



MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday September 23, 2015

Thuggish behaviour disrupts Information Day

A Community Information Day for the proposed Rye Park Wind Farm, which was held on Tuesday in the Rye Park Memorial Hall, was disrupted by a small, unruly group of protesters who threatened people conducting the information day with violence and stole lists of people who had requested more information about the wind farm.

"It is disappointing almost beyond belief that this sort of thuggish, intimidatory behaviour should be tolerated by the community," said Trustpower Wind Generation Development Manager Rontheo Van Zyl, who says he was personally threatened with violence.

"We believe that people have every right to protest against wind farms, or anything else for that matter, but not in a way that threatens people, intimidates them or prevents them from finding out more information."

Mr Van Zyl said the information day, which started at 1pm, had been particularly successful with more than 60 people attending before the small group of no more than 10 protesters arrived at around 5.30pm and started shouting and harassing Trustpower staff and its team of consultants who were there to provide information.

"We have already been subjected to several phone threats of violence and, although we didn't really anticipate any harassment of this kind, we had engaged two licensed security officers to be in attendance," Mr Van Zyl said.

"I must emphasise that at no point did any Trustpower staff or its consultants restrain or take any physical action against the protesters, and they remained calm and did their best not to respond to this outrageous behaviour.

"This was an attempt to give local residents the maximum opportunity to learn more about how wind farms really function and how they benefit the community.

"It is necessary because it's obvious that some people in the community have been subjected to considerable misinformation both about the proposed Rye Park Wind Farm and wind farms in general – and this small, unrepresentative group is clearly behind that.

"One of the purposes in holding an information day such as this is to give people a chance to hear other people asking questions and hearing the answers in an open and transparent environment," Mr Van Zyl said. "It is shameful that this group should seek to prevent that from happening rather than engaging in meaningful discussion."

Mr Van Zyl said members of the group had also been seen attempting to urinate on one of Trustpower's vehicles.

“This sort of disgraceful behaviour is not typical of the broader community and only further serves to illustrate that this is a small, unruly group who prefer thuggish intimidation to open information and debate.”

Members of the community wanting more information on the project are encouraged to:

- visit the project website www.ryeparkwf.com.au
- contact the Project Team on 1800 839 661
- or email ryeparkwindfarm@trustpower.com.au.

Media contact:

Nigel Hopkins, Media Consultant
Comjo
(08) 8390 1491 or 0411 707 150
nigelhopkins@comjo.com.au

For more information on the Rye Park Wind Farm please visit the project website
www.ryeparkwf.com.au

Trustpower:

Trustpower is a publicly owned electricity generator and multiproduct retailer company listed on the New Zealand stock exchange and one of the 15 largest companies by market capitalisation on the NZX. Its current market capitalisation is around \$2.5 billion.

It is one of the most experienced wind farm developers and operators in Australasia whose involvement in wind power dates back to its purchase of Stage 1 of the Tararua Wind Farm in New Zealand in 1999.

Trustpower owns and operate primarily renewable energy assets, including 42 hydro stations, (39 in NZ and three in Australia) and a total of eight wind farms, of which four are located in Australia, including Stages 1 & 2 of the Snowtown Wind Farm (the largest wind farm in South Australia) and the Blayney and Crookwell wind farms New South Wales. It develops wind farms with the ultimate goal of owning and operating them for the life of the projects.

Trustpower takes prides in the ownership and operation of its projects and its reputation for establishing long term positive and supportive relationships with the communities within which its projects are located. All of Trustpower's operating projects enjoy strong landowner and community support.