



Fw: Morwell Mine Fire Submission

info/ [redacted]
Sent by: info@hazelwoodinquiry.vic.gov.au

13/05/2014 09:49 AM

Submission

----- Forwarded by [redacted] HAZELWOODINQUIRY on 13/05/2014 09:49 AM -----



Hazelwood Inquiry info/DPC@DTF
11/05/2014 08:55 PM

To Hazelwood Inquiry
info/DPC@DTF
cc
bcc
Subject Morwell Mine Fire Submission

Title: mr

First Name: chris

Surname: lord

Email address: [redacted]

Home or office phone: [redacted]

Content of submission (you can choose multiple): Response to fire by
Emergency Services, Response to fire by Public Health Officials,
Response to fire by Other Government Agencies

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.

Upload Submission:

http://hazelwoodinquiry.vic.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/formidable/Screenshot_2014-05-11-20-46-14.png

User Information

[redacted]

User-Agent (Browser/OS): Mozilla/5.0 (X11; Linux x86_64)
AppleWebKit/534.24 (KHTML, like Gecko) Chrome/11.0.696.34
Safari/534.24

Referrer:

<http://hazelwoodinquiry.vic.gov.au/make-a-submission/online-submissions/>



Screenshot_2014-05-11-20-46-14.png



Benzene Emissions

Chris Lord

to:

Tracey Matters

08/05/2014 08:08 PM

Hide Details

From: Chris Lord

To: Tracey Matters/HAZELWOODINQUIRY@DPC,

You may recall our conversation at the churchill community session regarding benzene emissions.

I just want to pass onto the inquiry the series of emails that i mentioned. I will forward these to you after this email.

My key issues are:

1. It took 18 days to commence benzene monitoring and a further 19 days to report at the morwell bowls club 2 data points that both exceeded the thresholds published by the epa.
2. I generated over 15 emails, telephone calls and in person approaches to authorities during the 19 day period to get the results. I found the experience appalling as you will see in the attached emails. In some instances key authorities did not even bother to respond to my requests.
3. When i approached the fire services commissioner (refer to following emails) he indicated to me that he had not been briefed about benzene over the threshold and yet it was uploaded on the epa and health site 5 days beforehand. He should have known this.
4. I urged the chief health officer to undertake specific follow up health studies given that benzene was over the threshold. This suggestion was ruled out at the time and again i think that was unacceptable. I gather this matter is now being taken up but again this whole episode for me is a case of authorities 'dragging their feet'.
4. The health department declared that the emissions were just over the threshold (numerically more than 50% over) but no clarification as to whether risk should be highlighted for groups such as infants. Given that the reports were that the smoke levels were regarded by many in the community as much higher in the first 2 weeks, can the health department estimate what could have been the benzene levels potentially reached.
5. I ask the judicial inquiry to determine what impact would have been if the benzene emission levels were known at the time on the decision making process to proceed or not proceed with an evacuation. I ask this so that next time this decision is based on important data such as the emissions of known carcinogens. It is rumored around the community that Vicpol wanted to proceed with an evacuation but this was blocked. Is this true?

I have numerous other issues that are raised in the emails that i will forward.

Chris lord





Fwd: Question related to benzene emissions from Hazelwood Mine Fire
Chris Lord
to:
Tracey Matters
08/05/2014 09:03 PM
Hide Details
From: Chris Lord [REDACTED]
To: Tracey Matters/HAZELWOODINQUIRY@DPC,

----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Feb 27, 2014 7:42 PM
Subject: Fwd: Question related to benzene emissions from Hazelwood Mine Fire
To: [REDACTED]
Cc:

----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Feb 27, 2014 10:58 AM
Subject: Question related to benzene emissions from Hazelwood Mine Fire
To: [REDACTED]
Cc:

Hello Mr Lord,

Yesterday you spoke to me and other agencies at the CFA's public information bus at Mid Valley Shopping Centre. You had two specific questions about benzene emissions from the Hazelwood Mine Fire.

Your first question was: Is benzene emitted in the smoke caused by the Hazelwood Mine fire?

In response I can confirm that benzene is a product of incomplete combustion, and therefore it is possible that benzene may be found in the smoke being emitted by the fire.

Your second question, based on the assumption that benzene could be in the smoke (which as per the above response is possible), was: Why isn't benzene being monitored by EPA?

In response I can inform you that EPA did commence benzene monitoring yesterday.

