

**INQUIRY INTO PERFORMANCE OF THE NSW
ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY**

Name: Name suppressed

Date received: 8/07/2014

Partially Confidential

My submission is in relation to 1(b)(ii) of the terms of reference, regarding the EPA reports on coal dust in the Hunter Valley. I am a resident of the Hunter Valley and I believe that there is a lot of hysteria about coal dust within the area. For one, a lot of the dust that leaves mine sites is not actually coal dust, it is overburden dust and yet there appears to be a belief that this will have the same health impacts as coal dust (such as black lung). Secondly, I get the impression that if trains lost as much coal dust as is reported, there would be a black streak along the rail line that would be easily visible. Coal tends to come out of mines very damp - due to how it forms and the processing it goes through, so the loss of dust from coal should be minimal. I don't deny that mine sites and the railways should be managing dust, I just don't believe that the issue is as terrible as people want to believe. I think that the local EPA have done well not to give into the hysteria and have tried to provide a balanced view of what is actually happening. Unfortunately, people prefer to blame things on others, rather than accept that their own actions (burning fires, driving cars) could have more of an impact on the local air quality. I support the work that the EPA have been doing in this area.