

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

Name: Ms Wendy Hawes

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. Following the tragic murder of [redacted] in northwest NSW, it is critical the government sends a clear message to the community that law and order will prevail, and breaches of environmental legislation will not be tolerated.

Most importantly, the EPA 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, industrial development and continuing clearing of native vegetation 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.

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 developers and polluters.

Yours sincerely,
Wendy Hawes