

Submission  
No 100

**INQUIRY INTO CURRENT AND POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF  
GOLD, SILVER, LEAD AND ZINC MINING ON HUMAN  
HEALTH, LAND, AIR AND WATER QUALITY IN NEW  
SOUTH WALES**

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date Received:** 4 September 2023

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Partially  
Confidential

2023 Submission to

**NSW Government inquiry into Current and potential impacts of gold, silver, lead and zinc mining on human health, land, air and water quality in New South Wales.**

Copper and gold, silver and lead/zinc mineral extraction is common in NSW there is plenty of production, I don't see how any open cut mines 20km up and down wind corridors, from primary and secondary schools, agriculture and livestock farming in medium to large towns or 3kms from local primary schools are a GREAT IDEA!

Gold dust is not permitted to be lost from the extraction process by the miners themselves, but in the Bowden's proposal we are expected to put up with lead dust blowing from an open cut mega mine down a wind corridor through our towns settling on water catchments, meat producing farmland and towns with schools, Lead dust that settles on roofs was washes into rainwater tanks, poisoning the humans and animals who drink it or wash in it, breathed in by our children while at school and at home.

I don't accept that any mine can be dust controlled, as is evidenced by historical contamination even from 'underground' Silver/lead mines at Broken Hill, that has been mined continuously for almost 120 years, however, there are now only two operators in this area, both utilizing highly efficient bulk underground mechanized mining.

Dust is any material of a small enough particle size to be blown by wind, it's atomic weight is not the issue here, the heavier the material the smaller the particle size and smaller particles are the dangerous sizes they go straight into the bloodstream from inhalation. They also pass through filters for water and air. (2 micron)

The wind corridor that runs from the Pilliga scrub through Dubbo, Dunedoo, Gulgong and Mudgee Via western plains and then down the Henry Lawson creek valley through Lue, where the proposed massive open cut mine is, further down the valley around Tong Bong mountain to Rylstone and Kandos and all the way down the Cappertee valley to Glen Davis, and finally over the escarpment into the Wolemi state forest, (80kms from Penrith) in total a few hundred kilometers at least, has been the path that many dust storms have regularly taken, all of us here have seen these dust storms picking up and in some cases stripping the topsoil from farmland surrounding and in the Lue area and carrying it to the towns of Rylstone etc, blanketing the area falling/settling on roofs and in water catchments.

In Broken Hill where silver/lead/zinc even as it is now only mined underground, the results of blood tests between 2009 to 2015 were disastrous,  
Following Taken from <https://www.phrp.com.au/issues/march-2022-volume-32-issue-1/blood-lead-levels-among-broken-hill-children/>

'The geospatial distribution of children with very high (blood lead levels) BLLs shows clustering of these children in some localities, as well as their widespread distribution throughout Broken Hill.'

Following From ABC <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-05-09/mining-contributing-to-broken-hill-lead-problem-research-shows/8507160>

'There is solid proof for the first time that current mining operations at Broken Hill in far west New South Wales are responsible for lead contamination', researchers have said.

The NSW Government is spending millions of dollars to lower lead exposure in the city and bring down high blood-lead levels in children.

But a new study published in the journal Atmospheric Environment has confirmed that some of that lead is emitted as dust every day by the city's mines.

The lead problem had been variously blamed on underground ore, leaded petrol and paint, as well as historical mining operations.

But Professor Mark Taylor from Macquarie University in Sydney said the research put it beyond dispute that local mining is still letting lead dust escape into the air.

"The misconceptions propagated in the past [were] that the reason why children are leaded or there's a lead problem in Broken Hill [had] nothing to do with the mining operations, and it's all to do with naturally-occurring lead," Professor Taylor said.

"That's all just — for want of a better word — complete poppycock."

He said data collected from sensors across town prove much of the contamination is from the Southern Operations mine owned by Perilya."

I would stress, Perilya is not an open cut mine, it is underground.

It is ludicrous that Bowden's are to be responsible for blood sampling of individuals when we know there is NO SAFE LEVEL of lead contamination in blood, despite the many historic cover-ups of the mining industry and their medical professionals when monitoring mine workers blood levels and health, eg recent cases of 'black lung' in Hunter valley coal mining,

I know no open cut minerals mine ever has a 'no particle escape record' and very few have an appropriate, mitigation strategy, this is why Broken hill mines are underground, even then the blood test results are this bad!

We don't want to have to isolate our children from out doors and have no defense against air borne lead dust, to have many generations of children affected by high blood/lead conditions

I would recommend that ALL of the board of directors and their families and grand children agree to move to Lue and live there for the proposed duration of the mine in exchange for approval. Well I don't think they will agree to that! So why should we have a decision in favour of this mines approval forced on us.

