

Question on Notice

No. 1521

Asked on 1 September 2016

MRS FRECKLINGTON asked the Deputy Premier, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade and Investment (HON J TRAD) –

QUESTION:

With reference to a letter copied to the Deputy Premier's office on 21 December 2015 from the National Wind Farm Commissioner, Mr Andrew Dyer in which he stated that 'With regard to the Queensland Environmental Noise Policy (Noise) 2008, he was of the view that the Policy should apply to all aspects of noise generated by wind farms' –

Will the Deputy Premier explain why this advice has not been accepted by the State Government and included in the Wind Farm Code?

ANSWER:

I thank the Honourable Member for Nanango for the question.

The Palaszczuk Government is committed to increasing the production and use of renewable energy. In fact, the government has committed to achieving a 50 per cent renewable energy target by 2030.

On 22 July 2016, the state government became the assessment manager for all wind farm development across Queensland; providing much needed certainty and consistency to communities and industry alike. To support this role, the Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning (DILGP) prepared the Wind Farm State Code, supported by a planning guideline.

The code is now the primary assessment tool for wind farm proposals in Queensland and sets out clear assessment requirements for the design, construction and operation of new or expanded wind farm proposals. The code includes strict criteria to address community concerns about health and safety issues.

In relation to noise impacts, the code has been prepared based on expert technical advice, the review of recent and emerging research, an analysis of national and international best practice, and extensive consultation.

According to expert advice provided to DILGP, the code will ensure wind farm proposals achieve the internal acoustic quality objectives in the Environmental Protection (Noise) Policy 2008 (EPP (Noise)), as administered by the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection (DEHP) under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*.

The internal acoustic quality objectives within the EPP (Noise) will be achieved via appropriate external noise criteria included within the code. The code utilises external noise criteria that take into account the level of noise reduction afforded by facades to ensure that the internal acoustic quality objectives stated within the EPP (Noise) will be met.

DEHP, who as I note administers the EPP (Noise), has advised that the code represents best practice environmental regulation of wind farms and suitably meets the internal acoustic quality objectives of the EPP (Noise).

DILGP has also sought independent expert acoustic advice that confirmed the acoustic criteria prescribed within the code for both host and non-host landowners will achieve noise levels below those stated in the acoustic quality objectives within the EPP (Noise).

The code will undoubtedly help grow a vibrant renewable energy industry to achieve our renewable energy target while also protecting the health and safety of individuals and communities.