

Submission Rix's Creek South Continuation of Mining Project SSD 6300

Attention:

Mary O'Kane

Chair Independent Planning Commission of NSW

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Rix Creek coal mine expansion.

The benefits claimed for this project do not outweigh the long term costs to the public, in particular the cumulative health impacts on the community from coal mining in the Upper Hunter. Air pollution at Camberwell and North West Singleton regularly exceeds the national standards.

My long-term experience of living near three major coal mines has shown air pollution standards are part of a "regulation" regime the practical outcomes of which are completely unfair and a shameful failure of duty of care by a series of venal, incompetent Governments and a compromised, under-resourced Public Service. Existing pollution standards work to facilitate industry operational priorities rather than protecting the community from a poisoned legacy of ill-health, death and disease. Mine rehabilitation in many Hunter mines are well below acceptable community standards.

Australia's current air pollution standards are seriously outdated. The evidence for the harm to human health caused by air pollution has significantly advanced since the last time the standards were set twenty-one years ago, leaving Australian standards well behind the United States, the European Union and China. Unchecked air pollution already leads to more deaths than the national road toll, and worsens asthma, chronic bronchitis, and lung and heart diseases. Young children, pregnant women, the elderly, and people living around Singleton and Camberwell are the most at risk.

The Upper Hunter is now over saturated with open cut coal mining. No additional expansions or new mines can be justified by any reasonable judgement. The long term legacy of final voids is also a cost shifting exercise that will seriously disadvantage future communities. This mine expansion should not be approved.

Yours sincerely,

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