

HAZELWOOD MINE FIRE INQUIRY

Submission cover sheet

Post your submission with this cover sheet to:

Submissions Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry
PO Box 3460
GIPPSLAND MC Vic 3841

Email your submission with this cover sheet to info@hazelwoodinquiry.vic.gov.au.

Title:	First Name: JENNY	Surname: JACKELLEN
Organisation represented (if applicable): —		
Email address:	[REDACTED]	
Postal address:	[REDACTED] MOE 3825	
Telephone:	Mobile: [REDACTED]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Origin and circumstances of fire <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Measures by Hazelwood Coal Mine to prevent fire <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Application and administration of regulatory regimes <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state)	Response to fire by: <input type="checkbox"/> Hazelwood Coal Mine <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Services (← Excellent response) <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Agencies <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Health Officials <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Government Agencies	

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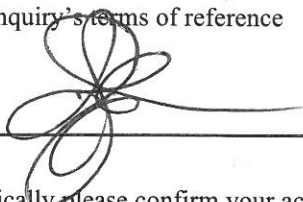
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Acknowledgements

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11/4-14

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Date

I am speaking on behalf of myself and my daughter Tia with her permission, as she had a car accident yesterday and is home recovering.

Tia left her Morwell South unit and found a place to stay in Traralgon and hasn't been back to live in her unit since.

Tia applied to DHS for re-location money when it was announced and had her name taken. Tia gave all her details and was given a reference number. She was told she was entitled to re-location assistance because of where she lived and because she was not on newstart, held a healthcare card or obtained other centrelink payments, therefore not getting access to other benefits. Tia was told she was like most people who had been applying and that they would let me know if things changed. So Tia waited for contact. She knew DHS and Latrobe City workers were under the pump so she waited while she was living out of a suitcase. She still had to drive to work in Morwell until the firm she works for re-located to Moe because of the affect the smoke and ash were having on the employees there. So another move she had to deal with and everyday she had to drive through that smoke. The trip being longer now, from Traralgon to Moe (remember she lived and worked in Morwell).

The smoke was affecting Tia's health. She had headaches, fatigue and nose bleeds. Getting an appointment with her regular GP was next to impossible at that time so she, whilst still working in Morwell, sort a doctor out during her lunch break. This doctor told her to suck it up as she, the doctor, had to work through it so why couldn't Tia. Tia did not seek an assessment at the Emergency centre set up in Saskia Way I believe because it was set up in Morwell - the cause of her problems. I personally live in Moe and I am a chronic asthmatic. I had my first ever stint in hospital with a severe asthmatic attack during the recent mine fire and ended up at WGH. I was told by my doctor I was very lucky. I jokingly call it a *'missed opportunity for some'*. I had been keeping indoors especially the afternoons and continually kept wiping the black soot off everything. There was no way I could have ever been assessed at the emergency centre in Morwell as being at risk. I couldn't have risked driving there through all that smoke and ash. I don't believe I was alone in this.

After a period of time. Tia went to the relief centre and spoke with a DHS representative who told her again that she could possibly be eligible for financial re-location assistance as the restrictions were lifted to cater for more residents based on income and life style impacts. Tia was never properly assessed, nor told that she had to be properly assessed. Someone was going to get back to her and let her know. No one ever did. When Tia called back after waiting a substantial period of time she was told that the money was no longer available, even retrospectively.

We have since found out that a in-laws elderly uncle who lives in Church St Morwell (north of the railway line) was advised and received, DHS payment with regards to the Morwell Mine fire financial relief, and he never left his property. He may have been entitled to whatever money he received but the point was that he received it and immediately after someone else advised him to apply for it. He was then referred to other apply for other money avail for Morwell residents and received that as well. Around \$1,000 I believe. T received nothing. She has a mortgage and bills to pay, bill at her Morwell South home and then find money for the accommodation she

moved to in Traralgon plus the find money for the extra travel her place of employment in Morwell. This place of employment was eventually re-located to Moe temporarily as a result of the fire so she had to travel further - from Traralgon again at her own expense.

When the all clear came for the residents to move back in to their homes T applied for and received her clean up package or whatever it was called, without question (once her she had provided identification and proof of residency and rightfully so.). We set about cleaning her place with her free bucket, mop, mask and a pair of gloves, for one, and used the \$15 laundry voucher. all inadequate. The voucher only covered 2 1/5 loads at the Laundromat. Again she is out of pocket. The only good thing that she got was the vacuum cleaner and she collected a bag and a half of black dust out of her unit with it.

When she queries about getting the dust out of her two reverse cycle heating units, one of which is located on the roof of her two storey unit she is also told to either contact her insurance agent or clean them herself with a vacuum cleaner. Remember one is located on her roof. Again inadequate, dangerous and impracticable.

The day after this massive clean the dust was well and truly back because it is in the atmosphere, flying and floating around in the breeze.

To surmise we feel that the money was not properly distributed during the mine fire crisis. We allege that there appeared to be unintentional ageism discrimination, and the clean-up money was basically a waste - the package, not including the vacuum cleaner provided, couldn't have cost more than \$30. It was inadequate - Tia would have rather had that that value in laundry vouchers. I mean who hasn't got a mop and bucket already.

We also believe that the government should not only endorse, but provide funding for affected residents to be assessed as part of a long term health study so that if there was another similar disaster in the future anywhere in Australia, possibly the world, then we could have the data from the findings here to help forecast long term health affects with more certainty for others. What we had was all guess work which only increased anxiety rather than allay them.

And re-claim the mine. Get rid of that eye sore and hazard. No one is saying fill the hole up. That would be impossible. What money's that would be spent on pipes, sprinklers, water would be best spent on soil, seeds and trees. It is doable. Refer to the Newport Lakes and the struggles and the re-development that took place there as a positive example. I just hope it doesn't take the state government to take that long to re-claim the unused mines in the Latrobe Valley.

Thanks for coming here and listening.

Tia van der Meulen

██████████
Morwell 3840

Jenny Jackeulen

████████████████████
Moe 3825

(11/4/2014)



Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry

Jenny Jackelen

What worked well in the lead up to the fire, during the fire, and in putting the fire out?

- Police - 10/10
- CFA - 10/10
- MFP - 10/10
- Red Cross - 10/10
- EPA - with their limited resources to monitor such an event

What didn't work well in the lead up to the fire, during the fire, and in putting the fire out?

- Govt agencies. ageism, confusion, ^{people missing out, being dismissed} not getting back to people.
- Mis-information re: health warnings
 - There is nothing to compare - long term such as asthma. if so Direct us to them.
- no fire prevention or re-clamation in the mine itself - exposed to such ~~events~~ catastrophic events.

What should be done differently to prevent such a fire in the future, and in response to it if it happens again?

Re-Claim the Mine. This doesn't mean filling it. Refer to Newport Lakes model. It is do-able - it will make all parties happy. Win Win Win