

INQUIRY INTO CROSS CITY TUNNEL

Organisation:

Name: Mr Peter Snepvangers

Telephone:

Date Received: 19/01/2006

Theme:

Summary

received
19 JAN 2006

Submission to Cross City Tunnel lodged by Peter Snepvangers

I apologise for being late with my submission, please see fit to accept as it is only very short.

I would like to talk about the role of Government agencies in entering into major public private partnership agreements, including public consultation processes and terms and conditions included in such agreements.

My family complained to the RTA and NSW Health department for more than 3 years and not once did we actually get to see a doctor to assess our rashes and chest throat problems caused by the M5 stack. We were always palmed off as things did not seem to be set up properly and were only instigated after considerable effort from the community. NSW health advised us to complain to the RTA so we tried to complain to the RTA but there was no mechanism to do so.

In an email I sent to Dr Vicky Sheppard from the Environmental health branch dated 25 August 2002 I thanked her for finally getting my complaint lodged at the AQCCC. I was concerned because I naively thought the health department would have already discussed and agreed a mechanism for investigating health complaints BEFGORE such a project as the M5 stack took place. I told her something did not seem right between the various government departments such as EPA, RTA, Health and the department that approved the project. It seemed that things were being made up as we went along and everything was secretive. My wife Kim took part in a phone in by the Health department that was a study into health effects. She told them we had been sick for the previous 12 months but they said they were not interested and only wanted information on the past 4 weeks only. This study's results were used by Rockdale council to approve the development application of a primary school for kids within the 400m radius of the M5 stack. I publically advised Rockdale council that in the study it is stated very clearly..... Children were excluded from the study. See minutes from M5 East Freeway Air Quality Community Liason Group minutes for Wednesday 26 May 2004. The Health department still has not withdrawn this stupid waste of peoples time and public money. The EPA will not help with anything to do with the M5 stack as they say it is DIPNR who are the only ones who can do anything. The original scaled models of the stack that was exhibited by law to the public was not actually to scale and had trees almost as high as the stack. When this was brought up at a community consultative meeting with the RTA they just said it wouldn't have really mattered. I know if I sell a product in the marketplace and I mislead the public then I can be sued or fined under the trade practices act. It seems government departments in NSW are not bound to these same obligations. I believe the government has fostered a culture of deceit and compliance to government decisions within the various departments and there is no clear mechanisms for dissent by the departments or the community. The mistakes made in the M5 seem to be repeating themselves over and over in each new tunnel built and it seems to be the same senior personnel in the government departments pulling the strings.

As a community the people of Turrella lost all respect for the NSW government and the public service departments due to the M5 stack. The government cannot seem to get their minds around working for the benefit of the peoples in the communities that bear the burden of their decisions as well as the greater community. They seem more interested in poor communication as a tool of deceit to hide the decisions and processes they implement. As far as the RTA are concerned community consultation is a one way flow process, but on the positive side they do let you pick the colour of your point source of pollution.

Thank you for listening, if you would like more information or copies of documentation I can happily supply it.