The State is changing the way wind farm developments are assessed in Queensland.

The draft wind farm state code and associated guideline provides a whole-of-government approach to assessing and regulating wind farm proposals through the State Assessment and Referral Agency (SARA).

The Queensland Government will relieve local governments of the cost and responsibility of assessing wind farm proposals.

**What is the wind farm state code and guideline?**

The wind farm state code and guideline will regulate the development of new wind farms or the expansion of existing facilities.

Under the new code, wind farm development will be carefully considered against the State’s core objectives to achieve a liveable, sustainable and prosperous Queensland. The health and safety of the community is paramount.

Sitting alongside the code will be a guideline which will assist applicants when preparing their development proposals.

**Why is the State preparing the code and guideline?**

The State has a strong interest in increasing the production and use of renewable and sustainable energy.

The new code and guideline will provide a state wide, consistent, whole-of-government approach to the assessment and regulation of wind farm developments.

**How will the assessment process and code differ from what currently exists?**

Costs and responsibility for assessing wind farm developments will shift from local governments to the State.

Currently, councils are responsible for assessing wind farm developments in Queensland, however, few local government planning schemes include planning provisions that address the complex characteristics specific to wind farms and their impacts on the environment, community and strategic infrastructure such as airports.

The new code and guideline will be used to assess and consider all potential adverse impacts as a result of wind farm developments, and ensure that these impacts are avoided or mitigated.

**When will the code and guideline come into effect?**

Upon completion, it is anticipated that the code and guideline will come into effect, as a module in the State Development Assessment Provisions (SDAP), in mid-2016.
Will the code and guideline create more red tape?

No. The draft code aims to remove the burden of assessing wind farm developments from councils to SARA.

Increasing interest in recent years has highlighted a need for a more consistent approach in the assessment and regulation of wind farm developments across Queensland.

The code will require applicants to publicly notify wind farm developments which will allow for the community to comment.

What happened after the recent consultation period?

The Department recently released the draft wind farm state code and guideline for a second round of public consultation. The consultation period ran for a period of eight weeks from 16 October to 11 December 2015.

The Department is in the process of reviewing all submissions received and making any required amendments to the draft code and guideline.

What other consultation has been undertaken in the development of the code and guideline?

The public were asked to comment on the draft wind farm state code and guideline from 22 April to 13 May 2014. Submissions received from that consultation period were reviewed in detail, and where deemed appropriate, were considered in the recently notified versions of the draft code and guideline (as currently available on the Department’s website).

The code and guideline have been developed based on expert technical advice, the review of recent and emerging research, extensive consultation with key inter-departmental and external stakeholders and the detailed review of national and international best practice.

For more information

Copies of the draft wind farm state code and draft wind farm state code planning guideline are available from the Department’s website www.dilgp.qld.gov.au/windfarms.

If you have any questions please email the wind farms inbox: windfarms@dilgp.qld.gov.au.