



Waubra Wind Farm

Complaints Procedure



Version 2
February 2015



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1 Introduction

Complaints regarding the operation of the Waubra Wind Farm including noise, shadow flicker, telecommunications interference or other issues may be registered by the community.

All complaints regarding the operations of the Waubra Wind Farm will be taken seriously by ACCIONA Energy. All complaints and feedback received from the community and project neighbours are recorded and ACCIONA Energy will endeavour to respond in a timely and courteous manner.

The Community Relations Co-ordinator in conjunction with the Site Manager of the Waubra Wind Farm, is responsible for ensuring all complaints are processed in accordance with this procedure.

2 Process

The complaints process has four key steps:

1. Receive
2. Record and Register
3. Investigate and Respond
4. Review

3 Receive

3.1 Complaints received by ACCIONA Energy

Any complaint regarding the Waubra Wind Farm operations can be directed to ACCIONA Energy through:

- The community hotline 1800 283 550
- Email waubra@acciona.com.au
- Mail ACCIONA Energy
PO Box 252
South Melbourne VIC 3205

The community hotline number is a free-call number which operates 24 hours per day and is serviced by both staff and a message service. This free call number is also displayed on signage fixed to gates leading from the public road network onto private access tracks, at the Waubra Wind Farm.

ACCIONA Energy promotes these contact methods through its newsletters, websites and other communication methods associated with the Waubra Wind Farm.

3.2 Complaints received by third parties

If a complaint is received by Council, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning or the Environment Protection Authority (EPA), details of that complaint may be forwarded to ACCIONA Energy.

ACCIONA Energy will consult with the third party – and with the complainant – in order to determine if that complaint will be assessed in accordance with this Complaints Procedure.

If it is agreed that the complaint received by a third party is related to the operation of the Waubra Wind Farm – and the complainant consents for ACCIONA Energy to investigate - then the complaint will be assessed in accordance with this Complaints Procedure.

If a complaint received by a third party is not deemed to be related to the operation of the Waubra Wind Farm – and/or the complainant does not consent to ACCIONA Energy investigating their complaint – then the third party will retain responsibility for investigating that complaint.

4 Record and Register

4.1 Record

All details received from the complainant will be recorded to capture detailed information from the complainant regarding the complaint, including the name, address and contact details of the complainant, the date, the nature of the complaint, the person who received the complaint. For noise complaints, where relevant and provided, the weather conditions, the time and a description of the noise will also be captured.

In the first instance, ACCIONA Energy will seek to discuss the complaint with the complainant to capture additional information about their complaint as well as discussing next steps.

Records will be maintained of all communications in regard to the complaint. ACCIONA Energy currently uses a program called Consultation Manager to record all information regarding noise complaints and responses. Previously an Environmental Complaint Form was completed, this information is now captured in the stakeholder data base of Consultation Manager. Reports can be generated as required.

4.2 Register

ACCIONA Energy will record and register complaints and determine an appropriate response within 5 working days of receiving the complaint.

All noise complaints will be recorded by ACCIONA Energy in the Complaints Register. Each noise complaint will be allocated an incident number, with these numbers also recorded in the complaints Register. The Complaints Register may be inspected by the Minister for Planning at any time.

5 Investigate and Respond

The process to investigate and respond to noise, shadow flicker or telecommunications Reception and interference complaints is outlined in the following sections.

5.1 Noise Complaints

5.1.1 Within 2 kilometres of a turbine (new noise complaints)

When a noise complainant's house is within two kilometres of a turbine, ACCIONA Energy will refer to the modelled pre-construction noise level data at the noise complainant's house – or at a nearby location. ACCIONA Energy will also refer to the results of the post-construction noise monitoring program where such monitoring has been completed in accordance with Condition 17 of the planning permit.

The noise complainant will be advised if the outcome of the post-construction noise monitoring program demonstrates that noise levels at the noise complainant's house – or at a nearby location - complies with the noise limits set out in Condition 14 of the planning permit.

Where these results related to a nearby location rather than the complainants house, the complainant will be advised of the uncertainty associated with reliance on that nearby location.

If the noise complainant is satisfied with that advice, ACCIONA Energy will provide a written response to the noise complainant to resolve the complaint.

