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CEC Best Practice Charter Report - 2025

Wind. It means the world to us.™

Vestas®

Vestas Development Australia Pty Ltd (Vestas) is pleased to provide its second annual report to the **Clean Energy Council (CEC)** in respect of our adherence to the **CEC Best Practice Charter For Renewable Energy Projects** commitments.

The **2025 report** outlines how **Vestas** engages respectfully with the communities in which we develop our wind farm projects, including Traditional Owners, and how we respect and enhance local environmental, agricultural, and cultural values to ensure a positive contribution to the regions in which we operate. The report also highlights particular recent examples and case studies of our commitment to engaging positively with local communities.

Vestas acknowledges the importance of engaging respectfully, regularly and transparently with communities and providing tangible benefit to regional areas from wind farm projects, to ensure a sustainable renewable energy industry.

We recommend this report to the **CEC** and welcome feedback.

Vestas

Respectful, regular and transparent engagement will support social licence.

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1 About Vestas

Vestas has more than 40 years of experience in wind energy globally and was the first company to reach the 100 GW landmarks for both the installation and service of wind turbines. Vestas has again been recognised as the most sustainable company in the entire energy industry in the Corporate Knights Global 100 ranking and remains among the top three most sustainable companies across all sectors in the world

We develop, design, manufacture, install, and service onshore and offshore wind turbines across the globe. To date, Vestas has installed more than 189 GW of wind turbines (almost 20% of worldwide installed wind capacity) in 88 countries. Through our industry-leading smart data capabilities, we interpret, forecast, and maximize wind resources to deliver best-in-class wind power solutions across more than 151 GW of capacity under service. Together with our customers, Vestas's more than 29,000 employees are bringing the world sustainable energy solutions to power a bright future.

Vestas in Australia

Vestas has been active in Australia since 1993. With a local workforce of more than 750 passionate people, Vestas has an installed base of over 6 GW of wind turbines. Vestas wind turbines provide around 40% of Australia's installed wind capacity. It is with great pride and responsibility that Vestas currently provides more wind power than any other wind turbine manufacturer in the country.

Vestas is also developing a large number of wind farm projects across the country which will contribute to the expected growth in wind energy over the next two decades. We are excited to be a key part of Australia's energy transition.

We believe wind will form the backbone of the sustainable energy systems of the future, and we remain focused on developing solutions that accelerate the energy transition and strengthen Vestas's continued leadership in wind energy.

2 Best Practice Charter Commitments

Our report against each Best Practice Charter Commitment is summarised here.

2.1 We will engage respectfully with the local community, including Traditional Owners of the land, to seek their views and input before submitting a development application and finalising the design of the project.

Vestas is committed to engaging early, respectfully, regularly and transparently with the local community. Our goal is to engage early to help us identify potential community concerns. We recognise that individual communities are unique and we ensure our engagement is meaningful. We work closely with the local community and stakeholders to deliver projects that will have a positive, long-term impact. We provide opportunities for public participation in our decision making, and where possible, we incorporate community feedback into the project design.

Vestas is committed to engaging respectfully with Traditional Owners to ensure we protect cultural heritage within our project developments. We identify Indigenous people potentially affected by the project, and follow guidelines set out by each State to identify and manage cultural heritage sites.

Case study on respectful engagement: Cleve Wind Farm

On the Eyre Peninsula in South Australia, Vestas is developing the Cleve Wind Farm. The wind farm has a planned capacity of up to 500MW. The Project team has been consulting with landowners since 2021, and with the local community and Traditional Owners since 2023. This has been undertaken through one-on-one meetings, community information sessions and regular project updates to stakeholders. Feedback has been encouraged, received, and implemented into preliminary project design. This feedback has ensured the Project does not impact on areas of interest or impact land management practices for farming.