Broken hill is a very big operation, with big international companies, we don't want smaller players opening dodgy mines, and taking shortcuts during operations with real self admitted risks of air contamination when there are plenty of other silver/lead operations away from major centers like Mudgee and well established historic working smaller towns like Rylstone and Kandos and smaller towns only 2kms from a lead mine at Lue.

This proposed mine will DESTROY our century and a half old farming, eco tourism and local economic system. Not add to its wealth, the money will all go elsewhere! Our economy will change to a mining economy. Businesses with organic certification, livestock and agriculture farming adjacent to the mine will have to cease, as lead and other dusts and liquids contamination will prevent the animal welfare and quality continuation that currently exists

Employment, there are plenty of coal mining jobs and what is really needed is regular transport to and from the coal mines, I am 65 but I can not justify travelling 100kms + each way by private vehicle to work at a mine in Ulan, so this prevents me from doing so .I AM NOT ALONE.

Water, the Henry Lawson Creek runs through the town of Lue and all drinking water in the town is from Bores. The creek continues to Mudgee where drinking water is also drawn from bores, and during wet weather ( when the risk of tailings ponds overflowing is high) the entire water course system of the viticulture and Sheep and beef farming plains of Lue, through to Mudgee and the other direction to Rylstone in flood .It is unreasonable by historical fact to assume there will never be consequences to the water supply of 15 to 20 thousand residents of the area and their livelihoods from farming and agriculture destroyed.

Further the Gold mines in NSW do have tailings arrangements to ensure they can re cycle the tailings and recover more gold they are a better design.

The tailing ponds design at Lue can only result in an environmental disaster, sooner or later, due to the mines own admission that they will leak, stated at a very low estimated rate However their location, directly above Lawson creek and the figure suggested as an accurate residual amount is not reasonable or anywhere close to best case, and during recently more common extreme weather events all of the dams in the area overflow.

So when there is a drought we will be exposed to air borne lead contamination and when we have high or any rainfall (when the drought is over) we will be exposed to contamination via drinking water.

I think if Bowden's mine was to gain approval and they were made to compensate all citizens with a million dollar payout within a radius of 50kms of their massive open cut mine. I would sell up and move out anyway. As it stands I will be at odds with rising property prices to move to a comparable area to protect my children from the same fate as Broken Hill!

**WE DON'T NEED ANY MORE MINING IN OUR AREA, WRONG PLACE, WRONG INDUSTRY, WRONG NSW GOVERNMENT MINERALS STRATEGY. ALL WRONG!**

Bowden's can go somewhere else where they won't affect a thriving local community, the Australian minerals NSW opportunities are shown here,

[https://www.australianminerals.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/51972/NSW-silver-KO.pdf](https://www.australianminerals.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/51972/NSW-silver-KO.pdf)

The map shows larger more pure and easily extracted deposits that will affect no people other than the miners themselves, go there first.

Bowden's statement "Largest undeveloped silver project in Australia" is misleading if not a lie, the purest and largest undeveloped silver project is Drake at Mt Carrington at almost twice the size and purity and more easily and safely extracted. The nearest town is 5kms away and the mine site itself is shrouded in bush land.

Lue is 2 kms away from the proposed Bowden's mine site via cleared farmland.

Mines and industry partners consistently abdicate their contamination responsibilities to those affected by the consequences of wealth extraction, who are the people living in contaminated communities.

In the case of broken hill, mines and authorities made parents responsible by demanding they clean dust up more often to prevent their children from high levels of lead, this didn't work, but it made someone else responsible!

Dangerous metals mine proposers always re-submit EIS's until authorities make a decision based on economics of the local area and the nation, not public safety of the local population, and then after the damage is done throw a paltry amount of money at it to try and make the problem go away.

People die from less contamination than Bowden's proposed mine admits to and have very poor health outcomes that cost them not only health but the government dearly. Bad economic decision.

I love my local area, and all the people in it. I have invested a lifetime and way too much work to provide a safe home for my children and until recently it was a lifetime dream come true, Bowden's wants to change all that for me but more importantly an estimated 30,000 residents that could potentially be negatively affected when a damn wall breaks or overflows or a storm picks up dust from Bowden's mine site and distributes it! But more importantly the cumulative effects of lower level continuous exposure.

We need background heavy metals monitoring in all the towns around here and free water and blood testing undertaken by licensed pathology services. NOT BOWDENS as proposed.

This mining proposal was approved by the previous coalition government and we expect better from the current government, very disappointing.

Please reject this massive open cut lead/silver mine proposal!