

## 2023 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.

2023 saw a return to more regular community activities post COVID-19 restrictions, with public tours recommencing and proving very popular with the broader community. Events have largely also returned to pre-COVID levels, with sponsorship opportunities for GRWF increasing in 2023. Given this return to activities in the community, GRWF has returned many of its community engagement initiatives to pre-pandemic levels, where possible. Government initiatives such as STEM school partnerships remain at a limited level, however GRWF continues to explore opportunities in the educational area to engage local school communities.

**Table 1 shows the Imperative communication tools**

Communication Tool	GRWF activities and outcomes	Effectiveness	Future improvements
<b>Community Consultative Committee (CCC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One meeting was held in 2023, with another planned for late April 2024.</li> <li>Information about meetings, including minutes, is provided on the GRWF website.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>In consultation with the CCC and independent chair, and given GRWF is in operational phase, it has been determined that annual CCC meetings will be suitable for the time being.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advertise for more Committee Member(s)</li> <li>Continue to work with CCC Chair to ensure meeting frequency is adequate throughout the year</li> </ul>

Communication Tool	GRWF activities and outcomes	Effectiveness	Future improvements
<p><b>1800 telephone number, email, website enquiry/complaints form</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing and monitored daily.</li> <li>• 60 calls to the 1800 telephone number during 2023.</li> <li>• There were 8 emails to <a href="mailto:info@gullenrangewindfarm.com">info@gullenrangewindfarm.com</a> in 2023</li> <li>• GRWF contact information is provided as part of the info@gullenrangewindfarm email signature.</li> <li>• 1 website contact us form enquiry received in 2023.</li> <li>• Contact information is advertised in the local newspapers. It is also provided on public tours and at community events attended by GRWF.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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 consistent number of calls and emails.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Clean Energy Program (CLEP)</b></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"> <li>• During Year 9 of the Clean Energy Program (23<sup>rd</sup> December 2022 to 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2023), a total of three Stage 1 applications were received, three Energy Efficiency audits were carried out and three Stage 1 vouchers were issued to applicants.</li> <li>• Stage 2 of the Clean Energy Program: four applications were approved by the Energy Committee, with the total value of all the approved grants for Year 9 amounting to approx. \$30,800.</li> <li>• GRWF made more than 40 phone calls and sent 130 emails to local residents regarding the CLEP during 2023.</li> <li>• There were 360 visits to the Clean Energy Program’s webpage in 2023.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotion of the GRWF Clean Energy Program has continued to not be as effective as hoped, with 3 of the 4 funding rounds for Stage 2 not receiving any applications in 2023 and only a small number of applications for Stage 1</li> <li>• GRWF believes the CLEP has however continued to be effective as a community engagement tool. This is supported by the high visitation rate to the CLEP webpage, the high volume of emails sent, and phone calls made by GRWF. In addition, there was an opportunity during these CLEP communications for GRWF to answer questions about other aspects of the wind farm.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote in newsletter.</li> <li>• Consider advertising in local publications.</li> <li>• Proactively engage with Stage 1 applicants via phone and follow-up emails to encourage them to progress to Stage 2 of their applications.</li> </ul>

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<b>Community Fund</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information about the Community Fund is provided on the GRWF website, CCC and at community events attended by GRWF.</li> <li>There were 314 visits to the Community Fund webpage in 2023.</li> <li>Seven projects were funded in 2023, with information about funding outcomes available on the GRWF website. The projects supported in 2023 were:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anglican Church Parish- St Bartholomew’s Church</li> <li>Anglican Church Parish – St George’s Church</li> <li>The Australian Agricultural Centre</li> <li>Breadalbane Hall Committee</li> <li>International Women’s Day 2024</li> <li>Southern Tablelands Group 12 (RFS)</li> <li>Upper Lachlan Landcare Inc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GRWF believes that the Community Fund grant scheme was effectively communicated to the community, with seven community projects receiving grants in 2023.</li> <li>This is supported by the high volume of visits to the Community Fund webpage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote in newsletter.</li> <li>Consider advertising in local publications.</li> <li>Increase project success stories in local media.</li> <li>Work with ULSC to improve publicity opportunities.</li> </ul>

**Table 2 shows the Additional communication tools**

Communication Tool	GRWF activities and outcomes	Effectiveness	Future improvements
<b>Wind Farm public tours</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Tours recommenced in 2023 following a pause due to COVID-19 lockdowns</li> <li>Three tours were held throughout 2023</li> <li>There were approx. 1,075 visits to the Gullen Range Wind Farm’s tour web page.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The public tours remain a very popular way for the broader community to engage with GRWF, with all tours fully booked and waitlist in place for a number of dates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look to roll out more frequent public tours if operationally feasible in 2024</li> </ul>
<b>Website</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Live and updated frequently.</li> <li>24 news updates posted to the website.</li> <li>In 2023, there were 4,593 unique visitors to the website and 10,570 page views.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GRWF assesses the website to be an effective communication tool, providing the public with regular news updates about the wind farm,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue refreshing information on website to provide</li> </ul>

