

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: Mrs.	First Name: Margaret COOK	Surname: COOK
Organisation represented (if applicable):		
Email address:	[REDACTED]	
Postal address:	[REDACTED] MORWELL 3840	
Telephone: [REDACTED]	Mobile: [REDACTED]	
<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (please state) Gone and forgotten by overseas company	Response to fire by: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hazelwood Coal Mine <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Emergency Services <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environmental Agencies <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Health Officials <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Government Agencies	

Confidentiality

The Inquiry will consider all requests for confidentiality. Should you wish for your submission or parts of your submission, to be treated as confidential, please clearly state the reason in the space provided below. If you require more room, please attach a separate page and provide together with your submission.

Should the Inquiry consider the request for confidentiality not to be appropriate you will be provided with an opportunity to withdraw your submission or re-submit it in a form suitable for publication.

Please select one of the following options

I acknowledge that my submission will be treated as a public document and may be published, quoted or summarised by the Inquiry.

OR

I request that my submission or parts of my submission, be treated as confidential, and not published quoted or summarised by the Inquiry, for reasons stated below

Margaret Cook

I only wish to tell you how this Mine Fire has created a lot of uncertainty in our life. The unit we live in is a Community Housing owned unit, so you may realise our only income is the Age Pension. We were thrilled to be allotted this unit, we felt it was in a nice area, flat ground (we are 73 & 75yo). Then this happened because of negligence on the part of the mine owners and no-one in authority watching over them. And from France or Singapore or any-where overseas they don't care, it's not their lives at risk. My husband has multiple lung conditions, from C.O.P.D., emphysema and asbestosis. He has an oxygen concentrator to help him breath easier. So for him some days are so-so and some are dreadful. When that smoke hit he was totally breathless, then we were evacuated to Traralgon (what was wrong with some-where in Morwell, I know Kernot Hall was in use, but it's not the only hall in town). Red Cross were great but there is a limit to how long I can sit on a plastic chair, so by 8.15pm I decided to go home and my husband needed his O2. No-one was happy but we signed out as requested and came home. There were no beds for us in Traralgon anyway. After 3 days of seeing his father deteriorate our son lent us some money to get out NOW not when maybe some-one threw some "pea-nuts to the monkeys" to get away from the pollution. We were told by phone we had to come back to apply for the money, now that's authoritarianism at its best, it was very obvious we were eligible. What it has cost us in money is a lot more than \$1,250 we got. We were also told there may be another payment so hold onto our pin numbers for the Wespac Bank etc. Oh sure that would happen! It cost us all of that hand out for extra medications for his my husband alone. I

was exhausted looking after him as I'm his carer and sure earned my BIG allowance. Yes we have had our house cleaned but there's a lot we had to do ourselves every day, like hosing down that persistent fallout from near the doorways etc. I also had a headache for weeks which I think was sinusitis from the smoke. Where we live is right down amongst the heavy pollution area, so we had to lock ourselves inside to help ourselves. What a disaster to have thrust upon us and upset our quiet life for the sake of big companies and greed making the big dollar at the expense of the ordinary people. My opinion to make them listen is to lay a **BIG CLASS ACTION** on them for all of Morwell, as the only language they talk is **MONEY**.

Margaret Cook

 Morwell.



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

Red Cross -
C.F.A etc etc

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

Being evacuated to Traralgon, then stranded there and no sign of anywhere to sleep. Having to return to Morwell to apply for the money to leave the area, which was too little too late. We had already vacated Morwell as my husband has multiple lung conditions and he was desperately ill. Then we had to return to get \$1,250 - our son had already had to lend us money to go.

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

Who-ever owns the power company should be made totally responsible for the safety etc at all the mines & power outlets - not just take our money overseas & this happening again. 2nd all.