While the Cleve Wind Farm is unlikely to impact Aboriginal cultural heritage, Vestas initiated consultation with the Barngarla Determination Aboriginal Corporation (BDAC) and intends to continue to engage with BDAC throughout all stages of the Project in relation to Native Title and heritage matters. In addition to further site assessment and consultation with the Barngarla Traditional Owners, appropriate management actions, in accordance with legislative requirements, will be adopted throughout the development and construction stages of the Project with respect to Aboriginal heritage and artefacts identified at the project site.

2.2 We will provide timely information and be accessible and responsive in addressing the local community's feedback and concerns throughout the life of the project.

Vestas is committed to providing timely information and being accessible and responsive in addressing the local community's feedback and concerns throughout the life of the project. During development, Vestas uses a range of communication and engagement tools to maximise community reach and create meaningful opportunities for feedback. We are committed to regular, ongoing engagement.

Case study on community engagement: Captains Mountain Wind Farm's commitment to inform, engage and seek feedback

Our Captains Mountain Wind Farm project in Queensland has logged over 2,000 interactions with community members and stakeholders to date. Our Project team is committed to maintaining strong relationships with key stakeholders and ensuring local community input to achieve positive local and regional community benefits.

The project has implemented an extensive engagement program supported by a wide range of communication materials and tools, including:

- A stakeholder database to record all engagements and support responsive follow-up.
- A project website featuring key updates, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), contact and feedback forms and downloadable project materials and reports submitted as part of the development application process.
- A toll-free community phone line (1800 313 095) and dedicated email address (info@captainsmountainwindfarm.com.au).
- Social media updates shared via the project's Facebook page to promote events, share project milestones, and engage a wider audience.
- A dedicated local project shopfront providing an accessible point of contact.
- Regular newsletters distributed in both print via letterbox drop and digital to subscribed stakeholders to keep the community informed of project progress.
- Project update letters distributed to landholders and residents near the project area, as part of a doorknock initiative aimed at speaking directly with neighbours and providing tailored updates and contact details.

- A printed and digital FAQ booklet, regularly updated and distributed at community sessions, the shopfront, and online.
- A wind energy education booklet developed for children to support local schools and build awareness of renewable energy.
- Targeted invitations to project events and sessions, shared via letter, email and SMS.
- Key stakeholder briefings held with landholders, Traditional Owners, local and state representatives, peak bodies, business owners, and community groups.
- Community information sessions and drop-in events.
- Community surveys to understand local values, preferences, and priorities.
- Site tours conducted with stakeholders, including Traditional Owners, to build shared understanding of the project area.
- Community sponsorships to support local events, clubs, and initiatives.

2.3 We will be sensitive to areas of high biodiversity, cultural and landscape value in the design and operation of projects.

Vestas is committed to ensuring that our wind farm projects are developed with a strong emphasis on safeguarding areas of high biodiversity, cultural significance, and landscape value throughout the project lifecycle.

Vestas screens potential wind farm sites to assess the potential impacts to biodiversity, cultural heritage, and landscape values. We identify potential environmental or cultural concerns early and determine the feasibility of mitigating these impacts. Only projects that demonstrate an ability to meet criteria and where impacts are deemed acceptable or manageable through effective mitigation strategies are developed. Vestas aims to mitigate the impacts to landscape values through siting and design of the project layout. Vestas will establish minimum setbacks from neighbouring dwellings and a buffer from the nearby town centre to preserve the integrity of communal spaces. We aim to understand areas of high landscape value and adjust a project's layout to reduce potential visual impacts.

Case study on biodiversity protection: Winterbourne Wind Farm

Winterbourne Wind Farm has now completed its third revision of the Biodiversity Development Assessment Report (BDAR). The BDAR identifies and assesses biodiversity values in accordance with the Biodiversity Assessment Method (BAM) 2020.

WinterbourneWind has undertaken six years of biodiversity surveys and technical assessment for the proposed project. The wind farm infrastructure has been preferentially sited in low-quality grassland areas to minimize impact to high-condition woody vegetation and the threatened species which utilise this vegetation for habitat.

