

2020 Gullen Range Wind Farm Community Information Plan Review

Section 4 of the Gullen Range Wind Farm (GRWF) Community Information Plan requires that the outcomes and effectiveness of the plan are evaluated on an ongoing basis and reported to the CCC.

This document reports on the communication tools (imperative and additional) listed in section 3.1 of the plan in order to assess their effectiveness.

The landscape for community engagement changed in 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There were fewer local events for GRWF to sponsor and participate in. For at least part of the year, most sporting teams stopped competing and newspapers reduced their staff levels and reduced circulation of paper-based publications. Regular events conducted by GRWF, such as the monthly BBQs undertaken in 2019 in front of Crookwell IGA and Gullen Range wind farm public tours and school visits had to be cancelled. In response to the reduced engagement opportunities through conventional means, where possible, GRWF adapted its approach by proactively moving to engaging across online platforms.

Table 1 shows the Imperative communication tools

Communication Tool	GRWF activities and outcomes	Effectiveness	Future improvements
Community Consultative Committee (CCC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, GRWF arranged for CCC meetings to be held via video/teleconference and two such meetings were held in 2020. The CCC committee was updated on the latest Gullen Range Wind Farm response to COVID-19. Information about meetings, including minutes, is provided on the GRWF website. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GRWF assesses the CCC has been effective in providing a forum for (1) asking questions relating to the wind farm and (2) informing the committee about wind farm work and activities. However, it would be more effective if an additional community member could be sourced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertise for more Committee Member(s)

Communication Tool	GRWF activities and outcomes	Effectiveness	Future improvements
<p>1800 telephone number, email, website enquiry/complaints form</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing and monitored daily. • 86 calls to the 1800 telephone number. • Approx. 278 emails to info@gullenrangewindfarm.com • GRWF contact information is provided as part of the info@gullenrangewindfarm email signature. • 8 website feedback form enquiries. • Contact information is advertised in the local newspapers. It is also provided on public tours (when they are operating) and at community events attended by GRWF. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRWF assesses these communication channels to be effective at providing processes for the community to communicate with the wind farm. This is supported by the high number of calls and emails. 	
<p>Clean Energy Program (CLEP)</p> <p>CLEP comprises two stages. The first stage is an energy efficiency audit, which helps residents identify the best way to improve energy efficiency in their home. The second stage is applying for the energy efficiency grant.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During Year 6 of the CLEP (23rd December 2019 to 22nd December 2020), a total of 13 new Stage 1 applications were received, 16 Energy Efficiency audits were carried out, including four applications received at the end of Year 5 and 16 Stage 1 vouchers were issued to applicants. Regarding Stage 2 of the Clean Energy Program, 11 applications were approved by the Energy Committee, with the total value of all the approved grants for Year 6 amounting to approx. \$75,557. • During 2020, information about the CLEP was provided: (1) on the GRWF website, (2) at community events attended by GRWF, (3) at the CCC and (4) when handling enquiries about the wind farm. • GRWF communicated with more than 40 community members about the CLEP in 2020. GRWF made more than 90 phone calls and sent 150 emails to local residents regarding the CLEP during 2020. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRWF assesses that it has effectively promoted and encouraged uptake of the Clean Energy Program in 2020. • More applications were received from new eligible residents compared to 2019. This was in spite of the COVID-19 situation, which resulted in the temporary suspension of Stage 1 audits during lockdown. There was also a high visitation rate to the CLEP webpage. • GRWF believes the CLEP has been effective as a community engagement tool. This is supported by the high volume of emails sent and phone calls made by GRWF. In addition, there was an opportunity during these CLEP communications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advert in local newspapers

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Clean Energy Program (CLEP) contd.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were 274 visits to the Clean Energy Program’s webpage in 2020. 	for GRWF to answer questions about other aspects of the wind farm.	
Community Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information about the Community Fund is provided on the GRWF website, CCC and at community events attended by GRWF. The Community Fund Workshop took place again in 2020 to assist the community with the grant application process. The workshop was advertised via the GRWF website and via emails to community groups. It was attended by 8 people and feedback was very positive. There were 373 visits to the Community Fund webpage in 2020. Five projects were funded in 2020, with information about funding outcomes available on the GRWF website. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GRWF believes that the Community Fund grant scheme was effectively communicated to the community, with five community projects receiving grants in 2020. This is supported by the high volume of visits to the Community Fund webpage and attendance by 8 people at the community fund workshop. 	

Table 2 shows the Additional communication tools

Communication Tool	GRWF activities and outcomes	Effectiveness	Future improvements
Wind Farm public tours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 public tours of GRWF were put on hold for health and safety reasons. • Members of the public can register via the GRWF website if they wish to be notified by email when the tours recommence. • There were approx. 616 visits to the Gullen Range Wind Farm’s tour web page. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The tours have not been effective in 2020, as they have been suspended due to COVID-19. • High visitation rates to the tour web page suggests the public continue to be interested in attending the tours. 	
Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live and updated frequently. • 51 news updates posted to the website. • Dedicated COVID-19 response page. • For 2020, there were 5,114 unique visitors to the website and 12,828 page views. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High visitation rates in 2020 suggest that the website is being accessed and used by the public. • GRWF assesses the website to be an effective communication tool, providing the public with regular news updates about the wind farm, including its activities in the community and response to COVID-19. 	
Sponsorship	<p>Nine community groups/projects were sponsored:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 142nd Crookwell Show • Crookwell Meals on Wheels • Crookwell CWA Day Branch • Crookwell/Taralga/Upper Lachlan Community Care • Crookwell Men’s Bowling Club’s Gullen Range Triples Classic Tournament • Goulburn Railway Bowling Club’s 2020 Rose Tournament 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRWF has been proud to support local community groups, especially those that have struggled to fundraise during COVID-19. • GRWF believes their sponsorships have been an effective way to help local community groups and establish goodwill in the community. Note that some of these 	