I hope that this assists you with your questions. If you would like further information about the air monitoring in and around Morwell, please feel free to call EPA's Customer Service team on 1300 EPA VIC (1300 372 842).

Regards

[REDACTED]

Manager – Industry Strategic Partnerships

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Fwd: RE: Delivery Status Notification (Failure) benzene
Chris Lord
to:
Tracey Matters
08/05/2014 08:55 PM
Hide Details
From: [REDACTED]
To: Tracey Matters/HAZELWOODINQUIRY@DPC,

----- Forwarded message -----
From: [REDACTED]
Date: Mar 4, 2014 1:20 PM
Subject: RE: Delivery Status Notification (Failure) benzene
To: [REDACTED]
Cc:

Hi Chris

I'll have a chat to our Science Officer today and will find out when the benzene results are expected to be available

I'll let you know as soon as I can

Regards

Susanna Young
Manager - Industry Strategic Partnerships

EPA Victoria
200 Victoria Street, Carlton VIC 3053 | GPO Box 4395, Melbourne VIC 3001 | DX 210082
[REDACTED] | www.epa.vic.gov.au

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A healthy environment that supports a liveable and prosperous Victoria.

From: Chris Lord [mailto:[REDACTED]]
Sent: Tuesday, 4 March 2014 12:02 PM
To: Susanna Young
Subject: Fwd: Delivery Status Notification (Failure) benzene

Please see email below regarding benzene

----- Forwarded message -----
From: "Mail Delivery Subsystem" [REDACTED]
Date: Mar 4, 2014 8:19 AM
Subject: Delivery Status Notification (Failure)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc:

Delivery to the following recipient failed permanently:

[REDACTED]

Technical details of permanent failure:

Google tried to deliver your message, but it was rejected by the server for the recipient domain epa.vic.gov.au by epa.vic.gov.au.inbound10.anz.mxlogic.net. [208.81.66.2].

The error that the other server returned was:
553 Invalid recipient [REDACTED] (Mode: normal)

----- Original message -----

DKIM-Signature: v=1; a=rsa-sha256; c=relaxed/relaxed;
d=gmail.com; s=20120113;
h=mime-version:date:message-id:subject:from:to:content-type;
bh=ALXKbE7wvpFw6991EexeRB/aPBQONI2KfUCGoVZK/wM=;
b=O7TOyR17CDtnvBXSQ+bDvAv8I3dBHfU5Yvm/4uB1jCEFoTdb/vm7PwQcTgU7057qji
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HDVA==

MIME-Version: 1.0
X-Received: by 10.66.243.131 with SMTP id wy3mr1927308pac.32.1393881548909;
Mon, 03 Mar 2014 13:19:08 -0800 (PST)
Received: by 10.70.119.6 with HTTP; Mon, 3 Mar 2014 13:19:08 -0800 (PST)
Received: by 10.70.119.6 with HTTP; Mon, 3 Mar 2014 13:19:08 -0800 (PST)
Date: Tue, 4 Mar 2014 08:19:08 +1100
Message-ID: <CAF42KhS8=jYJcet=MaZ+LTKCK7gfKiYWVF/Rn2OmtUnczisk/h0g@mail.gmail.com>
Subject: Benzene
From: Chris Lord [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Content-Type: multipart/alternative; boundary=047d7b15a13394f29b04f3ba5654

Hello sussanah, i emailed last week about benzene. Are there any results from the monitoring and what are the levels? I would also like to know about the methodology of the monitoring if possible
Regards chris lord

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Fwd: The EPA still does not know the benzene level in morwell air samples?

Chris Lord

to:

Tracey Matters

08/05/2014 08:52 PM

Hide Details

From: Chris Lord [REDACTED]

To: Tracey Matters/HAZELWOODINQUIRY@DPC,

----- Forwarded message -----

From: "Chris Lord" [REDACTED]

Date: Mar 5, 2014 4:17 PM

Subject: The EPA still does not know the benzene level in morwell air samples?

As I understand, you have advised me today that it is still not known what level of benzene is in the air samples for Morwell.

Could you please advise when did the air sampling of benzene commence and when will the results be known. Please this time be prompt in your response. I do not want to wait another week!

Chris lord

On Mar 5, 2014 12:52 PM, [REDACTED] wrote:

Dear Mr Lord,

I apologise for the delay in getting back to you with details about the monitoring of Benzene emissions.

