

**Submission  
No 188**

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

**Name:** Ms Diana Fraser

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25 August 2014

The Hon Robert Brown MLC  
Chair, General Purpose Standing Committee No 5  
Legislative Council  
NSW Parliament, Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

cc: Jamie Parker MP, Member for Balmain

Dear Chair

**RE: Submission to Inquiry into the performance of the NSW Environmental Protection Authority**

Further to 1. (b) (v) of the Inquiry's terms of reference, I would like to make the following comments about the regulation of cruise passenger ships at the White Bay Cruise Terminal at Balmain:

- This new terminal has been approved in an area immediately adjacent to a high density residential community; with the ships smoke stacks the same height as homes.
- Regulations significantly lag behind other first world countries: **Fuel sulphur content is up to 35 times higher than allowed in Europe and North America.** Cruise ships in Sydney Harbour are allowed to burn fuel with a sulphur content of up to 3.5%. In North America, once ships come within 200 nautical miles of the east or west coastlines, they are not allowed to burn more than 1% sulphur fuel and this will further reduce to 0.1% sulphur by January 2015. In Europe, ships in port are also limited to 0.1% sulphur fuel.
- **Shore-to-ship power has not been provided.** Over 100 ports around the world now provide the ability for ships to plug in to the local power grid so that they can switch off their engines stopping dangerous diesel emissions in port. Whilst there was a requirement to allow for shore power at the White Bay Cruise Terminal in the future, there is no requirement to actually provide it and as predicted Sydney Ports are reluctant to embrace shore power at the site.
- **Emissions monitoring criteria is inadequate and unsafe.** It is well known that diesel emissions are carcinogenic containing the dangerous toxins: sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, particulate matter (both PM10 and the finer and more deadly PM2.5), benzene, toluene and formaldehyde. Yet, monitoring of the White Bay Cruise Terminal measures only two toxins – sulphur dioxide and PM10. It completely ignores the other dangerous emissions. By way of example, benzene is a carcinogen for which there is no safe level of exposure. Further, the criteria against which

sulphur dioxide is being monitored is woefully inadequate, with the 24 hour allowable limit 11.4 times higher than the World Health Organisation recommends.

- **There are no penalties for breaches of planning conditions.** There is no provision for cruise companies to be penalised for breaches of the regulations that do exist (inadequate as they are). For example, monitoring has shown that the cruise ships have breached noise criteria 75% of the time, yet the only requirement in the planning approval to address such breaches is for more monitoring to be conducted.

This lack of regulation has already resulted in our community experiencing a range of health symptoms and exposure to serious, known health risks. All of which could easily been avoided if the protective measures which were adopted long ago in the Northern Hemisphere, were implemented here.

Had the recommendations been adopted, the community would not be suffering air and noise pollution to the extent it is today. The EPA 's role is to protect the NSW environment and community. Their advice, was ignored.

We intended to move from the area earlier this year but were unsuccessful in the sale of our house. A number of potential buyers were concerned with the proximity of the frequent berthing of the pollution and noise emitting ships. We believe this will be an ongoing problem until serious changes are urgently made.

Yours sincerely,

Diana Fraser

Kerry Fraser