



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**PROOF**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Newcastle Electorate: Renewable Energy,  
Newcastle Electorate: Manufacturing**

**SPEECH**

**Thursday, 23 March 2023**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

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| <p><b>Date</b> Thursday, 23 March 2023<br/> <b>Page</b> 80<br/> <b>Questioner</b><br/> <b>Speaker</b> Claydon, Sharon MP</p> | <p><b>Source</b> House<br/> <b>Proof</b> Yes<br/> <b>Responder</b><br/> <b>Question No.</b></p> |
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**Ms CLAYDON** (Newcastle—Deputy Speaker) (16:55): Newcastle and the Hunter region have powered Australia for generations and will continue to do so well into the future. As a proud Novocastrian I understand this. So does the Albanese Labor government.

We know that carbon-intensive regions like Newcastle and the Hunter are ideally placed to take full advantage of the opportunities that come with renewable energy. That's why I am so excited that consultations for an offshore wind zone off the Newcastle coast are currently open. Community consultation sessions have already begun, with at least two face-to-face sessions in my electorate of Newcastle and an additional five that were held further north and south along the coastline. I'd like to thank those Novocastrians who took up this chance to hear directly from experts and to have their voices heard. I know there has been some concern about the potential impact of offshore wind on marine and bird life, and I want to reassure my constituents that around the world offshore wind farms do co-exist with wildlife—with whales, with migrant sea life and with birds. The proposed offshore wind zone, which is currently on display for public comment, follows initial analysis of marine topology, vessel traffic and sensitive environmental or defence areas.

Part of the consultation process is to ensure that any infrastructure built within that proposed zone will have minimal impacts on marine users, the environment and wildlife. Following feedback from the community, the proposed area may need to be adjusted before a final offshore wind area is in fact declared, and there are a number of further steps to go through before any infrastructure can be built. Any company looking to establish an offshore renewable energy project is required to demonstrate how they will comply with the conditions of approval and environmental obligations under Australia's Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act. This act provides a legal framework to protect and manage unique plants, animals, habitats and spaces, including marine areas. Potential developers will also need to submit a management plan to the Offshore Infrastructure Regulator. This process ensures that any developments manage risks in an environmentally acceptable way that also mitigates and minimises impacts on the environment and wildlife. I reassure the community that this is a genuine consultation process. I encourage all residents and all interested people to look at the map and to consider what it looks like, consider the implications for you and our community and then make a submission. They are open until 28 April.

It was an honour to join Bekaert Australia recently to celebrate 100 years of continuous manufacturing excellence at their wire rope manufacturing facility in Mayfield. Originally known as Australia Wire Ropes Works, Bekaert was established in 1923 in Newcastle by what was BHP and four leading rope manufacturers in Great Britain. Bekaert holds a prominent place in Newcastle's—and, I suggest, the nation's—manufacturing history, employing and training thousands of men and women from the Newcastle and Hunter region over its long and distinguished career. It provided jobs during the Great Depression and diverted operations to support Australia's war efforts during World War II. Today Bekaert in Australia is a world leader in the manufacture, supply and technical support of wire and synthetic ropes. I was particularly pleased to see how much time and energy is going into being able to repurpose and renew those wire ropes, ensuring that the life cycle is extended fourfold compared to what it had been previously.

Bekaert is just one of a number of leading manufacturing facilities now in Newcastle to have been operating for more than a century, which speaks volumes about the deep history of making things in our city—a tradition that stands to benefit enormously from Labor's \$15 billion National Reconstruction Fund. The National Reconstruction Fund investments will help regional areas like Newcastle to diversify our economy and help create secure, well paid jobs. There is a very bright future for manufacturing in Newcastle under a Labor government.

**House adjourned at 17:00**

Thursday, 23 March 2023

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER ( Ms Payne )** took the chair at 09:30.