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Sponsorship contd.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gunning Arts Festival FlashWrite Project • Crookwell Public School’s student prizes • Crookwell Public School Parents and Citizens Association (P&C) Christmas hamper raffle 	<p>sponsorships have been through BJCE Australia, the owner of GRWF.</p>	
Social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRWF did not post LinkedIn news items in 2020. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This tool was ineffective in 2020, as no resources were invested in this method of communication. GRWF uses the social media as a supplementary communication tool only. 	
School engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRWF was an Industry Partner for the STEM Industry School Partnership Program (SISP) in 2020 and as a part of the Program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Organised a blade viewing event at the Crookwell Showgrounds for more than 90 students, including Yr 5/6 students from Crookwell Public School and Yr 8 students from Crookwell High School. ○ Presented an Industry award to the student team “Exquisite Engineers” at the Crookwell Public School Wind Power Showcase. ○ Conducted online presentations to more than 70 students, including Yr 5/6 students from Crookwell Public School and Yr 8 students from Goulburn High School. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRWF assesses that its school engagement was effective at educating, informing and encouraging learning about STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) and renewable energy in 2020. Students were also provided with a forum to ask questions about the wind farm. • This is evidenced by GRWF engaging with large numbers of primary and high school students from four local schools in both face-to-face and online settings. • GRWF received positive feedback from the schools and Regional 	

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School engagement contd.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STEM Connect@AAC: GRWF gave an online STEM lesson to Yr 5/6 students from St Mary's Primary School in Crookwell. Students made anemometers and were able to measure wind speed generated by fans in the classroom. The event was coordinated by the Crookwell Australian Agricultural Centre (AAC) as part of STEMConnect@AAC. • School visits to the wind farm were put on hold in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Instead, GRWF proactively adapted its approach and switched to online presentations and 'virtual' tours of the wind farm. 	Development Australia Southern Inland (RDA SI) for its involvement in the 2020 SISP. GRWF was invited to return as an Industry Partner in the 2021 SISP program.	
Presentations to interest groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upper Lachlan Landcare: GRWF joined Landcare's online school holiday workshop called, 'Blowing in the Wind' to talk about the wind farm and solar farm with local children and parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less effective than 2019 due to the low number of presentations. Due to COVID-19, fewer opportunities were available for presentations to interest groups, particularly in face-to-face settings. • GRWF assesses the presentation to the Upper Lachlan Landcare provided an effective forum to present information about the wind farm and for the community to ask questions. 	

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One-on-one meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Met with 4 community members throughout 2020. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The individual meetings were effective, however fewer one-on-one meetings (particularly in face-to-face settings) were conducted in 2020 compared to previous years, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. 	
Newspaper advertisements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Fund Workshop advert Usual 6 monthly advertisement of complaints line did not occur due to an administrative error. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectiveness of local newspapers was reduced in 2020 as the Goulburn Post and Crookwell Gazette stopped their printing due to COVID-19, with only the Goulburn Post recommencing their printing in the second half of 2020. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More adverts in 2021. GRWF to explore using radio adverts too.
Media reports of wind farm progress & activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 51 news items were posted to the GRWF website. Two organisations issued media releases involving GRWF to the media. A dedicated COVID-19 web page was set up to inform the community about GRWF's COVID-19 response. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GRWF assesses its media reports and releases have been effective at providing regular updates about the wind farm and its activities. 	
Local community event participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 142nd Crookwell Show: GRWF had an information stall for two days at the Crookwell Show. Donations from the face painting stand were given to the Grabben Gullen community. The stall was well attended, with a wide variety of people asking questions about GRWF. Community fundraising BBQ and information stand outside the Crookwell IGA in February. Donations went to the Grabben Gullen Rural Fire Service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GRWF has endeavoured to participate in local events throughout the year, however, due to COVID-19, fewer opportunities were available. On the occasions where GRWF did participate in such events, GRWF assesses its participation has been effective at positively engaging with the community. 	

Communication Tool	GRWF activities and outcomes	Effectiveness	Future improvements
Local community event participation contd.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two SISF events – Crookwell Public School Wind Power Showcase event and the blade viewing event. Goulburn Railway Club’s Rose Tournament presentation ceremony. 		
eNewsletters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A few GRWF activities were announced in the Biala Wind Farm monthly newsletter, such as the Community Fund and sponsorships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GRWF believes this communication tool was not effective due to the low number of updates provided about the wind farm. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly eNewsletters

Conclusion

GRWF believes the Community Information Plan (CIP) has overall been effective during 2020, in spite of the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. In response to the reduced engagement opportunities through conventional means, where possible, GRWF proactively moved to engaging across online platforms. GRWF will continue to identify and implement future improvements to the CIP in consultation with the Community Consultative Committee.