

**Submission
No 143**

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

Name: Mrs Jane Sampson

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To whom it may concern

I have lived in this area for over 35 years. I lived initially for 15 years in Grafton Street, directly opposite the then container terminal. The container ships were not a problem. We enjoyed watching them. I now live in Ewenton Street and the emissions are real and dangerous.

Please take genuine action NOW.

The fuel emissions are a problem whenever the ships are in port.

When ships remain in port overnight it is diabolical. They contaminate the air with emissions from their use of poor quality diesel fuel day and night. There is no relief. The result for me is that I experience headaches and the taste of diesel in my mouth. I also have to increase the doses of medication I use every day of my life to manage my asthma.

I spend a lot of time and effort (gym, pilates, yoga and tennis) to remain healthy so when the ships arrived making me feel so unwell I was more than just a little annoyed! I have had asthma for over 60 years and work hard to manage my condition.

Not for one moment did I expect a government to violate world health standards by allowing shipping companies to use our harbour with such poor quality fuel.

Originally I was not opposed to the cruise ships berthing at White Bay and initially I did not connect the head aches and my increased breathing problems with the cruise ships, even when others were talking about the impact the ships were having on them. After some time trying to determine the cause - I realised it was the discharge from the visiting cruise ships. I could taste it! It also produced a visible film of black on our windows.

When the Cruise Ship Terminal was proposed I never considered for one moment that any government or public authority would allow the health of the community to be put at risk. I am staggered that you or any state or federal authority have not already required the cruise ships to make genuine changes to their current practices. I appreciate that recently efforts are being made to determine the problem and that finally it is being acknowledged as a problem. Obviously the money originally spent on the terminal should have been put in to 'ship to shore' power. Now is the time to do that!

I also appreciate that an effort is being made to reduce the impact of the diesel discharge on the Ewenton, Adolphus, Grafton and Wallace Streets area by having some ships berth with their bows facing west: a recent change. This may help reduce some of the emissions in some parts of Balmain, but it really just shares and spreads the problem.

It is unusual that cruise ships berth in a residential suburb - a densely populated residential suburb! Usually ships berth in industrial zones. Berthing in a residential suburb is an even more important reason why the conditions for berthing in Sydney should be to protect the health of the residents. Essentially the conditions should be 'breathing friendly'.

There is also a noise issue - with some ships pushing the limits unnecessarily, as if challenging the locals. It is childish and unpleasant for those living in the area. A ship may breach the noise limits just once but regular visits by a number of ships mean the residents hear it regularly! Most reasons for the noise - 'dinner will be served' and 'let's party' style announcements and music, could easily be left until the ship is away from the wharf, if needed at all!

This is a resolvable issue. There should be shore to ship power connected! Ships should be required to convert to this form of power. I know one argument is that the cruise ships that visit here do not have this facility - tough!! The older cruise ships are used extensively for Sydney cruises. We seem to be a dumping ground for inferior goods - again. Why do we accept it? Other places don't. Sydney provides a booming trade in Australian cruise ship passengers. It is time the cruise ship companies pay for the privilege of visiting Sydney, the most beautiful harbour in the world. At the very most basic level all ships should be required to use high quality diesel; diesel that does not emit toxins.

I really do not understand why Sydney - clearly a desirable harbour - should allow ships to operate in a way not allowed in other parts of the world! Please act now to ensure ships do not continue to emit diesel poisons, and require ships to respect the residential areas they are visiting.

Jane Sampson