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Submissions
Climate Change Authority
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Review of the National Wind Farm Commissioner

I make a submission to the Review based on my experience with the Commissioner in relation to the proposed Naroghid Wind Farm in near Cobden, Victoria. My role has been to support the local community in its opposition to the proposal due to its likely adverse impact on Cobden Airport.

In this matter the Commissioner has played an important role as an independent sounding board and source of information. While the Naroghid matter is on-going, it is evident that the Commissioner has actively engaged with the local community, the proponent, and state planning authorities to facilitate the sharing of information, and to articulate the concerns among the relevant parties.

The Commissioner has been able to share relevant knowledge and experience from other wind farm proposals with the parties, and being removed from the decision maker and from the proponent is trusted as a genuinely independent engagement point for the community.

The Commissioner's knowledge and experience from other windfarms in other jurisdictions has been particularly valuable in assisting the community to understand the likely true impacts of the Naroghid proposal while also addressing any misinformation.

Windfarm developments can be highly divisive and controversial. My experiences to date with Naroghid indicates that there is an important and on-going role for the Commissioner in facilitating engagement and resolving conflict. The potential for similar issues to arise with large scale solar and storage proposals suggests that similar benefits may be possible from their inclusion within the scope of the Commissioner's role.

Yours sincerely,

(Gordon Rich-Phillips)

CC: The Hon. Josh Frydenberg MP, Minister for the Environment and Energy