2.4 We will minimise the impacts on highly productive agricultural land and explore opportunities to integrate agricultural production.

Wind turbines only occupy a small amount of land, and landowners can continue normal grazing and cropping activities. Vestas is committed to ensuring that the integration of these two land uses – wind energy and agriculture – is both practical and beneficial.

Our design philosophy centres on recognising that productive agricultural land is a valuable resource. By strategically designing our wind farms to avoid disruption of key farming activities, we can preserve the functionality of the land for ongoing agricultural use. We work with landowners to integrate wind energy infrastructure with agricultural operations by ensuring that the layout of wind turbines, access tracks and electrical cabling allows for the continued use of the land for crops and livestock. This approach not only supports sustainable energy generation but also respects and enhances the productivity of agricultural enterprises, creating a sustainable balance between renewable energy development and agricultural continuity.

As an example, Captains Mountain Wind Farm has been designed to minimise impacts to productive agricultural land by using existing farm tracks where possible and carefully considering alternatives before final design decisions are made. Where feasible, infrastructure is aligned along ridge lines and designed to avoid intersecting contour banks, helping to maintain existing drainage and support continued agricultural use.

2.5 We will consult the community on the potential visual, noise, traffic and other impacts of the project, and on the mitigation options.

Vestas is committed to meaningful and ongoing consultation with the community on potential visual, noise, traffic, and other impacts of the project. We use a number of communication channels and engagement tools to inform and consult with landowners, neighbouring properties, local businesses and the broader community. This includes project update letters, door knocks, individual meetings, stakeholder briefings and community information sessions.

We comply with the visual assessment guidelines for each State. We consult with impacted neighbours about potential visual impacts and solutions. Consultation may include discussion of vegetation screening or other mitigation options to minimise visual impact.

To ensure our projects achieve relevant noise criteria, a pre-construction noise assessment is undertaken based on the nominal turbine model, turbine specific sound power levels and the proposed wind farm layout. We design our wind farm layouts for the relevant noise criteria and discuss any residual impacts with affected landowners and neighbours. Noise modelling results are communicated both through our communications channels and also as part of environmental impact assessment reporting. We also ensure that the community is made aware of potential construction noise and management measures to reduce construction noise impacts, including the hours of construction works and noise control strategies such as the construction of temporary acoustic barriers, the use of enclosures around machines, and silencers. Operational noise monitoring is conducted following commissioning of the Project to verify compliance with the noise criteria

Our projects undertake traffic impact assessments to analyse whether the local road system can accommodate expected vehicle types and traffic volumes during construction, operation and decommissioning and advise on what road upgrades and traffic management measures should be implemented to mitigate traffic impacts.

Case study on community engagement: Piambong Wind Farm's commitment to consultation on Project impacts

Our Piambong team have been active in the community over four years, undertaking close to 4,000 engagement activities to date to ensure local feedback directly informs project planning and decision-making.

Piambong Wind Farm listened to the community and Mid-Western Regional Council concerns around traffic and is proposing to use on-site accommodation and a quarry to reduce traffic impacts on the local community. The Project team has also carefully selected main access points for the Project to reduce traffic on public roads in rural areas.

The Project's visual impact modelling is an example of our commitment to best practice. Visual impact modelling has been based on the largest possible turbine to reflect a conservative, worst-case scenario. Informed by this analysis and community input, the Project made substantial changes to the proposed wind farm project layout, including the removal of more than 20 turbines to address localised visual concerns. The Project team also identified and commenced early mitigation measures such as targeted tree planting, in collaboration with local community organisations who provide these services. This will help minimise potential impacts well in advance of construction.

The Project team's proposed use of Vestas turbine blades with serrated trailing edges will significantly reduce the overall noise footprint.

These measures reflect a proactive, transparent, responsive approach to project development, ensuring local concerns raised during consultation are addressed early and effectively.

