

**Submission
No 226**

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

Name: Mr John Bartholomew

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 lives and economy. If the environment on which our prosperity depends is allowed to be degraded by the activities of industry, our prosperity will soon be nothing more than a distant memory.

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.

It is as important to public confidence in the government that EPA be properly funded and allowed to regulate its area of responsibility as it is to maintain a proper police service that is allowed to investigate and prosecute criminals. The running down of the EPA conveys the impression that the government would rather serve the interests environmental criminals than look after its legitimate responsibilities. Therefore an open and well resourced inquiry into what has caused the EPA to fail in its duty to protect the public estate in recent years is necessary.

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,
John Bartholomew