I can confirm that in the last 2 weeks we have checked for benzene and many other Polyaromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs) in the ash samples. The samples have shown results below the detection limits. These are weekly and ongoing.

The results have also been posted online.

<http://www.epa.vic.gov.au/our-work/monitoring-the-environment/monitoring-victorias-air/monitoring-results/20140224-hazelwood-mine-fire-water-soil-and-ash-sampling>

There are 2 ways to detect PAHs, in the ash and in the air. This is now the third week of sampling in the ash and the air samples are currently being tested.

I hope this information has helped.

Please contact EPA on 1300 EPA VIC (372 842) for further air quality information.

Thanks

[REDACTED]
EPA Victoria



200 Victoria Street, Carlton VIC 3053 GPO Box 4395 Melbourne VIC 3001 | DX 210082

(03) 9695 2672 (0407) 433 227
enquiries@epa.vic.gov.au | www.epa.vic.gov.au

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Chris Lord" [REDACTED]
Date: 27 February 2014 8:11:48 PM AEDT
To: russell.northe@parliament.vic.gov.au
Subject: Fwd: Question related to benzene emissions from Hazelwood Mine Fire

----- Forwarded message -----

From: "Chris Lord" [REDACTED]
Date: Feb 27, 2014 8:07 PM
Subject: Fwd: Question related to benzene emissions from Hazelwood Mine Fire
To: <russell.northe@parliament.vic.au>
Cc:

Hello Russell

I am a bit taken aback about the epa monitoring. Yesterday i contacted the epa about benzene emissions. I have been advised today that they started monitoring benzene yesterday (see email from sussanah young, epa, attached). The victorian government's own website - better health channel - lists benzene as a cause of luekemia. You should ask why has this not been monitored earlier and exactly how is it been monitored now. I would very much appreciate a prompt response on these questions.

Regards
Chris lord.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Feb 27, 2014 7:42 PM
Subject: Fwd: Question related to benzene emissions from Hazelwood Mine Fire
To: [REDACTED]
Cc:

----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Feb 27, 2014 10:58 AM
Subject: Question related to benzene emissions from Hazelwood Mine Fire
To: [REDACTED]
Cc:

Hello Mr Lord,

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Your first question was: Is benzene emitted in the smoke caused by the Hazelwood Mine fire?

In response I can confirm that benzene is a product of incomplete combustion, and therefore it is possible that

benzene may be found in the smoke being emitted by the fire.

Your second question, based on the assumption that benzene could be in the smoke (which as per the above response is possible), was: Why isn't benzene being monitored by EPA?

In response I can inform you that EPA did commence benzene monitoring yesterday.

I hope that this assists you with your questions. If you would like further information about the air monitoring in and around Morwell, please feel free to call EPA's Customer Service team on 1300 EPA VIC (1300 372 842).

Regards



Manager – Industry Strategic Partnerships

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Fwd: Re: Further questions
Chris Lord
to:
Tracey Matters
08/05/2014 09:05 PM
Hide Details
From: Chris Lord [REDACTED]
To: Tracey Matters/HAZELWOODINQUIRY@DPC,

----- Forwarded message -----
From: <Russell.Northe@parliament.vic.gov.au>
Date: Mar 5, 2014 9:36 PM
Subject: Re: Further questions
To: "Chris Lord" [REDACTED]
Cc:

Hi Chris,

Yes sorry I missed you today.

Kath did tell me you called by and I have seen your emails.

I think your response email to EPA is more than warranted in the circumstances.

I will actually escalate this to John Merritt as the CEO of EPA for his consideration as well.

best regards

Russell Northe MLA
Member for Morwell
Parliamentary Secretary for Small Business & Tourism

address 66 George Street, MORWELL VIC 3840
phone 03 5133 9088 | fax 03 5133 9388
website www.russellnorthe.com.au

From: Chris Lord [REDACTED]
To: russell.northe@parliament.vic.gov.au
Date: 05/03/2014 09:16 PM
Subject: Further questions

Hello Russell,

I dropped by your office today just to let you know that i have contacted gavin jennings.

I have some further questions that i hope you will request answers from EPA.

I have 2 dauagters who work at midvalley and in bridle estate. I want to know if epa are monitoring in this area. I notice that these areas get pretty bad when there is a south westerly. The air was so bad there today i just got back in the car and put the recycle on.

