

MEDIA RELEASE

30th October 2018

Crookwell High School visit Gullen Range

On Thursday 25th October, Gullen Range Wind and Solar Farm hosted Year 8 students from Crookwell High School. Throughout the morning, students immersed themselves in the renewable energy technology housed at Gullen Range Wind Farm. The excursion was organised by RDA Southern Inland, as part of the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths) Industry School Partnership Pilot Program, funded by the Department of Education.

Over the last two school terms, students have been able to get to know a number of local wind farm representatives, including staff from Gullen Range. The representatives have assisted the students in solving different problems identified in the agriculture sector. The project is part of a pilot program aimed at providing students with age appropriate skills and pathways to STEM jobs. Several local primary schools are also involved in the STEM Program, including Bigga, Binda, Laggan, Crookwell and Taralga Public Schools.

The students were welcomed to Gullen Range Wind and Solar Farm by Isabel Nelson, Community Engagement Officer, Leo Pearce, Asset Manager and Simon Zhao, Site Manager. Many students are using renewable energy as part of their agricultural projects, so a tour provides invaluable experience. Gullen Range is Australia's first co-located wind and solar farm, housing 42,000 solar panels and 73 wind turbines.

The tour started with Dimity Taylor, who lives close by, speaking about how agriculture and renewable energy can work together very well. Dimity told students about the positive experience she has had living next door to a wind farm.

The excursion was a fantastic opportunity for students to learn about an operating wind and solar farm and get up close to one of the 130-metre-tall wind turbines. They were shown different parts of a turbine, including an anemometer, wind vane and the large bolts used inside the wind turbines.

The tour concluded with a visit to the operations and maintenance building. Students were shown around the control room where the operations team can monitor weather patterns and wind turbine performance. They were also shown the substation, which is where all the power generated from the wind and solar farm is passed onto the electricity grid.

Isabel Nelson said, "We love hosting the students at Gullen Range Wind and Solar Farm, they always have plenty of questions and we hope we can inspire them to study and work in a STEM-related field".

Rebecca Dark, STEM teacher at Crookwell High School, spoke highly of the relationship that has been built with the students and Gullen Range Wind Farm throughout the past two terms.

"Working closely with these representatives has shown students that the project they are working on has real world applications, and that the skills they are developing through their participation can assist them with future employment."

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