

Lesson 17: Watch out for Paddock Loggers

In Victoria, Australia, a pollution authority, the EPA, regulates wind farm noise compliance.

It has a tick-the-box role only.

This EPA accepts self-written opinion reports from the wind farm, ticks them off as being received, then files them away as compliant.

The Victorian EPA Regulations allow wind farms to monitor noise using proxy loggers in paddocks.

It is not unusual for acousticians to use proxy loggers at representative locations; however, it can be argued that a noise logger in a paddock between the house and the turbine is not a representative location.

The diagram below is a simulation of air turbulence behind a wind turbine.

Wind turbine blades create a wake of pulsating air that spirals upwards and outwards behind the blades.

The air is forced out with direction, like a torch beam or ray of sound.

The taller the turbines the greater the torch beam effect.

The torch beam of noise waves impacts homes many kilometres away.

Measuring noise under this torch beam of turbulent air does not measure the full effect of the turbine noise.

Intermediate loggers or paddock loggers located under the torch beam miss the noise.

And although in Victoria, under the EPA, wind farm noise compliance is signed off with a paper shuffle, at court, noise compliance is determined by the evidence before the Judge.

Bald Hills [\[Uren 2022\]](#) determined that noise measured kilometres away in a paddock was NOT representative of the noise at the plaintiff's home.

The Judge determined Marshal Day Acoustic's had "*patently absurd conclusions that it was quieter at both properties after the wind farm started operating*".

The Judge preferred the diaries and complaints tendered by the plaintiffs and not the self-written noise reports of the wind farm.

And was quick to point out that only a Judge or adjudicator can determine wind turbine noise compliance, not the Responsible Authority.

In the common law of nuisance, [\[Uren 2022\]](#) is the law.

