



Taralga Wind Farm

Background

Prior to the construction of the Taralga Wind Farm, many local residents received fortuitous signal from the Knights Hill Digital TV Broadcast Site (**Knights Hill Site**), located approximately 85kms away. The wind farm developer of the day included a benefit in the Environmental Impact Statement (**EIS**) submitted to the authority in 2004 which sought to improve access for Taralga residents to terrestrial television services during the operational life of the proposed wind farm. In or around 2012 – 2013, digital TV came into existence; residents in Taralga were designated as being located in a Viewer Access Satellite Television (**VAST**) service area.

What is the VAST system?

Funded by the Australian Government, VAST provides digital television and radio services to viewers in remote areas of Australia, as well as viewers who are unable to receive

digital TV through their normal antenna because of issues relating to local interference, terrain and/or distance from the transmitter in their area. The VAST service has channels for the ABC, SBS and the Australian commercial television networks.

In early November 2015, construction of the wind farm was complete and Pacific Hydro

installed and commissioned a terrestrial television re-transmitter that received the fortuitous digital TV signals from Knights Hill Site and re-transmitted those signals to Taralga residents. Since it was commissioned, the re-transmitter experienced occasional outages due to factors outside Pacific Hydro's control, such as loss of power, supply or



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interference to the signal coming from Knights Hill Site.

The extended outage in December 2021 was deemed likely due to an interruption to the fortuitous signal from Knights Hill Site, which was unresolvable by Pacific Hydro.

Interim solution

A temporary satellite dish was installed at Taralga Wind Farm on 18 December 2021, which restored TV signal to the Taralga community. Whilst effective in the short-term, the interim solution was not designed for commercial use.

Long term solution

Pacific Hydro engaged with the ABC, SBS, the Australian Communications and Media Authority and an independent TV transmission consultant to identify a long-term solution to the ongoing signal issue from Knights Hill Site. The results of this investigation revealed that a permanent satellite dish installed at Taralga Wind Farm and maintained for the operational life of the farm or as long as the farm is owned and operated by Pacific Hydro is the most appropriate option.

The satellite is designed to re-

transmit the existing NSW VAST system content and programming to Taralga residents. Channel numbers should also revert to the standard numerical sequencing that Taralga residents are accustomed to.

The satellite will work alongside the current terrestrial re-transmitter and aims to provide contingency in the event of any future re-transmitter outages. An automatic cutover between the terrestrial and satellite signals is intended to result in no more than a momentary signal disruption.

The timing of this installation is weather-dependent. To ensure its longevity, the satellite will be placed on a fenced, concrete pad. Unfortunately, the unprecedented rains are preventing some of the large machinery required to install the satellite from accessing the site. As soon as weather conditions permit, these civil works will be undertaken and the satellite will be installed and commissioned.

Pacific Hydro will provide a further update to Taralga residents once the timing of the satellite installation is confirmed.



Contact us

For further information contact Pacific Hydro via email at enquiries@pacifichydro.com.au or contact the project team on **1800 730 734**