrastructure like fences and the potential for increase in incidents resulting in the need of volunteer emergency services (especially given many of the employees/contractors will not be familiar with the roads and driving to the conditions)?

(6) Do you believe proper consideration has been given to safety concerns around local school bus routes along many of these roads?

No. Many developers and EnergyCo have stated their projects will not have any negative impacts during school bus run times yet I believe, even despite potential best efforts, there will be impacts to the safety of school bus routes. We all know projects do not always run exactly to schedule, and given there will be multiple projects under construction and in operation concurrently, I believe there is the potential for detrimental impacts to the safety of all road users, including those that operate school buses and their passengers.

(7) In your view, what have been the most significant benefits — if any — from hosting renewable infrastructure on your land or in your area?

At this stage there are not a lot of large scale renewable energy infrastructure projects that have been constructed in the local area. Whilst Wellington is not my local community I have noticed a one specific thing since the solar and wind projects have been constructed and in operation.

One of the major roads to Wellington from the North is Saxa Road. Saxa Road was closed in October 2022 due to flood damage at the Comobella causeway. It has recently (in early June 2025) reopened to through traffic after construction of a new bridge. Wellington has been hosting large scale renewable energy projects for almost a decade yet the community, and region, is still suffering from the impacts of below standard infrastructure and extended timeframes for repairs. Where are the benefits??

The following was posted on the CWO REZist Inc. facebook page on September 21st, 2023.

Dubbo Regional Council threaten ratepayers: accept industrialisation by energy developers or your roads will never be fixed.

"Last week residents of Gollan had Dubbo Regional Council threaten to not repair their roads or causeways if they do not accept Squadron Energy's Spicers Creek Wind Farm proposal.

Squadron Energy is still to respond to Gollan community following submissions on the wind farm project. 83% of submissions objected to the proposal.

Select Gollan residents received an email last week from Council indicating they are holding a meeting with Squadron representatives to discuss the funds that will flow to council from the project. The meeting is to be held at Gollan community hall this Friday, 22 September.

Upon receiving a copy of the Council email from a neighbour, one Gollan resident phoned the council to discuss the planned meeting. The council spokesperson told the resident the project was going ahead and 'there was plenty of land out there so they didn't know what the issue was. If the project was not accepted by locals then it was likely roads and causeways would not be repaired.'

Saxa Road, between the Golden Highway near Elong Elong and Wellington has been closed since October 2022 due to repairs required at a causeway. Forestvale Road has been impassible at another causeway for much of the past three years. Local residents have been denied access to their fire trucks during this time unless they cleared the causeway with their own equipment.

It seems that Dubbo Regional Council have lost sight of the fact that they have been collecting funds from energy developers in the local government area for some years now and there is little evidence of these funds benefiting local roads.

The land on which the development is planned is designated RU1 – agricultural, and landholders are subject to development control plans that the Council enforces.

Squadron Energy plan to build 117 wind turbines, each 256 metres high. During construction the project is expected to use over 1million litres of water per day, as are the other industrial energy projects in the area.

Dubbo Regional Council plans to receive 1.5% of the capital value of each of the 24 projects in the LGA. An energy project has a capital cost upwards of \$1 billion.

It would appear that rural residents in the Dubbo Regional Council area are expendable in council's bid to reap financial reward."

I don't see any benefit from "hosting" large scale renewable energy infrastructure on my property (hence I have not invited it!) and do not believe I, as a local landowner, will see any benefits from projects being built in my area. I even wonder if our local communities will ultimately see a net benefit or loss? Whilst there are payments made to landowners who have wind and solar projects constructed on their properties, I do not believe those payments will cover future decommissioning costs, which fall on the landowner if the proponent defaults (given a lot of the renewable energy developers use shell companies as the applicant for large scale projects I believe this will happen). Government, and developers, claim that road "upgrades" are for the benefit of local communities – the Port to REZ upgrades are currently 19 intersection and pinch points where signs are being moved and extra bitumen is being added to existing intersections to allow OSOM loads to navigate the transport route NOT for the

benefit of road users! Local road upgrades will see some gravel roads sealed (again for the benefit of the developer) and returned as local Council assets which Councils will then need to find the funding to maintain – will this put us further behind in the end? Legacy infrastructure projects (eg. rural town water and sewage) will mean upgrades for townspeople – I can't help but think that these Council assets, that are meant to be self-funding (paid for by Council rates), may also end up costing rate payers in the long term.

