

Community Engagement

As far as I am aware, there has never been a Community Consultative Committee (CCC) for either of the Infigen wind farms in our locality and the Department by its inactivity has allowed that.

The Planning Assessment Commission, in its Determination for the Capital 2, Modification 2 decreed:

“Community Consultative Committee

C6. The Proponent shall establish a Community Consultative Committee (CCC) for the project to the satisfaction of the Secretary. This CCC must:

- be established prior to the commencement of construction, unless otherwise agreed with the Secretary; and
- have a membership and be operated in accordance with the procedures detailed in Appendix C of the draft *NSW Wind Farm Guidelines* (Department of Planning & Infrastructure 2011), or any update to this guideline.”

Wind farm developers don't action unpalatable items before they have to. Infigen is no different.

Infigen created a deceptively named Capital Community Committee (ccc – lower case to differentiate) approximately 3 years ago. Its major role is to evaluate community requests for funds and apportion the budget. They have distributed \$130,000 in sponsorships on behalf of the operating local wind farms; Capital (67 turbines) and Woodlawn (23 turbines) in that timeframe.

So, we were surprised to see in the supporting documentation for Capital 2, Modification 4, the following statement:

“Community Engagement

Since the Project Approval was granted, CWF2PL has continued its engagement with the local community via:

- Capital 2 Wind Farm Community Consultative Committee as part of the Capital Energy Renewable Precinct ccc: and (my change to lower case)
- Regular.....”

Infigen publishes the minutes of the ccc in the Tarago Community Times.

In the September 2016 edition, the minutes for the latest ccc meeting read:

“JULY 2016 CAPITAL COMMUNITY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Successful applicants

The Capital Community Committee turns three in September 2016. Over this period the Committee has approved over \$130,000 to sponsor projects for the benefit of the Bungendore and Tarago communities.

The Committee met on 21 July 2016 at the Woodworks Café in Bungendore to review four applications; and approved \$8,500 for:

- Bungendore Rodeo in support of hampers
- Bungendore Pony Club in support of a new cross-country jump course that the local community can use”

Admirable, but that is it. No Capital 2 CCC imbedded in there. You would think they would have at least discussed the imminent Modification 4.

Community engagement is a key issue. Infigen agrees as is shown by the inclusion of a significant section on the topic to close the Modification 4 request. A genuine CCC is fundamental to community engagement.

The statement in the Modification 4 application is deliberately false and misleading which I understand is an offence under The EPA Act, 1979

148B Offence--false or misleading information

- (1) A person must not provide information in connection with a planning matter that the person knows, or ought reasonably to know, is false or misleading in a material particular.

If so, the Department has no option but to reject the Modification request.