

**Submission
No 173**

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

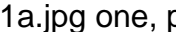
Name: Mr John Byrnes

Date received: 31/08/2014

To: Stewart Smith, Director, Committee No. 5


Dear Stewart,

I am writing because I had read that Standing Committee No. 5 is going to be looking into matters within the province of the NSW EPA.

Have you ever seen (or have you ever had sent to you) any plant similar as the attached  one, please?

When I first saw it I thought it was a soil remediation plant.

However a send of the photo to EPA with "what is it?" question at first got no response.

This particular photo has been sent to 163 places by now (including seeming 'chemical experts' and others) - and nobody has known what it is; the only suggestions back were 'possible water treatment plant' or 'possible coal seam gas plant'. My thought was that it was neither or those but most likely a DTD type soil treatment/'remediation' plant. The man who took the photo () says that he found (when out walkign one day) the plant operating at a site which he had known very well in his childhood and which had been a military materials tip from out of the nearby Schofields airbase. The Council however says it has no record of the military ever having dumped rubbish there..

I have resent the photo to EPA again, but this time via the Ministers office -- as I've wondered did EPA even get it the first time?

Please see the EPA website at: <http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au> and note that the agency has NO DIRECT CONTACT !

There is in fact only ONE public email address for what's now a whole host of goverment bodies and I fear that many things are no longer getting through even (i.e. to persons who might best know). Has anyone else expressed that concern to you please?

This has come about via the great downscaling of Environment in government - form once a Department then to an Office -- and now perhaps as a sub-office when Environment got combined with Heritage - as OEH.

And even that 'Office' (which had accumulated NPWS, EPA and likely a host of other things as well) got further downscaled, if I read correctly, by now merging it into or with Planning (or maybe I too am confused by this stage?).

The original email address for Environment (info@environment.nsw.gov.au) presumably once was for just environment matters --- but it must now deal with vastly bigger span and I suspect it has possibly gotten clogged up and or ineffective.

I would like to suggest that EVERY SINGLE BODY, like EPA (but many others ... National Parks and Wildlife etc.) must have their own email contact (and preferably more than one too ... for all divisions etc.).

If you go to National Parks and Wildlife website (= <http://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au>) you will find that its sole contact is also info@environment.nsw.gov.au

The whole business of contactability and communication has become FAR worse in NSW in recent times than ever before ~~ I know because I am a full-time dealer/writer with information (and most of which comes, or should come, from government), and I have never before (in the span of decades) seen things so bad as they currently are.

Contactability of NPWS is particularly poor. I went to my nearest National Park and discussed this with rangers. The first girl ranger I spoke to said "tell us about it", and stated that people are constantly complaining to them about poor contactability and that they (the rangers) had a nickname for the [info@environment](mailto:info@environment.nsw.gov.au) sole (and clogged-up/ineffective) bottleneck ... she told me "we call it no-info at environment".

I myself have experienced 'info at environment' responding to me with 'global' style information which I could tell (already knowing the subject matter well) had been taken out of Wikipedia (presumably right at 'front office' level) instead of passing the enquiry into the organisation to a level where there were people who might actually know the facts as they applied specifically in NSW.

Has there been anyone else contact you with anything similar to any of this, please?

Kind Regards,

John Byrnes