It has been suggested numerous times that a way to share monetary “benefits” to every person within the REZ boundary would be to pay Council rates on behalf of each and every ratepayer. While that idea has been received by EnergyCo several times it has never been actioned.

Hopefully the communities most impacted will see more than a new playground, or the tarring up of a few old buildings. Could we hope the legacy funding promised by the Government might bring industry back to our regions and help us thrive instead of becoming boom and bust ghost towns?

(8) What could be done to make the engagement process more collaborative and less transactional?

Active listening, note taking, making changes based on feedback and not using the “divide and conquer” method would be a good start (utilising town hall style meetings in conjunction with smaller group or one on one sessions – catering to let everyone be heard). Can you imagine how engaged a local community would become if they could see their feedback was being received and acted upon rather than saying the same thing time and time again without seeing any results?

A lot of frustration has been borne in affected communities due to the lack of knowledge project staff possess. I am often gobsmacked by the project illiteracy of those sent to “consult” neighbouring landowners and the broader community – is this on purpose? I had one project manager tell me that he didn't enjoy my company because I “knew too much and asked too harder questions”!! Staff often take “questions on notice” and never reply to the enquirer and some take notes yet, again, never respond, yet the “consultation” box is ticked because they “engaged” with you. Maybe letting community members converse with those in the planning team, who should have real project knowledge and understanding and be able to explain the reasoning behind certain decisions and make change, rather than just the “community engagement” team would assist in making real, collaborative community engagement a reality?

(9) Were you given enough information, in plain language and early enough, to make informed decisions about participation? How could this be improved?

On the ground, in the CWO REZ we are still crying out for information, in plain language, and before decisions are made – irrespective of if you would like to host infrastructure, are being forced to “host” transmission or just live in the region. I believe information is being deliberately withheld so as not to alarm REZ inhabitants and inform the general public of what the future looks like for rural and regional Australia and its industries. Those delivering the “community engagement” sessions are often less educated about the project than community members attending to have their concerns heard, and ultimately addressed – again, is this intentional?

The other issue is the cart being put before the horse – the “rapid transition to renewable energy” is being rollout out without proper and comprehensive planning or execution, and it shows!! The rollout of the REZ's should be paused until potential negative impacts, including cumulative impacts, can be better understood and processes and strategies can be put in place to mitigate those impacts instead of just proceeding without care or caution.

Being able to see the whole picture of what is planned, how it will be implemented, and having access to information vital for understanding potential impacts would assist landowners, business owners and the broader community – all things we have been asking for since the shock declaration of the CWO REZ. Transparency and honesty have been severely lacking throughout the REZ rollout.

(10) Do you think the current compensation models reflect the long-term impact on your land use and lifestyle? If not, what would a fairer model look like?

Compensation for those being forced to “host” transmission lines is neither fair nor reasonable and does not reflect the long-term impact on the land use or lifestyle of those impacted. Can I suggest the Committee go through the process of calculating what a landowner willingly hosting wind or solar infrastructure is getting paid compared to those having transmission lines erected on their property? I believe you will soon see there is no comparison!

I do not believe compulsory acquisition for this sort of project should come into play until a high percentage of impacted landowners are prepared to sign an agreement willingly – possibly 85-90%. If the model is fair and the need can be explained people will contribute for the “greater good”.

The Just Terms Act is “not fit for purpose” when it comes to transmission projects, as described by Minister Penny Sharpe and Treasurer Daniel Moohkey when visiting the CWO REZ in early 2024. There is no provision to compensate for loss of production – either by way of land being taken out of use during the construction phase (not only the land impacted but in some cases paddocks not being able to be utilised due to limited access to water or shelter or not being able to access parts of a property) or personal production (time being spent at meetings, getting legal advice, or even the productive losses stress is known to cause). The Land Acquisition Review will hopefully take feedback from transmission impacted landowners on board and update the Just Terms Act to adequately protect landowners in future – unfortunately it seems it will be too late for those in the CWO REZ!!

The next issue arises due to the fact that compensation is taxable income, not a tax free payment as it should be! What we have seen happen is landowners receive compensation from the State Government in the form of cash, that is required to replace infrastructure (eg. shade sails to provide shelter for livestock following the removal of trees) only to have nearly half of that cash (depending on your tax rate – noting that compensation is classified as “off farm income”) recouped by the Federal Government in the form of tax. Is it fair that a landowner then only gets to erect and utilise 53% of the shade sails they were meant to receive to replace destroyed trees?