This brings me to the second question. How will the EPA report on the benzene levels as some days

are bad and some are good. I hope the epa will give a full report of daily readings

Russell I just hope that this nasty stuff is below dangerous levels and the sooner we know the better. I am not prepared to sit and wait much longer when it comes to my kids health.

Regards
Chris

//////////*****
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Fwd: More questions for epa
Chris Lord
to:
Tracey Matters
08/05/2014 08:58 PM
Hide Details
From: Chris Lord [REDACTED]
To: Tracey Matters/HAZELWOODINQUIRY@DPC,

----- Forwarded message -----
From: "Chris Lord" [REDACTED]
Date: Mar 6, 2014 11:38 AM
Subject: More questions for epa
To: <russell.northe@parliament.vic.gov.au>
Cc:

Russell here are some more questions for epa

1. Was there a large stockpile of rubber container belts on fire for some considerable time. Does the epa know what impact and how would it have compounded the poor air quality. Would this also elevate benzene levels.
2. Given that benzene is emitted from incomplete combustion of coal, the community should be advised how then this is different to routine power station operation which i gather completely combusts coal. The question is that what advice has been sought on the impact of the much required fire fighting effort to douse the fire. Does this lead to further benzene emissions by unfortunately incompletely combusting the coal? I guess in the end the batters shuould have been clayed over then this may not have happened.

My comment is that the greens are tying this issue into coal fired power station emissions and the pm2.5 argument which is far broader. What i think needs to be sorted that this fire is different to what happens in a power station.

What gets my blood up is that nature of the epa email yesterday from its manager of marketing. You almost have to read it twice too see that that the question of benzene in the air is still not reported. I am not an organic chemist but i would have thought the first place to look for volatile compounds is in the air. Is it the case that benzene would have escaped from the ash anyway?

The community needs to hear from the epa scientists not the manager of marketing! Maybe the commonwealth chief scientist should give a second independent opinion.

Regards chris



Fwd: EPA Air monitoring
Chris Lord
to:
Tracey Matters
08/05/2014 09:06 PM
Hide Details
From: Chris Lord [REDACTED]
To: Tracey Matters/HAZELWOODINQUIRY@DPC,

----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Mar 6, 2014 12:03 PM
Subject: EPA Air monitoring
[REDACTED]

Hi Chris,

How are you? Its been a while since we've crossed paths.

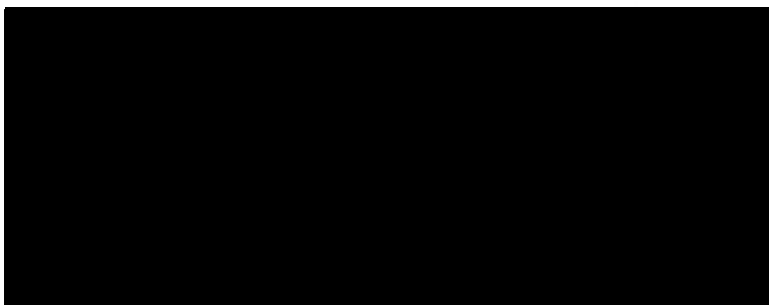
I understand you have some concerns about air quality monitoring in relation to the mine fire.

I am working in the RCC at the moment so would be happy to have a chat to you about what we are doing and where.

Feel free to give me a call [REDACTED]

Cheers

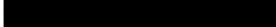
Liz



EPA Victoria



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Fwd: RE: Delivery Status Notification (Failure) benzene

Chris Lord

to:

Tracey Matters

08/05/2014 08:54 PM

Hide Details

From: Chris Lord [REDACTED]

To: Tracey Matters/HAZELWOODINQUIRY@DPC,

----- Forwarded message -----

From: "Chris Lord" [REDACTED]

Date: Mar 8, 2014 3:02 PM

Subject: RE: Delivery Status Notification (Failure) benzene

To: [REDACTED]

Cc:

Hello sussanah,

Why does it take 1 to 2 weeks to get benzene results when i have been advised by an atmospheric organic chemist that a lab can get the results in 4 hours. The community should have daily reports on this. It is simply not good enough.

Liz radcliffe organised yesterday morning for a science officer to contact me. I dont want to bother liz as she is on a well earned break. Can you follow up again as no one rang me yesterday.
Chris lord

On Mar 5, 2014 8:51 AM, [REDACTED] wrote:

Hi Chris

Just following up with you regarding the benzene monitoring

Regarding results - we do not have any results for benzene at this time, we re still awaiting the analysis. I understand that we expect to received results in approximately 1-2 weeks. As with all EPA's monitoring for the Hazelwood Mine Fire impacts we will make these results available on EPA's website as soon as they become available.

