

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

Name: Mr Fergus Horrobin

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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

25 August 2014

Dear Chair,

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

In accordance with 1. (b) (v) of the Inquiry's terms of reference, I wanted to make the following submission in respect of the regulation of cruise ships at the White Bay Cruise Terminal in Balmain.

I have been a long term Balmain resident and own a property in Birchgrove. With the exception of my wife and I, all of my immediate family lives in Ewenton Street, Balmain overlooking the White Bay Terminal.

This terminal has operated successfully in the community as a container terminal for many years. The transition to a cruise terminal had a nearly immediate effect. When the cruise ships are in the absence of shore power means they are required to run their engines whilst in port, with their funnels at almost exactly the same height as the surrounding residential properties. They also run loud speaker systems almost constantly. Whilst the noise pollution is a concern and unacceptable, the principal issue is air pollution. When the ships are in my family regularly suffer from saw throats, swollen eyes, difficulty in breathing and lethargy. There is also an obvious noxious smell in the air from the diesel fumes.

Looking into the matter more closely it appears that:

- The allowed fuel sulphur content for cruise ships in Sydney Harbour is 3.5%. In North America, within 200 nautical miles of the east or west coastlines, ships 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 power is not provided at White Bay and it is not foreseeable that it will be provided any time soon. The failure to provide shore power puts White Bay out of line with virtually every major cruise ship port located in the community in a first world country.

- Recent monitoring would confirm that the levels of carbon monoxide are indeed unacceptable. In monitoring conducted between February and March 2014, the 24-hr average sulphur dioxide measurement exceeded the levels recommended by the World Health Organisation by 100%.
- The monitoring currently conducted does not detect other known toxins, some of which are carcinogenic, including nitrogen oxides, particulate matter (both PM10 and the finer and more deadly PM2.5), benzene, toluene and formaldehyde.

In 2011 the Environmental Protection Authority ("EPA" - then the Department of Environment and Climate Change) specifically submitted to the then Minister for Planning prior to that:

- "DECCW considers that the adverse air quality impacts of the proposed CPT operations could be significantly reduced through the use of 0.5 per cent sulphur fuel"
- "DECCW still considers that adoption of shore-to-ship power would be the most effective and innovative way to satisfy Action for Air objectives of reducing air pollutants"

Ignoring the advice of the EPA and allowing carcinogens and other toxins to be emitted over the community with observable and immediate health effects is unacceptable. Allowing this to continue, once the issues have been made clear is disgraceful.

The EPA needs to be empowered to stop the use White Bay as a cruise terminal until clean fuel, shore power and other solutions in line with US and European standards can be implemented. Allowing the community to be showered with toxins with visible immediate effect and unknown longer term implications is a totally unacceptable interim measure and falls short of any reasonable expectation of government or a properly functioning Environmental Protection Authority.

Yours sincerely,



Fergus Horrobin