

Research Director, CWP select committee

Parliament House

George Street Brisbane Qld 4000

27 May 2017

Clean Air Wynnum made a submission to the enquiry in November 2016. It is listed as #13. We stand by the statements in that submission.

And we make this further submission related to the extended Terms of Reference concerning:

(e) the efficacy and efficiency of adopting methodologies and processes for respirable dust measurement and mitigation, including monitoring regimes, engineering measures, personal protective equipment, statutory requirements, and industry policies and practices, including practices in jurisdictions with similar industries.

- We are aware that the exposure of community members to respirable dust may not be as great as that of an underground persons in the miner, a worker engaged in coal transport and storage. However, the lungs and hearts of some community members, such as infants, older and unwell and people may be much more sensitive to coal dust than workers, who may be afforded protective equipment to protect against dust.
- When we have asked Department of Environment and Heritage Protection about the dust we find on our walls, cars, patios and plants, we have been told that this dust may not be coal dust, or that it is not just coal dust. Some of us care about our walls, patios and plants. All of us care about our lungs.
- Brisbane City Council, and the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection confirmed that dust emissions from coal trains are within emissions guidelines. We know that these guidelines measure coal dust emissions over a twenty four hour period. The trains at our back doors are not constant, but do exceed the standard for allowable emissions when a train is passing.
- We have sought information from Queensland Health about whether there is a higher incidence of asthma, other lung disease and cardiovascular disease among populations along the rail line. The response was that this is difficult to isolate and the biggest factor in these diseases is cigarette smoking.
- We have asked the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection about the regulation of coal dust emissions in transport. We have been advised that while coal dust is carcinogenic, rail transport of coal is not an environmentally relevant activity and as such is not specifically regulated under the Environmental Protection Act 1994 (EP Act).

- We have asked the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection about monitoring of emissions along the rail line and at the stockpiles. We have been advised of three sites at Wynnum and one at Murarrie. Two of the Wynnum monitoring stations were put in place by Caltex to monitor emissions from their refinery. In our view the monitoring stations are not well located to pick up coal dust emissions, especially not well located in relation to the stockpiles.
- In 2013 a trial of veneering loaded wagons began at the Acland mine loading site. An evaluation of the practice was promised, but has not occurred. Empty wagons are not veneered, and the coal stockpiles are not veneered.
- In 2008, Queensland Rail commissioned an analysis by Connell and Hatch which found that fitting lids to wagons achieves 99% reduction in coal dust emissions from the top of wagons, the major coal dust emission source.
- We submit the following recommendations:
  1. That the select committee recommend the inclusion of community members who are affected by coal in transport or storage;
  2. That coal in transport be regulated under the Environmental Protection Act;
  3. That coal wagons be fitted with lids and covered whether empty or loaded;
  4. That additional monitoring stations be located downwind from prevailing wind direction and at more appropriate locations along the rail line as well as at the stockpiles;
  5. That a trial in the Wynnum area by the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection be undertaken of low cost emissions monitors, which could be fitted to a home or even used as personal emissions monitors;
  6. That peak emissions be adopted as the standard, rather than emissions averaged over 24 hours;
  7. That a comparative evaluation of the effectiveness of veneered vs covered wagons be undertaken;
  8. That the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection research appropriate treatment or covering of stockpiles; and
  9. That the mining and bulk handling companies be required to implement best practice according to the results of research.

Mary Slivka

For Clean Air Wynnum