

**Submission
No 27**

**INQUIRY INTO KOORAGANG ISLAND ORICA
CHEMICAL LEAK**

Name: Mrs Vera Deacon

Date received: 7/12/2011



Vera Deacon

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE KOORAGANG ISLAND ORICA CHEMICAL LEAK

Ms Kate Mihaljek
Senior Council Officer

Dear Ms Mihaljek

4 December 2011

Thank you for the transcript of the Select Committee proceedings held at Stockton on 14 November, 2011. I enclose my amended section of the transcript, pages 14-15. I have taken a copy.

As you see I have retained the balance of the transcript as it is a valuable record of some of the Stockton Community's views.

I now make a further Submission in the hope that it is not too late for your agenda::

1 The media informs me that the Orica installation on Kooragang Island is three times the size of the plant which exploded in Toulouse, France in 2001. It is incredible that such an industry should be established so close to Newcastle, its industries and suburbs, especially those along the south arm of the H
is is the only way to protect human life, homes and all that creates a city, a town, a village.

3 The Hunter River estuary has endured abuse and pollution from industry since the 1860s, e.g. Port Waratah Coal Co.; Wallarah-Moonta Copper Works, 1867-1892, followed by BHP and its subsidiaries. The community paid a heavy price in health. Yes, I know the industries gave work, trained skilled people and helped create our city. Now, in modern times, we have the knowledge and the means to ensure industry is clean and able to function in harmony with nature. All we need is the will and determination to achieve this harmony. This applies not only to Newcastle but to the whole valley where so many people and so many enterprises such as wine, food, grain and etc., are crying out in protest.

4...In my life time I have witnessed a great deal: rowed my little boat through the polluted South Arm of the Hunter River.; inhaled the dirty air, and saw the destruction of the natural habitat: mangroves, fish, crabs, prawns and the estuarine islands. The effect on the estuary caused the establishment of the Coffey Commission in the early 1970s. Eventually thjs lead to the establishment of the Kooragang Wetlands Rehabilitation

Project (KWRP) on part of Ash Island and its eventual integration into a Green Corridor from Stockton to the Wattagan Mountains.

I am in my thirteenth year as a volunteer planter on the KWRP, and very proud to be one of over two hundred dedicated and tireless volunteers. We know how long it takes to grow native trees; cleanse and restore the wetlands; cleanse the polluted river; protect the bird habitats, whose numbers are in rapid decline. The Koorangang Wetlands Rehabilitation Project is internationally recognized. Industry and the community must recognize the importance of our environment to our health, our well-being, our very continued existence on the earth. I reiterate:

Destroy the earth and its life blood the river and we destroy ourselves.

Yours sincerely

(Mrs) Vera Deacon