



Hazelwood Inquiry info/DPC@DTF

11/04/2014 04:35 PM

To Hazelwood Inquiry  
info/DPC@DTF  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Morwell Mine Fire Submission

1 attachment



Hazelwood-Mine-Fire-Inquiry-Submission.docx

Title: Mrs

First Name: Ann

Surname: Kaufmann

Email address: [REDACTED]

Home or office phone: [REDACTED]

Mobile: [REDACTED]

Content of submission (you can choose multiple): Response to fire by Hazelwood Coal Mine, Response to fire by Public Health Officials, Response to fire by Other Government Agencies, Other (please state)

Please select one of the following options: I acknowledge that my submission will be treated as a public document and may be published, quoted or summarised by the Inquiry.

Upload Submission:

<http://hazelwoodinquiry.vic.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/formidable/Hazelwood-Mine-Fire-Inquiry-Submission.docx>

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Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry

11 / 4 / 2014

Dear Sir,

I would like to put my submission before the inquiry.

I became impacted by the smoke and dust at the beginning of the fire in the coal mine. I was calling into my son's home (he lives in Grandview Grove Morwell), to pick up his mail and check on things for him as he was out of town. As he had used public transport his car was in his drive. Well before warnings I noticed a heavy ash deposit inside his home and of course without thinking I started to sweep it up and didn't realise that it could be dangerous. Over the next week I called at my son's a few times and cleaned up the ash as best I could as each time I walked on it, it was like walking through snow leaving very distinguishable footprints. My son's car was covered in the ash and dust and I tried hosing it off but could not get it all off.

After a week I developed a very sore throat and chest, went to the doctor and was put on antibiotics and cortisone. This was a big worry for me as I was booked into hospital for a knee replacement in March. Fortunately the medications worked and the operation went ahead. I might add that I am in my 80<sup>th</sup> year.

Warnings came far too late, and they did not stress the danger of the smoke and ash that we were breathing in. The government should have taken immediate action even if it meant calling in the military to get that fire under control. The lives of the Morwell community were at risk.

Children and the elderly should have been evacuated immediately and others as they wished. Giving money was not the answer as some collected the money and stayed home. No thought was put into this, it was a knee jerk reaction by a government that had no clue as to what to do, and by a mine management that did not give a damn.

What needs to be done -- A contingency plan needs to be put in place and accommodation needs to be on the books so people who need to be can be moved out of the area. These old open cuts need to be rendered safe and if that means filling them with soil so be it and the mine should cover the costs. The mine should also cover the costs of the clean up and the impost this has had on the community and business's in the area.

Our fire fighters need to be recognised for the incredible job they did and as they on the front line they too were putting their health at risk. They saved this town from a major catastrophe and got more information to us that the government or their health spokesperson.

Too little too late was done. Lets hope we can learn from the failures here and that it will never happen again. It put Morwell on the map for all the wrong reason.

God bless our fire fighters.