Regarding your questions about methodology - our methodologies for Volatile Organic Compounds (including benzene) are based on the US EPA's USEPA TO15 method and the Australian ASTM D3686.

If you have any further questions regarding benzene monitoring, please let me know and I'll arrange for one of our science officers to contact you.



Regards

[REDACTED]
Manager - Industry Strategic Partnerships

EPA Victoria

200 Victoria Street, Carlton VIC 3053 | GPO Box 4395, Melbourne VIC 3001 | DX 210082

www.epa.vic.gov.au

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From: Chris Lord [mailto: [REDACTED]]
Sent: Tuesday, 4 March 2014 12:02 PM
To: Susanna Young
Subject: Fwd: Delivery Status Notification (Failure) benzene

Please see email below regarding benzene

----- Forwarded message -----

From: "Mail Delivery Subsystem" <mailer-daemon@googlegmail.com>
Date: Mar 4, 2014 8:19 AM
Subject: Delivery Status Notification (Failure)
To: [REDACTED]
Cc:

Delivery to the following recipient failed permanently:

[REDACTED]

Technical details of permanent failure:
Google tried to deliver your message, but it was rejected by the server for the recipient domain epa.vic.gov.au by epa.vic.gov.au.inbound1@anz.mxlogic.net. [208.81.66.2].

The error that the other server returned was:
553 Invalid recipient [REDACTED] (Mode: normal)

----- Original message -----

DKIM-Signature: v=1; a=rsa-sha256; c=relaxed/relaxed;
d=[\[REDACTED\]@gmail.com](mailto: [REDACTED]@gmail.com); s=20120113;
h=mime-version:date:message-id:subject:from:to:content-type;
bh=AIXKbE7wvpFw6991EexeRB/aPBQON12KfUCGoVZK/wM=;
b=O7TOyR17CDtnvBXSQ+bDvAv8I3dBHfU5Yvm/4uB1jCEFoTdb/vm7PwQcTgU7057qji
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O9iWrXQoxdqe8lztAZVa9JzpBPYnGsELjO134St7YYF2se/O70khVYqTdM2roiFpawkp
HDVA==

MIME-Version: 1.0
X-Received: by 10.66.243.131 with SMTP id wy3mr1927308pac.32.1393881548909;
Mon, 03 Mar 2014 13:19:08 -0800 (PST)
Received: by 10.70.119.6 with HTTP; Mon, 3 Mar 2014 13:19:08 -0800 (PST)
Received: by 10.70.119.6 with HTTP; Mon, 3 Mar 2014 13:19:08 -0800 (PST)
Date: Tue, 4 Mar 2014 08:19:08 +1100
Message-ID: <CAF42KhS8=jYJcet=MaZ+i.TkCK7gIKiYWVI Rn2OmUncziskZh0ga@mail.gmail.com>
Subject: Benzene
From: Chris Lord [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Content-Type: multipart/alternative; boundary=047d7b15a13394f29b04f3ba5654

Hello sussanah, i emailed last week about benzene. Are there any results from the monitoring and what are the levels? I would also like to know about the methodology of the monitoring if possible
Regards chris lord

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Fwd: Benzene must not be a problem???
Chris Lord
to:
Tracey Matters
08/05/2014 09:00 PM
Hide Details
From: Chris Lord [REDACTED]
To: Tracey Matters/HAZELWOODINQUIRY@DPC,

----- Forwarded message -----

From: "Chris Lord" [REDACTED]
Date: Mar 11, 2014 7:56 AM
Subject: Benzene must not be a problem???
To: <russell.northe@parliament.vic.gov.au> [REDACTED]
<daniel.andrews@parliament.vic.gov.au> [REDACTED]
Cc:

Given that the chief health officer said again yesterday that there are no long term health issues she must have the benzene air sample results and they must be ok.

