

3 March 2021

The Honourable Guy Barnett
Minister for Energy
Level 5, 4 Salamanca Place
HOBART TAS 7000
Via email: renewableenergy@stategrowth.tas.gov.au

Dear Minister

Draft Renewable Energy Coordination Framework (the Framework)

Thank you very much for inviting Goldwind Australia to comment on the Framework with its three objectives of (1) achieving Tasmania's Renewable Energy Target and (2) establishing Tasmania's Renewable Energy Zones whilst (3) partnering with Tasmania's communities to deliver local and regional benefits. GWA is very supportive of the Framework and is looking forward to collaborating with the Tasmanian Government to achieve its ambitious goals.

Goldwind is a global tier one wind turbine manufacturer and a leading renewable energy solutions provider. With a combined 13.06 GW of new wind capacity from onshore and offshore installations in 2020 Goldwind ranked 2nd in Bloomberg New Energy Finance's 2020 global ranking. Goldwind has over ten years' experience of successfully developing renewable energy projects across Australia, with 553 MW operating, 959 MW of projects currently under construction. In Tasmania, Goldwind operates Wild Cattle Hill Wind Farm with an installed capacity of 144 MW and is developing additional Renewable Wind Energy projects which are in the early stages of development.

Goldwind supports the fact that the Framework has a strong focus on community engagement and sustainable development to enable appropriate development in pursuit of Tasmania's renewable policy objectives. GWA has a strong commitment to the four foundation principles set out in the *Community Engagement Guidelines for the Australian Wind Industry* (Clean Energy Council 2018) of openness, inclusiveness, responsiveness, and accountability.

The Tasmanian Renewable Energy Target of doubling Tasmania's renewable generation to 200 per cent of its current needs by 2040 is amongst the most ambitious in the world and GWA agrees with the Framework's first objective that an orderly and coordinated process is needed to drive the development of renewable generation as well as transmission capacity. In this context it is important to understand that Tasmania is the smallest region in the NEM measured by installed generation capacity and the NEM itself is one of the smaller electricity markets globally. Therefore, a reverse auction mechanism may not attract the level of competition necessary to support the least cost and optimal delivery of the TRET. Goldwind believes that the Tasmanian Government may benefit from considering a mechanism where the demand and associated development of renewable generation capacity is channelled through Aurora Energy.

For example, if the Framework were to develop five-year renewable capacity milestones, then Aurora Energy could run an annual tender process for long term renewable Power Purchase Agreements (PPA) and where the tender delivers a competitive outcome Aurora Energy can then choose to enter into a long term PPA. The team of industry experts and subject matter specialists at Aurora Energy has experience in such a process and valuing long term PPAs as Aurora Energy's contract with Cattle Hill Wind Farm is the result of such a process. In addition to this competitive process, an increase and extension of the Federal Renewable Energy Target would also benefit the financial viability of any renewable energy project in Tasmania.

Engaging early with the community when mapping our priority areas within Tasmania's Renewable Energy Zones (REZ) and developing renewable energy projects is important. Goldwind has a track record with respect to engaging with and delivering social as well as economic benefits to the local community and wider region.

Stakeholder and community engagement is in its essence about making better, more sustainable decisions through a process that engenders trust and credibility. Stakeholder and community engagement contributes to informed decisions in several important ways. It brings all perspectives to the table; it identifies critical issues early; and it allows the decision to be understood and owned by as many people as possible.

Specifically, for wind farm projects, strong engagement creates mutual benefits for developers and communities as it creates transparency keeping stakeholders and the community informed about the decision-making processes of the project. A strong and robust engagement program can, in general, build respectful relationships allowing stakeholder and community support for and identification with project operations and goals whilst decreasing the levels of misinformation about the project and wind energy in general. Goldwind seeks to support communities in the local area of the wind farm through a range of benefit sharing methods tailored to the specific local community, including Community Funds, targeted sponsorships, neighbour agreements and facilitating economic benefits. In addition, there is strong focus on information sharing through opening an Information Centre which is run by a local community relations officer, and establishing a Community Consultative Committee (CCC) which holds regular meetings to provide updates, listens to feedback and designs and implements the Community Fund. As transparency is of the utmost importance, each project has of course a project website containing up to date information of the project and contact details for enquiries and complaints. Furthermore, tools such as media releases, direct letter drops, local radio updates, site visits (albeit limited), community events etc. form all part of the community engagement program.

At Cattle Hill Wind Farm, for example, Goldwind took the following actions (to name but a few) which benefited the local and wider Tasmanian community:

- Significant economic benefits, including more than 150 people employed during peak construction and seven full time local staff onsite during operations. Tasmanian businesses delivered civil and electrical works, road upgrades and some tower components. A local information centre, staffed by a local community relations officer, was established in Bothwell from August 2018 to March 2020 to allow local community members an opportunity to learn more about the project – over 850 visitors.
- Sponsorship Fund during construction donated approx. \$90,000 to over 30 different local based organisations, for example the 39th FIPS-Mouche World Fly Fishing Championship held in Tasmania in 2019.
- The Cattle Hill Wind Farm Community Fund with annual voluntary funding of \$120,000 during operations.

Goldwind has pioneered the alignment of renewable energy projects with the broader environmental, land use and social policies and strategies. Apart from aiming to minimise the impact on the local community during the construction phase by for example carefully planning haulage routes for over size over mass deliveries and upgrading local roads, Goldwind were also the first the wind farm developer in Australia to install IdentiFlight®. At Cattle Hill Wind Farm, Goldwind installed IdentiFlight®, an aerial monitoring and detection technology system as one of the key initiatives to mitigate possible impact on the Tasmanian Wedge-tailed Eagle population in the Central Highlands of Tasmania ([New technology to be trialled to protect eagles at Cattle Hill Wind Farm – Goldwind Australia](#)).

Tasmania is one of the pillars of Goldwind's Australian business plan and therefore Goldwind supports the Tasmanian Government's goal to establish the Renewable Energy Coordinator (the Coordinator) and we are looking forward to working with the Coordinator to facilitate the development and generation required to achieve Tasmania's TRET backing it with Goldwind's 600MW Tasmanian renewable wind energy project development pipeline.

Yours faithfully



Thomas Schmitz

Head of Wholesale Markets, Goldwind Australia Pty Ltd