

**Submission
No 51**

**INQUIRY INTO COSTS FOR REMEDIATION OF SITES
CONTAINING COAL ASH REPOSITORIES**

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The long term problem for these ash dams stems from the fact that they are not lined and that there is no barrier to groundwater contamination. Trigger points have been reached for contamination for arsenic, cadmium, selenium, chromium and other heavy metals. A Newcastle University study showed that these concentrations are found in some fish species but also in mud crabs. What is required is to amend NSW EPA (EPL1429) for Eraring and (EPL761) for Vales Point to bring concentration levels in line with ANZECC (2000) guidelines. More use of fly ash in concrete and other stable products as in Europe should be fast tracked. There should be no more consideration for expansion or duplication of these ponds as electricity generation by means other than burning coal are now economically and environmentally far superior. Public health alone must be a priority for all Governments in Australia and that must be a starting point for future planning.