No one has told me yet after 2 weeks where i have sent over 10 emails and made over 10 phone calls. Strangely the email below tells me that the benzene results wont be available for 1-2 weeks for what an atmospheric chemist tells me takes no more than 4 hours to ascertain in a lab

----- Forwarded message -----

From: "Chris Lord" [REDACTED]
Date: Mar 8, 2014 3:02 PM
Subject: RE: Delivery Status Notification (Failure) [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Cc:

Hello sussanah,

Why does it take 1 to 2 weeks to get benzene results when i have been advised by an atmospheric organic chemist that a lab can get the results in 4 hours. The community should have daily reports on this. It is simply not good enough.

Liz radcliffe organised yesterday morning for a science officer to contact me. I dont want to bother liz as she is on a well earned break. Can you follow up again as no one rang me yesterday.
Chris lord

On Mar 5, 2014 8:51 AM, [REDACTED] wrote:

Hi Chris

Just following up with you regarding the benzene monitoring

Regarding results - we do not have any results for benzene at this time. we're still awaiting the analysis. I understand that we expect to received results in approximately 1-2 weeks. As with all EPA's monitoring for the Hazelwood Mine Fire impacts we will make these results available on EPA's website as soon as they become available

Regarding your questions about methodology - our methodologies for Volatile Organic Compounds (including benzene) are based on the US EPA's USEPA TO15 method and the Australian ASTM D3686

If you have any further questions regarding benzene monitoring, please let me know and I'll arrange for one of our science officers to contact you

Regards

[Redacted]
Manager - Industry Strategic Partnerships

EPA Victoria
200 Victoria Street, Carlton VIC 3053 | GPO Box 4395, Melbourne VIC 3001 | DX 210082
[Redacted] | www.epa.vic.gov.au

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From: Chris Lord [mailto:[Redacted]]
Sent: Tuesday, 4 March 2014 12:02 PM
To: Susanna Young
Subject: Fwd: Delivery Status Notification (Failure) benzene

Please see email below regarding benzene

----- Forwarded message -----

From: "Mail Delivery Subsystem" <mailer-daemon@googlemail.com>
Date: Mar 4, 2014 8:19 AM
Subject: Delivery Status Notification (Failure)
To: [Redacted]
Cc:

Delivery to the following recipient failed permanently:

[Redacted]
Technical details of permanent failure:
Google tried to deliver your message, but it was rejected by the server for the recipient domain epa.vic.gov.au by epa.vic.gov.au.inbound10.anz.mxlogic.net. [208.81.66.2].

The error that the other server returned was:
553 Invalid recipient [Redacted] (Mode: normal)

----- Original message -----

DKIM-Signature: v=1; a=rsa-sha256; c=relaxed/relaxed;
d=gmail.com; s=20120113;
h=mime-version:date:message-id:subject:from:to:content-type;
bh=AIXKbE7wvpFw6991EexeRB/aPBQON12KfUCGoVZK/wM=;
b=O7TOyR17CDtnvBXSQ+bDvAv8I3dBHfU5Yvm/4uB1jCEFoTdb/vm7PwQcTgU7057qji
CgTp8L2YkMdl95onY5YGmXEn3IXdm2BdNTvacMhhZv3bWhN4OXI6Vlj3mo1pZnK4pbAJ
XmfrUfHB773OAhdB+Y9RU+awWzj/SwtlwWCKrV7hLJ3zVWRJ4mq4t+Ebf+rqG3zjHcc
PxiwjGrqVQxaHZYMpUkTKmYILYRRk3GBWYEfW8qtLGiYk79epUd9TbgHBEQEwwpU9ZpL
O9iWrXQoxdqe8IztAZVa9JzpBPYnGsELjO134St7YYF2se/O70khVYqTdM2roiFpawkp
HDVA==

MIME-Version: 1.0
X-Received: by 10.66.243.131 with SMTP id wy3mr1927308pac.32.1393881548909;
Mon, 03 Mar 2014 13:19:08 -0800 (PST)
Received: by 10.70.119.6 with HTTP; Mon, 3 Mar 2014 13:19:08 -0800 (PST)
Received: by 10.70.119.6 with HTTP; Mon, 3 Mar 2014 13:19:08 -0800 (PST)

Date: Tue, 4 Mar 2014 08:19:08 +1100
Message-ID: <CAF42KhS8=jYJcet=MaZ/+1JKCK7gfKiYWVFRn2OmUncziskZh0g@mail.gmail.com>
Subject: Benzene
From: Chris Lord [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Content-Type: multipart/alternative; boundary=047d7b15a13394f29b04f3ba5654

