

I object to the fact that corporate proponents of state significant projects such as this extension (or in reality “increase in impact”) of Vickery Coal Mine attend the IPC hearings and get paid by their employer for doing so.

I believe this highlights the inequitable circumstances of government processes that demand lay people be informed about an industry that has nothing to do with their chosen life path, be skilled in public speaking and give up many unpaid hours of their time to defend the life choices they have made.

The people who are employed by proponents that speak for the proposal on these days, have for the most part been educated in the wiles of their chosen mining industry, even possibly to the extent of being given training in how and what to speak about at these hearings by their employers. Others who speak in favour may be receiving money in other ways from the proponent and may be the subject to legal agreements that require them to speak favourably of the proponent. These people are speaking for a corporation that in effect owns them to a high degree while they are there in front of the IPC panel.

This needs addressing to allow a level playing field for all who speak at these hearings. The IPC needs to acknowledge the tainted nature of the presentations given by the ‘servants’ of their ‘master’, the proponents.