Communication Tool	GRWF activities and outcomes	Effectiveness	Future improvements
<b>Sponsorship</b>	<p>Six community groups/projects were sponsored:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 145<sup>th</sup> Crookwell Show</li> <li>• Crookwell Men’s Bowling Club’s Gullen Range Triples Classic Tournament</li> <li>• Crookwell Ladies Open 4s Bowling Tournament</li> <li>• Goulburn Railway Bowling Club’s 2021 Rose Tournament</li> <li>• Crookwell Public School’s Year 6 Presentation Day</li> <li>• Crookwell Junior Green Devils Rugby League Club</li> </ul>	<p>including its activities in the community and programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GRWF has been proud to support local community groups.</li> <li>• 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 sponsorships have been through BJCE Australia, the owner of GRWF.</li> </ul>	<p>new information to the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look to diversify sponsorships outside of Community Fund support to other areas</li> </ul>
<b>Social media</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GRWF does not have any active social media channels, however explores options for posting relating to specific events through community Facebook groups as suitable, or posting through ULSC channels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GRWF does not have any active social media channels.</li> </ul>	
<b>School engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in school STEM engagement in 2023 remained reduced post-COVID</li> <li>• GRWF attended the Crookwell High School Careers Expo, providing information to students on the wind farm and careers in renewable energy production</li> <li>• GRWF supported the Crookwell Public School Year 6 presentation assembly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GRWF assesses that it was effective in engaging students during 2023, albeit in a reduced capacity compared to previous years</li> <li>• This is evidenced by GRWF engaging with primary and high school students in the local area at appropriate events and through relevant sponsorship support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working to reestablish relevant and recurrent STEM engagement with local schools, through Government STEM Industry School Partnerships (SISP) or other opportunities</li> <li>• Look into broader STEM program across both GRWF</li> </ul>

Communication Tool	GRWF activities and outcomes	Effectiveness	Future improvements
			and Biala Wind Farm
<b>Presentations to interest groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GRWF hosted a tour for Goulburn Rotary Club in 2023</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GRWF is happy to support special tours or presentations on request, providing it is operationally viable</li> <li>Multiple other requests were received for tours or wind farm visits, however had to be declined for a number of reasons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to host adhoc tours as possible in line with operational requirements</li> </ul>
<b>One-on-one meetings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Met with 2 community members throughout 2023.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The individual meetings were effective, however fewer one-on-one meetings (particularly in face-to-face settings) were conducted compared to previous years, due to staffing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We expect the frequency of one-on-one meetings to increase in 2023-2024</li> </ul>
<b>Newspaper advertisements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 x 6 monthly advertisement of complaints line were published in the local newspapers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Goulburn Post has the largest readership in the region and that's why it was chosen as the newspaper to publish the advert in.</li> <li>The Goulburn Post reaches a wider audience than our newsletter and our website.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue advertising periodically throughout 2024, with additional information in advertisements for community interest e.g., tours, CLEP etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Media reports of wind farm progress &amp; activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>29 news items were posted to the GRWF website.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GRWF assesses its media releases and news updates have been effective at providing regular updates about the wind farm and its activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase media stories for community engagement, CLEP and tours.</li> </ul>

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<b>Local community event participation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>144<sup>th</sup> Crookwell Show: GRWF was a Red Ribbon sponsor of the show, which included an information booth at the Show ground across the weekend. A facepainter was featured with attendees donating a gold coin. Funds raised were dollar matched by NGRWF and donated to the local Rural Fire Service.</li> <li>Attended the Goulburn Railway Club's Rose Tournament presentation ceremony.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GRWF has endeavoured to participate in local events throughout the year where possible</li> <li>The Crookwell Show in particular was a good way to have face to face engagement with community members and to answer questions, particularly to educate regarding the CLEP and Community Fund</li> </ul>	
<b>eNewsletters</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 newsletters were published in 2023.</li> <li>GRWF activities were also announced in the regular Biala Wind Farm digital newsletter, such as the Community Fund, Clean Energy Program, and sponsorships initiatives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Newsletters remain an effective way to provide information to interested parties in GRWF's activities and engagement with the community</li> </ul>	

### Conclusion

GRWF believes the Community Information Plan (CIP) has overall been effective during 2023 with the increase in activities thanks to relaxed COVID-19 measures and a return to normality for the community.

While face to face engagements remained reduced, there has been a large amount of information shared with the community through other mediums, including the website, newsletters and via attendance at local events. Many queries were handled in a timely manner when received via the website, phone line or email.

GRWF will continue to identify and implement future improvements to the CIP in consultation with the Community Consultative Committee.