(11) What support — legal, technical or otherwise — would you have found helpful in navigating your involvement in these projects?

Legal and technical advice would be very helpful when attempting to understand the planning process, navigate the language used in the renewable energy industry, consider hosting infrastructure, gain awareness of private property rights, and understanding the potential impacts of residing and farming within a REZ.

EnergyCo is the infrastructure planner for the five currently declared REZ's in NSW. It is my opinion that EnergyCo has done an extremely poor job thus far coordinating the REZ's and informing community – maybe the “rapid” in “rapid transition to renewable energy” has had a part in that but nonetheless the outcome for those on the ground is the same. The role of providing information to community members and landowners and understanding and mitigating impacts rests with EnergyCo but we are yet to see them complete any stage of the rollout of the REZ's without incompetence – community is pushing for information and raising issues the whole way through. It is not good enough.

Although the situation is improving somewhat given the “rapid transition to renewable energy”, and the necessity for it to do so, it has been hard for landowners and community members to find legal representation with adequate experience in the renewable energy and transmission industries – we need to remember the rollout of the REZ’s is almost unprecedented in Australia.

How do community members access independent technical information without paying through the eyeballs for the privilege in the current system? EIS documents necessary for proponents to progress through the planning system are paid for by the developer – where is the unbiased information? Even the advice provided by Government departments (experts in their chosen field) eg. RFS and DPIRD does not highlight potential impacts – are staff in these departments being “muzzled” to ensure the “need” for the “rapid transition to renewable energy” is not derailed? I guarantee there are staff in Government agencies that are just as worried about some of the impacts as I am, eg. limitations to fire fighting (aerial included) and impacts to the agricultural industry, yet they tow the bureaucratic line for fear of losing their jobs.

At this point there have been no studies carried out to ensure potential impacts won’t cause irreparable devastation, nor are developers compelled to carry out baseline testing to ensure there are no adverse impacts to natural and essential resources like water and soil. I believe we need to have processes in place to protect rural and regional Australia - its people, land, water, environment and economy – even if the worst case scenarios are not realised. I think it would be helpful, and reassuring for those of us on the ground (in the firing line!), if the Government led the way in carrying out crucial baseline testing. Could it even be a show of good faith to those of us bearing the brunt of these infrastructure projects?

(12) How can the rollout of REZs be improved to strengthen, rather than divide, local communities?

First, including the local community members and landowners in the decision to become a REZ would be a start – the earlier the community is engaged and involved in the decision making the better. Genuine consultation would help local landowners and community members feel like part of the project. Listening to concerns and making changes to accommodate community sentiment would make locals feel like their opinions and concerns are valid and valued.

Giving the local community the option to “opt out” of any project they do not agree with – one of the biggest problems we have encountered is the “tick the box” planning process when it comes to renewable energy projects. It seems there are no reasons to refuse consent to a large scale renewable energy generation project (the “public interest” is much greater than any concerns raised by local community members – those who actually have to live with any potential negative impacts!).

The removal of the use of non-disclosure agreements would assist with transparency around projects – if a landowner considering hosting infrastructure would like to discuss monetary benefits with other people that should be their business. Are developers only concerned about this as they would be forced to pay all landowners the same rate? That would mean no pulling the wool over less savvy eyes.

(13) In the hearing, some landholders shared that they felt ‘kept in the dark’ or not fairly consulted. What would a model consultation process look like from your perspective — particularly with large-scale developers?

Much like above, early, thorough and collaborative consultation would go a long way to solve the issues we have faced so far in the CWO REZ. Government should lead the way with this process, not be the one of the worst offenders! We still have not been shown the whole picture of the “rapid transition to renewable energy” – what it will look like on the ground for rural and regional Australia and how it will roll out; we get snippets of information (often not accurate!) from authorities and are forced to go

searching for any further information (which is often “commercial in confidence” or not publicly available or takes volunteer time to access and understand). It is a time consuming and convoluted system making it difficult for the average person to find what they are looking for – getting the “run around” by Government authorities and developers does not help!

