

SAVE CENTRAL



“SPOUT HARD DATA, NOT HOT AIR”

Save Central says TrustPower is hiding the inefficacy of its wind farm plans even as the country lurches into a power crisis.

**Attention: News Editor
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Energy corporations must front up with hard data if the public is to believe their heady claims about wind power.

“Instead we are seeing companies like TrustPower fudge and stall on providing meaningful wind monitoring data at controversial sites – lest the public and Environment Court see through their claims that they will be ‘powering thousands of homes’ with oft-becalmed turbines,” says Save Central spokesperson Grahame Sydney.

"These schemes will do little to help security of supply: they are being promoted to suit faux clean-green imagery, will industrialise unspoiled landscapes, and the consumers will pay a hefty price.

" When will these profit-oriented corporates begin to realise that some landscapes in this country have a value beyond money? Put smaller wind farms in uncontentious landscapes where the land is already seriously modified; and invest in reliable base-load energy."

Sydney noted that nationally the situation had not improved since Genesis Energy chief

executive Murray Jackson described “six or seven companies” all helicoptering around New Zealand looking for different wind sites as “scary”.

Jackson stated in March that "Every nook and cranny of New Zealand can't end up with a wind farm and a \$300 million transmission line feeding into the national grid."

"The amount of wind is going to be limited by the cost of things we have to do to the grid. In my honest opinion, everyone is running around saying 'yes, we need a robust grid' and 'yes, we should develop it', but no one has thought it through carefully in terms of what it means and how we are going to get approvals for some of these issues."

Both TrustPower and Meridian have refused to release wind-monitoring data, citing commercial sensitivity. Sydney said it would be a “pleasant surprise” if TrustPower would:

- Provide unfettered access to the wind data gathered from sites so it could be analysed by independent experts for the public’s benefit – rather than just the company’s own employees such as Corporate Affairs Manager Graeme Purches – and matched against periods of national peak demand.
- Explain how TrustPower can justify a major industrialisation of rural landscapes on a mere two years’ data gathered from just two anemometers: “Given our exposure to El Nino and La Nina climate patterns, would not five or more years be more indicative of actual averages?”
- Explain the company’s rationale in proposing large wind farms in their present sites, given well-known transmission constraints and no projected local consumption to justify the size of Mahinerangi Windfarm and Kaiwera Downs other than Tiwai smelter.
- Explain precisely how, in a dry year, after a calm summer and autumnal season, the imagined output from unpredictable and unreliable wind estates would have averted the country’s present energy "difficulties"?

“The company has a track record of refusing to reveal its full data for public scrutiny, whilst continuing to insist it has the public’s best interests at heart. I am not hopeful of any such reassurance,” said Sydney.

For more information:

Grahame Sydney
Spokesperson, Save Central
03 447 3029
027 222 1423
027 44 22 714