

**Submission
No 39**

**INQUIRY INTO AGISTMENT OF HORSES AT YARALLA
ESTATE**

Name: Ms Elizabeth Webster

Date received: 31/07/2013

Elizabeth Webster

31.07.2013

The Director
Select Committee on the Agistment of Horses at Yaralla Estate
Parliament House
Macquarie St
Sydney NSW 2000
Fax: (02) 9230 2981

RE: Inquiry into the agistment of horses at Yaralla Estate

ACTIONS OF SYDNEY LOCAL HEALTH DISTRICT:

No community consultation was sought in this matter. We were instead told that a signed contract with the Mounted Police had already been made and as such nothing could be done if the community was unhappy with this new arrangement.

I pointed out at the community meeting that no government department could enter into a "contract" with another government department as one cannot enter into a contract with oneself. Since their stance (Dr Anderson, Ms Flood and MP Sidoti) had been that this was an unchangeable contract, signed sealed and delivered for the previous 2 hours of the community meeting (I was the final member of public chosen to speak) I can only surmise that lying blatantly to the public is fair in their eyes. It certainly matches the "fairness" they have displayed throughout their handling of this matter.

Promises were made to answer all questions raised that night. I asked three. I received a response to none unless you consider that all media references to their signed contract with the Mounted Police were suddenly referred to as an agreement instead.

THE EVICTION OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS WHO'S HORSES ARE AGISTED ON THE ESTATE LANDS:

The Yaralla estate was left for public access and enjoyment and health purposes. Exclusive government use of this estate (and any part thereof) is a violation of the role of trustee, and exclusion of the public in anyway is a further violation.

SLHD would have this land used for exclusive government use to the exclusion of the public. I cannot see in what respect they are fulfilling the trust placed in them as trustee in this matter whatsoever.

The community has been just that: a community at Yarralla. We need both that community spirit and unique culture and land to continue on as it has.

**THE “INDEPENDENT AUDIT OF THE SITE” REFERRED TO IN A 19 APRIL 2013
MEDIA RELEASE ISSUED BY THE SYDNEY LOCAL HEALTH DISTRICT**

This report was an insult to anyone of intelligence. I won't say more as anyone who cares to see the truth of this matter can see it for themselves.

ANY OTHER RELATED MATTER:

As a direct result of the actions of SLHD in the dealing with the community including referring to the members of the community present at the community meeting as feral nimbis, I have no respect and certainly no trust in their dealings with this matter, and perhaps in any other.

I do not want to see the Mounted Police on the Yaralla estate as certainly when the time comes they will be provided with alternate arrangements for agistment unlike the community. This has a double impact in that 1. They could have been provided with agistment for their 15 or so horses in many areas anyway, and 2. There will be no one independent to notify next time SLHD decides to make changes to Yarralla: an historic estate which should always have every effort to be kept as it had been for decades.

Whatever happens with the tender and independent operator should be put in place for the protection of the estate and to keep SLHD honest as they have not been recently. This will ensure a built in check is in place next time a change is “proposed” and will hopefully keep the community aware as was not the case this time. Not a single person would have been aware of these proposed changes to the Yarralla estate if they had not had to notify horse owners in order to get their horses off the estate. Indeed my preference is to keep many individual horse owners there.

I also understand that members of the public, myself included, have been exposed to asbestos dumped on the site. While I cannot begin to see how this could have been allowed to occur in the first place, I am aware as I walked past the area which was simply bordered with a flimsy plastic tape with no signage, that inadequate actions and responses were taken when this knowledge was made clear. In fact, when I walked by a couple of days later this tape had come away (I still did not know why it had been placed there) and members of the public including very young children were walking across this hazardous area. I cannot even begin to describe my disgust with their dealings in this matter. No effort was made to protect OR advice the public of this danger.

If SLHD is an expert in health as they claim perhaps they are aware of the dangers of asbestos? Perhaps they are also aware (although their actions give nothing to indicate this) of mental health issues. Their blatant disregard of the people and community impact and outcry on the receiving end of this issue is having countless negative impact. How are people to feel about the world they are a part of when they are so fully, completely, blatantly dismissed? To those who ARE a part of the community they know

about the depression, loss of purpose, loss of joy, and talk of suicide amongst both those who agisted horses, those who visited the site for either the horses or Yarralla itself and amongst their family.

I cannot understand how Yarralla, which means home, can left administered in this way.