Hello sussanah, i emailed last week about benzene. Are there any results from the monitoring and what are the levels? I would also like to know about the methodology of the monitoring if possible
Regards chris lord

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Fwd: Follow up conversation
Chris Lord
to:
Tracey Matters
08/05/2014 09:07 PM
Hide Details
From: Chris Lord [REDACTED]
To: Tracey Matters/HAZELWOODINQUIRY@DPC,

----- Forwarded message -----
From: [REDACTED]
Date: Mar 11, 2014 10:52 AM
Subject: Follow up conversation
To: [REDACTED]
Cc:

Hi Chris,

I am back on deck and am keen to have a follow up conversation with you, however I did not make a note of your number when we spoke on Friday. Could you please call me at your convenience [REDACTED] I am on duty at the RCC until 2200.

Cheers

Liz



Group Manager

Field Operations

Note I work in Carlton on Monday and Friday and regional offices the rest of the week

EPA Victoria



200 Victoria Street, Carlton VIC 3053 | GPO Box 4395, Melbourne VIC 3001 | DX 210082
1300 EPA VIC

[REDACTED] | www.epa.vic.gov.au

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Fwd: Hazelwood Fire - Monitoring Blood Cancers in Morwell.

Chris Lord

to:

Tracey Matters

08/05/2014 09:08 PM

Hide Details

From: Chris Lord [REDACTED]

To: Tracey Matters/HAZELWOODINQUIRY@DPC,

----- Forwarded message -----

From: "Chris Lord" [REDACTED]

Date: Mar 17, 2014 8:42 AM

Subject: Hazelwood Fire - Monitoring Blood Cancers in Morwell.

To: <david.davis@parliament.vic.gov.au>

[REDACTED]

The detection of benzene above air quality thresholds at Morwell was first published on your website yesterday. Can you please ensure the long term monitoring at morwell of the blood cancer types specifically linked to benzene

Benzene was not air sampled until 26 February 2014 when I first requested this sampling. It is therefore unknown what levels of benzene existed in morwell's air in the first weeks of the fire.

I urge you to put in place a robust mechanism to identify all new cases in Morwell of the specific leukemias linked to benzene.

Could you please acknowledge receipt of this email by COB today.

Chris Lord

Telephone [REDACTED]



Fwd: Questions to responsible Minister regarding benzene monitoring at Morwell.
Chris Lord
to:
Tracey Matters
08/05/2014 09:12 PM
Hide Details
From: Chris Lord [REDACTED]
To: Tracey Matters/HAZELWOODINQUIRY@DPC,
History: This message has been replied to.

No response or acknowledgment of this email

----- Forwarded message -----

From: "Chris Lord" [REDACTED]
Date: Mar 18, 2014 2:25 PM
Subject: Questions to responsible Minister regarding benzene monitoring at Morwell.
To: <ryan.smith@parliament.vic.gov.au>
[REDACTED]

On Sunday 16 March 2014, the Victorian EPA uploaded for the first time data on benzene emissions for sites within the Morwell township. All data provided for the Morwell South site exceeded the air quality threshold provided on that website.

Please provide answers to my following questions.

1. When was it first known within the EPA organisation of the results for the first recording benzene emissions of 26 and 27 February?
2. Why was the recording of VOCs commenced on 26 February and not earlier?

I would welcome a prompt response. My postal address is

[REDACTED]

Jeeralang Junction via Morwell 3840

Please provide an email reply to confirm receipt of this request by COB today.

Chris Lord
[REDACTED]



Fwd: Questions to responsible Minister regarding benzene monitoring at Morwell.

Chris Lord

to:

Tracey Matters

08/05/2014 09:14 PM

Hide Details

From: Chris Lord [REDACTED]

To: Tracey Matters/HAZELWOODINQUIRY@DPC,

No response. I rang the minister office on 20 March seeking an acknowledgment of receipt of email. No response.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: "Chris Lord" [REDACTED]

Date: Mar 19, 2014 9:59 AM

Subject: Fwd: Questions to responsible Minister regarding benzene monitoring at Morwell.

To: <ryan.smith@parliament.vic.gov.au>

Cc:

Second request. Please provide a confirmation that you received the email below by COB today

----- Forwarded message -----

From: "Chris Lord" [REDACTED]

Date: Mar 18, 2014 2:25 PM

Subject: Questions to responsible Minister regarding benzene monitoring at Morwell.

To: <ryan.smith@parliament.vic.gov.au>

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Please provide answers to my following questions.

