

Submission to: The Senate Committee Inquiry into the Impacts of Air Quality on Health

Dear Senate Committee,

I do not have a lengthy submission to make, nor the expertise to comment on air quality in detail. I am however a resident of Newcastle, and uncomfortably aware of the pollution that lands on, and in my home as a resident of Islington - a suburb south of Newcastle Harbour, the site of three coal loading terminals.

My perception is that Newcastle experienced improved air quality during the years following the closure of BHP; and this makes the increasing fall-out Newcastle is now experiencing all the more apparent. I believe the increasing pollution is being generated by the coal loaders operating on Newcastle Harbour, and because of this, I object to any expansion of these coal terminal facilities.

Please see the inset photos and notes.



Photo taken 26 February 2013.

Islington NSW 2296.

This is my kitchen table which sits under a large window facing north toward Newcastle Harbour - where three coal terminals are currently in operation. The table hadn't been wiped down for about a ten days when I took the photo.



Photo taken 26 February 2013.

Islington NSW 2296.

This is a window sill of my house looking north toward Newcastle Harbour where three coal terminals are currently in operation. I don't know what that black matter is made up of and have no way of knowing with the lack of information given to the community by any authority about this. My home is near a park on two dead-end streets with no through-traffic and is three blocks from a larger road. I don't believe this pollution is from road traffic. But how can I know?

I work in a country area with no coal mines or industry in the vicinity and I know that the dust I wipe from my work desk is white/grey; and by comparison, the dust that I wipe from the surfaces of my home in Newcastle is black. I believe that there is a large component of coal dust in this, and that this is being generated from the coal terminals on Newcastle Harbour and the uncovered train carriages carrying coal into these coal terminals.

My 4 year old niece lives by and has asthma. There is no history of asthma on either side of her parents' families. I have good health however the more I learn about small particle pollution from coal dust the more concerned I am becoming about impacts on my health.

I would like more information on air quality in Newcastle, as I don't believe there is enough monitoring, reporting or information on this provided to the community. I would like more information on actual dust emissions currently coming from the three operating coal terminals on Newcastle Harbour and the health impacts these dust emissions may be having. And furthermore I object to another terminal being built on Newcastle Harbour until the health impacts on the residents of Newcastle can be investigated.

Yours sincerely,

8 March 2013