WIND FARMS, AUSTRALIA
COMMUNITY REFERENCE GROUP

Project information campaigns / Stakeholder dialogue

ACCIONA is present in Australia with five wind farms. Cathedral Rocks Wind Farm was the first one, in operation since 2007, followed by Waubra in 2009, Gunning in 2011, Mt Gellibrand in operation since 2018 and the last one, Mortlake South in the construction phase, schedule to be in operation in 2020.

During the construction phase, ACCIONA with the objective of having a flow of information, created what it is called a **Community Reference Group**. The aim of the CRG is to provide an open forum for community members to discuss the project with ACCIONA staff. The group meets approximately every 6 or 8 weeks and it usually consists of landowners, neighbors, local business, local fire authority (emergency services), local council and local construction contractors to ensure they represent the different interests of the local community. The CRG enables ongoing and timely identification of community concerns, and even pre-emptive formulation of mitigation strategies and they must share the information with the rest of the community.

The Community Reference Group assists in the resolution of issues that arise during the pre-construction and construction phases of the project and for community members to raise any issues or concerns, as well as suggest how ACCIONA might fix them. Furthermore, group meetings provide an opportunity to discuss upcoming construction activities.

These meetings have benefited in 2018:

- Mt Gellibrand: 15 beneficiaries
- Mortlake South: 11 beneficiaries

For Mortlake South Wind Farm, this process has been redefined to include two CRGs: A Community Engagement Committee (CEC) and a Landowner Reference Group (LRG). Providing these two forums offer an efficient mechanism for the distinct requirements of the general community versus host landowners.

COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND IN WAUBRA AND GUNNING WIND FARMS

ACCIONA established a Community Benefit fund for the operational life of the Waubra Wind Farm and Gunning Wind. Upon wind farm commissioning, the Community Benefit fund supplants the local sponsorship program currently operating. The fund involves ACCIONA acting collaboratively with the community to enhance pre-existing community initiatives and to expand the knowledge and understanding of renewable energy in the district.

In 2018 there has been:

- 15 groups of beneficiaries in Waubra Wind Farm
- 6 groups of beneficiaries in Gunning Wind Farm.