If the noise complainant is not satisfied with that advice, ACCIONA Energy will discuss options for further investigation with the noise complainant. These options may include:

- Providing information about the noise monitoring and post-construction noise monitoring program.
- Discussing options to mitigate the noise complainants concerns
- Undertaking a noise monitoring survey, for first time complainants

Noise monitoring

If the post-construction noise monitoring program results – undertaken in accordance with Condition 17 - do not provide an adequate indication of noise compliance being achieved at the complainants house (an acoustic expert may be engaged to evaluate this, then noise monitoring may be undertaken).

If ACCIONA Energy and the noise complainant agree to undertake noise monitoring, that noise monitoring will be undertaken generally in accordance with NZS 6808:1998 and Condition 14 of the planning permit.

If ACCIONA Energy and the noise complainant agree to undertake noise monitoring, that noise monitoring will be undertaken at the same location (where possible) as the pre-construction monitoring (if this was undertaken). If preconstruction monitoring data was collected, noise monitoring will be undertaken considerate of the following rules:

- At least 5m away from any reflective surface (e.g. building, solid fence)
- Within 20m of the dwelling
- Within property boundaries
- Between the dwelling and the nearest turbines
- Avoid close proximity to “noisy” vegetation.

If available, baseline or pre-construction noise data for the complainant’s house will be used to compare the monitoring data against, with reference to the limits set out in the planning permit Condition 14 of the planning permit.

If there is no baseline or pre-construction data for that property to compare the monitoring data against, baseline data from the nearest available location with the most similarity of noise conditions (an acoustic expert may be engaged to evaluate this) will be used. The complainant will be advised of the uncertainty associated with reliance on that nearby location’s data as pre-construction comparison.

Information will be provided to the noise complainant about the noise monitoring program and ACCIONA Energy will provide and discuss the results with the noise complainant.

If the noise complainant is satisfied with the noise monitoring results, ACCIONA Energy will provide a written response to the noise complainant to resolve the complaint.

If the noise complainant is not satisfied with the response, ACCIONA Energy will discuss options for further investigation with the noise complainant. These options may include:

- Requesting a review of their noise complaint
- Discussing options to mitigate the noise complainants concerns

If noise monitoring indicates that the Waubra Wind Farm may not demonstrate compliance with the conditions of the planning permit at the noise complainant’s property, relevant results and circumstances will be further investigated. If required, ACCIONA Energy will prepare a noise management plan within thirty (30) days outlining how it will rectify a demonstrated non-compliance.

5.1.2 Beyond 2 kilometres from a turbine

When a noise complainant’s house is beyond two kilometres of a turbine, ACCIONA Energy will refer to the modelled pre-construction noise levels at the noise complainants house – or at a nearby location.

ACCIONA Energy will also refer to the results of post-construction noise monitoring program (where such monitoring has been undertaken in accordance with Condition 17) to establish whether noise compliance is likely to be achieved at the complainants house.

The noise complainant will be advised if the outcome of the post-construction noise monitoring program demonstrates that noise levels at the wind farm comply with the noise limits set out in Condition 14 of the planning permit, and therefore that compliance is assumed at their property, noting that it is located at a distance beyond houses which form part of the noise compliance testing process.

Where these results related to a nearby location rather than the complainants house, the complainant will be advised of the uncertainty associated with reliance on that nearby location.

If the noise complainant is satisfied with that advice, ACCIONA Energy will provide a written response to the noise complainant to resolve the complaint.

If the noise complainant is not satisfied with that advice, ACCIONA Energy will discuss options for further investigation with the noise complainant. These options may include:

- Providing information about the noise monitoring and post-construction noise monitoring program.
- Requesting a review of their noise complaint
- Discussing options to mitigate the noise complainants concerns

Noise Monitoring

Noise monitoring will generally not be undertaken at properties beyond two kilometres of a wind turbine.

NB: Should the results of the post-construction noise monitoring program indicate that noise monitoring may be required at properties beyond two kilometres of a wind turbine, ACCIONA Energy will discuss these results with relevant authorities – and the noise complainant – in order to determine if such monitoring will be undertaken.