Framework to ensure consultation and engagement are carried out comprehensively would assist in bringing community along on the ride and lessening community division. Currently, it seems developers simply have to prove they held drop in and/or pop up sessions (at the convenience of the developer not community), sent x number of emails and letters and “consulted” with impacted Councils. This process is not working! There should be targets that must be reached, ie. a certain percentage of the population residing within 50kms of the project, and proof that concerns have been adequately investigated and potentially mitigated, to the satisfaction of the local community. Council should also not be used as a conduit for taking information to community – while some Councils are proactive, I believe the majority are not relaying information to community members causing a road block of sorts and not helping the situation. I do not know exactly what the framework looks like but I can say that those who have worked in community development in rural areas would, given the chance, be able to come up with a plan.

(14) Have you experienced any direct benefits from hosting renewable infrastructure? If so, are there improvements you would suggest to the compensation or co-benefit models currently offered?

No. Given what I know about renewable energy developments and my concerns around the potential negative impacts on our region as a result of these projects, especially the cumulative impacts, I will not entertain the possibility of hosting renewable energy infrastructure nor would I sign a neighbour agreement with any of these companies.

Having seen some agreements and spoken to a lot of landowners who are, or have considered, hosting infrastructure I have a couple of suggestions.

1. More protection for landowners in a standard starting agreement – no NDA’s, no caveats over property, more transparency regarding the legal implications of signing any agreement with a developer – no dirty tactics, no manipulation, no deception, no secrecy!!
2. A percentage (85%?) of neighbour agreements must be reached for a project to proceed into the planning process – forces developers to engage early with neighbouring landowners and those impacted by the project.
3. As previously stated, with regard to compensation for transmission the Just Terms Act must be amended to allow impacted landowners to be adequately compensated, and not have that money taken back by the Government in the form of tax.
4. Penalties imposed on renewable energy developers who are not complying with consultation requirements.

(15) Do you believe current dispute resolution or feedback mechanisms are adequate when things go wrong or when there’s disagreement with a developer? What alternatives might be more effective?

No. Until recently the only way to raise concerns about renewable energy developers, and Government authorities, (other than through in house complaints departments which is a farce) was the Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner (AEIC). Now, in regard to transmission projects, and I understand soon to be other renewable energy generation projects, we can lodge complaints with the Energy and Water Ombudsman NSW (EWON). I have been through the complaints process with both of these entities and, although I have no complaints about anyone I have dealt with during the process, I have come to realise both the AEIC and EWON are effectively “toothless tigers”. Neither can impose penalties that will promote improved behaviour in the future, let alone punish continual egregious actions – until

you hit these companies in the hip pocket, either literally or by delaying projects, they will continue on as is knowing they can get away with “blue murder”.

I believe complaints would be handled more effectively and better outcomes achieved if the renewable energy infrastructure watchdog/s were given the power to impose penalties that would deter the same behaviour from happening again – whether it be the same perpetrator or another.

(16) Some landholders raised concerns about intergenerational impacts. How should long-term land use considerations — including farming viability and succession — be factored into the project planning process?

I don't believe farming family intergenerational impacts are a project by project planning issue but they are definitely an industry issue and are being used by renewable industry developers as a tactical manoeuvre.

One issue is the economic viability of farming enterprises if there is an impact on property values (as discussed previously) – could we see family farms being sold, and young farmers leaving the industry, as a result of equity issues?

Large scale renewable energy developments are causing division not only between friends and community members but in families as well – succession is a hard enough process without the added complexity of divisive projects. I have heard examples of developers asking the next generation of family farmers to sign agreements saying they will not make any changes that may negatively impact the project in the future (noting the main agreement would be signed by the current owners of the property – the parents or grandparents). These developments will lock family farming enterprises into certain modes of operation for decades, and possibly tear these family businesses apart.

Then we come to the potential negative impacts that could see children and grandchildren of those signing up to, or being forced to, host renewable energy infrastructure cleaning up the mess! Will renewables be the asbestos of our generation? Will Australian meat be tainted by heavy metals and not saleable? Will the health of our population decline due to the extra exposure to “forever chemicals”, the burden of noise and vibration or being subject to EMF? Will our land be as productive as it once was – will our livestock be healthy and fertile? Will Australia be able to feed and clothe itself?

(17) Would you support the creation of a landholder advisory panel — similar to what was suggested in the hearing — to shape best practice guidelines for consultation and consent?

I would support the creation of a landowner panel to shape best practice guidelines for consultation and consent under the following conditions:-

1. The panel needs to be a decision making body (we have seen how advisory, non decision making bodies, are treated) and has the ability to enact conditions and enforce penalties.
2. Landowners are provided with some kind of remuneration for their time.