

**Submission
No 208**

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

Name: Ms Helen Saville

Date received: 28/08/2014

Dear Sir/Madam,

New South Wales needs a fearless and independent Environment Protection Authority that puts the interests of the community and natural environment first.

Most importantly, it must be adequately resourced so that it can effectively meet its objectives and enforce compliance with conditions of licence or approval, defend regulatory policies and actions through law when required, or prosecute offenders.

Increased growth and industrial development are placing enormous pressure on the air we breathe, the water we drink and the ecosystems which support our well-being and survival.

The EPA has an important role to play in protecting, restoring and enhancing the quality of the environment in New South Wales. However a number of recent incidents highlight the EPA's failure to regulate or prosecute polluters and stop environmental breaches. Following these incidents there is strong public perception that the EPA has been captured by industry, and does not act in the public interest. I am particularly concerned about the failure to address public health issues from coal dust during the transport of coal in open trucks in the Hunter region. This is a clear example of the extent to which the mining companies' interests are placed well ahead of the public interest.

We look to this inquiry to address the specific concerns raised by the community and to make recommendations to ensure that the EPA is capable of putting the environment and healthy communities ahead of polluters.

Yours sincerely,
Helen Saville