2.6 We will support the local economy by providing local employment and procurement opportunities.

Vestas is committed to supporting regional economies through local employment and procurement opportunities. Our projects generate significant economic activity in regional areas, creating local jobs and boosting local businesses. In addition, our projects provide sponsorship during development and create community benefit funds, which supports employment and procurement opportunities in the local economy. Where possible, Vestas will support Indigenous-owned businesses as part of project development, construction and operation. Employment and training outcomes will be supported both as an outcome of project-specific negotiations, but also by Vestas encouraging its contractors, subcontractors and affiliates to do the same.

As an example, Captains Mountain Wind Farm, in the Toowoomba Regional Council area, will deliver significant benefits to the Millmerran region and surrounding communities. This includes opportunities for local contractors, suppliers, and businesses. It also includes up to 275 jobs at peak during construction, with an average of 140 FTE over the period, around 10 long-term jobs in service and maintenance once operational, and development of new skilled labour in the Darling Downs in the growing renewable energy sector.

2.7 We will offer communities the opportunity to share in the benefits of the project, and consult them on the options available, including the relevant governance arrangements.

Vestas supports benefit sharing opportunities as a key opportunity to strengthen social license in local communities. There are several ways in which the community can share in the benefits of a Vestas wind farm project. This includes local procurement, local employment, sponsorships, and the provision of a Community Benefit Fund. Vestas is committed to developing community benefit funds for our projects that align with government and community expectation in terms of funding and governance.

Case study on Benefit Sharing: Winterbourne Wind Farm's Community Benefit Fund

Walcha Council, Uralla Shire Council, and WinterbourneWind Pty Ltd have entered into a Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) which will establish a Community Benefit Fund (CBF) for the Winterbourne Wind Farm project.

WinterbourneWind will provide $1,000,000 to the CBF when the project achieves financial commitment, and $750,000 annually to the fund from the start of commercial operations through to project decommissioning (based on a project up to 600 MW capacity). For every megawatt over 600 MW built, we will contribute an extra $1,000 per MW annually to the CBF. The annual payment will be adjusted for inflation according to the Consumer Price Index. To ensure community input, the CBF will be supported by community advisory committees, established to make recommendations about the kinds of projects and services the community wants to invest in. The CBF will be split 90% to the Walcha community and 10% to the Uralla Shire community, which matches the relative geographic and infrastructure split of the proposed project within each Local Government Area.

This is a great outcome for both the WinterbourneWind project and the Walcha and Uralla communities.

2.8 We commit to using the project to support educational and tourism opportunities where appropriate

Vestas is committed to supporting and providing development opportunities for apprentices to work on Vestas projects. Currently Vestas has 40 electrical / mechanical / blade technician apprentices at various stages of their apprenticeships

Where possible Vestas will look to engage with schools and TAFEs to provide careers guidance and education in renewable energy. For example, Winterbourne Wind Farm attended the TAFE Connects with Walcha workshop to discuss training requirements and opportunities. Should the Winterbourne project be approved, we estimate up to 390 construction jobs will be created over four years, providing opportunities for local employees and businesses interested in working on the project. Project construction will also provide opportunities for a wide range of service providers including agricultural suppliers, mechanics, hotels, restaurants, and grocery stores. We also estimate up to 16 long term local jobs during operation, with workers based in the local area.

Vestas acknowledges renewable energy projects can provide an opportunity for education and tourism but notes that safety at operational facilities must always take precedence.

2.9 We will demonstrate responsible land stewardship over the life of the project and welcome opportunities to enhance the ecological, cultural and/or agricultural value of the land

Vestas designs our projects to avoid and minimise biodiversity impacts, and where required, we offset residual impacts to ensure a net positive outcome to the natural environment. We design our projects to minimise soil and water impacts. Farm management protocols are built into our agreements with host landowners. We seek to ensure that our activities during project development, construction and operation have limited impacts on existing agricultural operations. Vestas is committed to the responsible management of cultural heritage.