If the noise complainant is satisfied with that advice, ACCIONA Energy will provide a written response to the noise complainant to resolve the complaint.

If the noise complainant is not satisfied with that advice, ACCIONA Energy will discuss options for further investigation with the noise complainant. These options may include:

- Providing information about the noise monitoring and post-construction noise monitoring program.
- Requesting a review of their noise complaint
- Discussing options to mitigate the noise complainants concerns

5.1.3 Noise complaints relating to maintenance issues

Noise complaints received from complainants that relate to potential maintenance issues, will be recorded and investigated. The investigation will involve wind farm technicians visiting the turbines that were identified as having a potential maintenance issue. If the turbine is found to have a maintenance issue, a timely and appropriate rectification solution will be implemented and the outcome will be communicated to the complainant.

5.1.4 Unresolved noise complaints

ACCIONA Energy has received noise complaints regarding the operations of the Waubra Wind Farm from a number of complainants. These complaints initially have all been processed in accordance with this Complaints Procedure.

A small number of noise complaints are considered by the complainant to be unresolved. An unresolved complaint is one where the complainant continues to make noise

complaints after ACCIONA Energy has followed the process outlined in section 5.1.1, 5.1.2 and 5.1.3 to investigate and resolve the noise complaint.

At this point, these unresolved complaints will be 'case managed' by the allocated ACCIONA Energy staff member.

Where further noise complaints are made by a complainant with an existing unresolved noise complaint, the complaint will be referred to the appropriate case manager in order to oversee the response process. In general, the complaint will be recorded in both the Complaints Register and in Consultation Manager or similar program. The complaint will be recorded and noted and the complainant will be issued an incident number.

5.2 Shadow Flicker Complaints

ACCIONA Energy will investigate complaints of shadow flicker on an individual property. When the complainant's property is within one and a half kilometres of a turbine, a shadow flicker assessment may be undertaken.

Complainants will be asked for details of the timing and duration of the shadow flicker, and weather conditions at the time of observation.

Complaints will be assessed considering the proximity of the residence to the wind farm and correlation between the timing and duration of reported flicker effects and computer generated shadow flicker models.

5.3 Telecommunications Reception and Interference Complaints

During the first 5 years of operations of the Waubra Wind Farm when the complainant's property was within the vicinity of the townships of both Waubra and Learmonth a television and radio reception quality assessment was undertaken.

ACCIONA Energy arranged for an experienced telecommunications technician to undertake a qualitative survey at those houses to establish if there has been any detrimental increase in interference with reception caused by the wind farm, as compared with the pre-construction reception quality.

All complainants assessed by the independent technician to be legitimate have had their television and radio reception restored to at least pre-construction quality reception.

After 5 years of operations of the Waubra Wind Farm, ACCIONA Energy will investigate TV reception complaints that:-

- Do not relate to pre-existing TV reception issues; or
- Do not relate to regular TV tuning, TV aerial issues and weather conditions that are not attributed to the operations of the Waubra wind farm; or
- Do not relate to accommodating reception for multiple TV's at a residence.

The TV reception complainant should contact the Waubra Wind Farm Site Manager on (03) 4313 4421 to lodge a complaint. This complaint will be investigated and may or may not require further follow up with TV Technician.

It should be noted that TV reception infrastructure (TV repeaters) for the towns of Waubra and Learmonth requires updating and has been affecting TV reception in the area. These reception issues do not relate to the operations of the Waubra Wind Farm. When this TV reception infrastructure has been upgraded, ACCIONA Energy will review the current TV reception complaints procedure in consultation with the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

6 Complaints Review

If a complainant is not satisfied with ACCIONA Energy's investigation of a Waubra Wind Farm operations complaint and remedy, the complainant can request a review of their complaint by the Senior Manager of Operations at ACCIONA Energy.

Requests for review of complaints must be made in writing within thirty (30) days of receiving ACCIONA Energy's written response to the complaint.

The Senior Manager Operations will review the recording, investigation and response to the complaint.

A written response outlining the outcome of the complaint review will be provided to the complainant within thirty (30) days.

ACCIONA Energy will maintain communication with the complainant during the review process.

7 Complaints Procedure Review

ACCIONA Energy will review this Complaints Procedure to ensure it is adequate every five years.