

BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES

Wind's growing role in regional Australia



FAST FACTS ON AUSTRALIAN WIND POWER

Australia's 82 operational wind farms are delivering significant financial and social benefits to their host communities.

- ≈ Wind farm construction has delivered an economic boost of almost \$4 billion to regional Australia—over half of this in the last five years. Wind farms under construction now are injecting a further \$1.6 billion in economic activity into the regional economy.
- ≈ The 2GW of new wind farm capacity currently under construction have created an estimated 1,950 direct local jobs and a further 4,500 indirect jobs in local businesses that supply to the projects.
- ≈ Across the 25-year life span of Australia's existing wind farms and wind farms under construction, an estimated \$10.5 billion could be delivered to host communities.

Sharing these benefits equitably with local host communities ensures these projects generate not just much-needed clean energy, but also strengthen the social and economic health of regional Australia.

For the first time, *Building Stronger Communities: Wind's growing role in regional Australia* presents a list of wind farm Community Enhancement Funds across the nation and illustrates the direct and indirect financial and social benefits to Australia's regional communities from wind power.

Between \$19 and \$21.5 million goes directly into regional communities every year through payments to host landholders and wind farm Community Enhancement Funds (CEFs). With fourteen more wind farms under construction, that annual figure will increase to between \$30 and \$32.5 million.

From 2019, Community Enhancement Funds will make available \$2.5 million annually for community projects. A diverse range of other benefit sharing mechanisms will see additional payments go to neighbouring landholders, local councils and community shareholders.

If the 70-plus wind farms in the development pipeline are constructed, more than \$7 million could flow into regional communities through CEFs alone each year.

Wind farms are playing an increasingly important role in regional communities. With the right Federal and State policy settings, wind farms, and other renewable energy projects, can become an even stronger part of regional community life.

As Australia builds enough new wind power to meet the 2020 Renewable Energy Target and the rapidly falling cost of wind energy drives new installation, regional Australia should continue to benefit.

However, the current National Energy Guarantee (NEG) is unlikely to create a stable investment environment for renewable energy projects and could leave regional areas out in the cold.