



8<sup>th</sup> August 2018

Wind Prospect Pty Ltd  
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Victoria

**Attention: Rory McManus (Development Manager)**

By email: [Rory.McManus@windprospect.com.au](mailto:Rory.McManus@windprospect.com.au) (phone+61 412958829)

Dear Rory,

**RE: WILLATOOK WIND FARM  
2018 BROLGA FLOCKING SEASON SURVEY RESULTS  
BL&A REF. 16087.4**

Willatook Wind Farm Pty Ltd engaged Brett Lane & Associates Pty Ltd (BL&A) to undertake a monitoring program during the flocking season in 2018 of the state-threatened Brolga (*Grus rubicunda*) within ten kilometres of the proposed Willatook Wind Farm (WWF) in western Victoria. This letter outlines the monitoring program and summarises its results.

Brolga congregate in large groups after the breeding season when their breeding wetlands dry and form flocks from January through to July. BL&A undertook flocking season surveys within ten kilometres from the border of the proposed WWF (Radius of Investigation – RoI).

A traditional flocking site according to the definition of the '*Interim guidelines for the assessment, avoidance, mitigation and offsetting of potential wind farm impacts on the Victorian Brolga Population 2011*' is a roost site where 10 or more birds have been seen regularly over two different years and in more than one particular month.

No historic flocking sites within ten kilometres were identified from various databases including the Southwest Victorian Brolga Flocking Site Database (Sheldon 2004) and the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas (VBA). There were five records from the above-mentioned databases that had 4–6 Brolga recorded at them. These five sites were the focus of the investigation.

Monitoring was undertaken over two periods for two days listed below.

- 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> May 2018 and
- 31<sup>st</sup> May and 1<sup>st</sup> June 2018.

The monitoring included visiting the five potential flocking sites and recording any Brolga present and making notes on the condition of the wetland. In addition to visiting the flocking sites, the proposed wind farm was searched from public roads for the presence of Brolga.



Brett Lane & Associates Pty. Ltd.  
Ecological Research & Management

No Brolga were observed within the proposed wind farm boundary during the 2018 flocking season surveys and none were observed in the surrounding 10-kilometre radius of investigation. Appendix 1 presents the results of the monitoring program.

Generally, the landscape was quite dry at the time of the surveys and wetlands were not holding water. Brolga were at their traditional flocking sites away from the proposed Willatook Wind Farm. The Rol does contain some breeding habitat and there are records of Brolga present in the breeding season. Further studies are recommended to determine where Brolga breeding habitat is present.

The literature review combined with the filed investigation has found to-date that there are no traditional flocking roost sites within the Rol no turbine-free buffer zones are required for flocking Brolga sites.

We look forward to being of assistance. If you have any questions regarding the above please do not hesitate to call me.

Yours sincerely,

**Bernard O'Callaghan**  
**Senior Ecologist and Project Manager**  
**Brett Lane & Associates Pty Ltd**  
(03) 9815 2111

**Attached:**

- Appendix 1: Sites investigated as potential flocking sites
- Appendix 2 Figure of the 5 sites investigated as possible flocking sites

**Appendix 1: Results from the Brolga Flocking Season survey at Willatook Wind Farm**

Date	Replicate	Survey	Weather	Wetland	No. of Brolga	Activity	Status - Wetlands Information
3-4/05/2018	1	Curtis Doughty	Partly cloudy to overcast 11 - 25 degrees	F1	0	nil	Wetland dry, in a rocky rise area at Macarthur Wind Farm. This record is more likely to be a breeding record with adult pair and two young chicks rather than a flocking site.
				F2	0	nil	No wetland, grazing land. Unlikely flocking site.
				F3	0	nil	Pallisters Reserve, sedgeland/grassland. Dry at time of survey. This area is a breeding site, unlikely to be a flocking site.
				F4	0	nil	The point is located at the edge of Pallisters Reserve between the woodland and Blue Gum plantation. Unlikely flocking site.
				F5	0	nil	In paddock behind Pallisters Reserve, no wetland present. Unlikely flocking site.
31/05-1/06/2018	2	Curtis Doughty		F1	0	nil	Macarthur Wind Farm breeding site. Not a flocking site.
				F2	0	nil	Very old record 1964, random record in July. No wetland, unlikely breeding or flocking site.
				F3	0	nil	Pallisters Reserve, breeding site. The reserve only used between June to November. Blue Gum plantation has lowered water table and prevented the reserve from receiving a lot of surface water runoff.
				F4	0	nil	Adjacent to Pallisters reserve. Surrounded by Blue Gum plantation, there is a wetland in close proximity to point, most probably a breeding record before Blue Gum plantation was established.
				F5	0	nil	Hockings Block, another possible Brolga breeding site.



**Appendix 2: Map of possible flocking sites investigated**

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