Case Study: Tara Wind Farm's responsible land stewardship

Our Tara Wind Farm development project is actively look for opportunities to strengthen the ecological health, cultural heritage, and agricultural productivity of the land proposed for development. Our design approach to biodiversity management follows Queensland and Commonwealth guidelines so that local flora, fauna, and ecological communities are carefully identified, impacts are avoided wherever possible, and any residual effects are offset to achieve positive environmental outcomes. The wind farm will continue to follow these guidelines through construction and operation.

Protecting soil and water resources is a key design principle, with measures in place to prevent contamination and manage erosion risks during construction. We work closely with host landowners to embed farm management practices into project agreements, including pest, weed, and feral animal control, as well as biosecurity protocols that protect ongoing farming activities.

The cultural heritage of the region is treated with the same level of care and respect. For Tara Wind Farm, a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) is currently being developed under Queensland's Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003 in consultation with the Bigambul People. This process involves extensive cultural heritage surveys and a thorough assessment of the project area's cultural and natural landscape. These steps ensure the project is delivered in a way that safeguards and honours the cultural values of the land while enabling sustainable development.

2.10 During the life of the project, we will recycle waste materials where feasible and commit to responsible decommissioning or refurbishment/repowering of the site at the end of the project's life.

Sustainability is a core commitment at Vestas. Waste assessment is undertaken for our projects to characterise and quantify the waste streams likely to be generated from our projects – during construction, operation and decommissioning. Our project teams manage waste to avoid unnecessary resource consumption and maximise resource recovery.

Decommissioning wind farm infrastructure at the end of project life is generally a legal condition of project development consent. Our agreements with host landowners require that wind turbines and other infrastructure are removed at the end of the lease term. Specifically, decommissioning will involve:

- Consulting key stakeholders including landowners;
- All above ground structures not required for the ongoing agricultural use of the land, including the wind turbines, transformer stations, and substation, will be removed and the land rehabilitated to ensure it can be returned to agricultural use;
- Access tracks and hardstands not requested by the landowner to be retained will be removed and land rehabilitated and returned to agricultural use;
- Below ground infrastructure, including cabling and the wind turbine foundations, will typically be left in situ to avoid further disturbance and minimise clearing of revegetated areas.
- Rehabilitated areas will be adequately graded to reflect the slope of the surrounding area and to mitigate the risk of soil erosion.
- All materials removed from the Project Area will be sorted and packaged for reuse and/or recycled where possible in accordance with the waste hierarchy.

Case study on decommissioning, waste and recycling: Captains Mountain Wind Farm

At the end of its operational life, the Captains Mountain wind farm will be deconstructed in accordance with the Queensland Wind Farm State Code and supporting planning guideline. In addition, contracts with landowners require that wind turbines and other infrastructure are removed at the end of the lease term. Decommissioning will be an obligation under the Project's development consent. Decommissioning will involve de-energising, disconnecting, dismantling, demolishing and removing the wind turbines and other operational infrastructure (e.g. maintenance buildings, substations and power lines). The Project has also committed to rehabilitate roads and fencing in consultation with host landowners.

The Vestas wind turbines proposed to be used on the project are currently 85% recyclable, though turbine blades still contain non-recyclable composite materials. Vestas aims to achieve 100% recyclable rotors by 2030, ensuring materials can be reused in new turbines or similar applications. Advancements in "re-powering" will allow for replacing or upgrading critical components, extending the life of wind farms beyond 30 years, reducing impacts while ensuring continued energy generation.

Captains Mountain Wind Farm will recycle materials where feasible and ensure all waste is promptly and properly removed from site. Landowners will be consulted as to whether they wish to retain any excavated materials (e.g. soil or rock), with the remainder responsibly disposed of or relocated in line with regulations.

3 Conclusion

Vestas is committed to the CEC Best Practice Charter and thanks the CEC for the opportunity to provide an annual report.

Acknowledgements

Vestas extends our gratitude to all communities and stakeholders involved in our development projects.