1. When was it first known within the EPA organisation of the results for the first recording benzene emissions of 26 and 27 February?

2. Why was the recording of VOCs commenced on 26 February and not earlier?

I would welcome a prompt response. My postal address is

[REDACTED]
Jeeralang Junction via Morwell 3840

Please provide an email reply to confirm receipt of this request by COB today.

Chris Lord
[REDACTED]



Fwd: Chris Lord
Chris Lord
to:
Tracey Matters
08/05/2014 08:34 PM
Hide Details
From: Chris Lord [REDACTED]
To: Tracey Matters/HAZELWOODINQUIRY@DPC,

----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Mar 20, 2014 4:10 PM
Subject: Chris Lord
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]

Hi Chris,

The call centre staff have passed on your questions to me to be answered by the scientists at EPA. The responses received are below.

1. Chris is advising he would like to know why the time takes so long for results to be provided. He advises he is aware the test takes 4 hours to complete. He is also questioning why it took 2 weeks before testing started after beginning of Morwell fires.

In relation to testing, the focus and priority was on the priority pollutants that were likely to be in the highest concentrations in air, small particles PM_{2.5} and carbon monoxide. These pollutants are routinely monitored and the levels can be readily assessed against the national air quality standards. This monitoring data is critical in air quality impact assessments and guiding the issuing of smoke advisories, smoke alerts and providing data to the Department of Health to assist with understanding likely health impacts and possible relocations. After the monitoring programs for the priority pollutants were adequately in place the monitoring for other specific air pollutants such as benzene were commenced.

Benzene in air is not routinely monitored and monitoring is typically undertaken for 12 months for specific projects. This is to allow an assessment against the 12 month National Environment Protection Measure Monitoring Investigation Level for benzene which is 3 ppb. Benzene is being sampled over a seven day period for 52 weeks to determine a 12 month average. Sampling every day will provide a representative 12 month average. Sampling was also undertaken over a 24 hour period during significant smoke events to gain an understanding of benzene levels during the smoke events.

The sampling canisters are supplied and analysed by a Sydney laboratory that EPA has been using. The delay in results was due to internal processes such as obtaining canisters, shipping samples in batches having canisters, processing results and forwarding results to Department of Health. The Department of Health is providing advice on what air quality guideline to assess the 24 hour results as there is no national 24 hour air guideline.

2. Caller advised the reading on EPA website is 9 parts per billion at Morwell Bowls Club for Benzene according to data was 50% over acceptable level but still considered safe - DHS website advises level is over acceptable level it needs to be retested- Will these standard guidelines be followed.

For benzene I don't believe EPA website states levels are considered safe. Need to check. EPA follows the guidelines DoH advises. The reference to "it needs to be retested" is being confused with DoH's statement "The results for 24 hour testing cannot be compared against values set to protect the community from long-term health effects of benzene exposure such as cancer. This is because air monitoring hasn't been done for a long enough period.

Therefore, EPA is doing a long-term air monitoring program over a 12 month period to understand:"

3. If spot urine tests Indicator/Blood test happen for Safe work Australia for benzene levels, why not for Morwell?

Question for DoH. Workers undertaking spot urine samples tend to be exposed to significantly higher levels (Worksafe Std for 8 hours is 1000ppb) compared to the

than the community is typically exposed to (DoH std for 24 hours is 9 ppb NEPM is 12 month average of 3 ppb). I suspect the levels would be too low for community monitoring. DoH better placed to answer question.

4. Figures of density of concentration for benzene is measured over 12 months. He advises there will be 12 months of fresh air that skews the average & the Morwell population experienced concentrated levels.

As outlined previously, the benzene air monitoring program has two purposes and uses two different methods. One is for short term concentrations over 24 hours and the second is long term monitoring for purposes of assessment against the 12 month National Environment Protection Measure Monitoring Investigation Level for benzene. Two different air quality guidelines or assessment criteria are used for the assessment.

The Morwell Fires are being taken seriously by EPA and we have committed to continue monitoring even after the fires have been fully extinguished.

I hope these answers have helped and please feel free to e-mail me any other questions you may have and I will endeavour to have the more technical questions answered by our scientists.

Regards,

[Redacted]
Manager - Customer Service
Marketing & Communications



EPA Victoria
200 Victoria Street, Carlton VIC 3053 | GPO Box 4395, Melbourne VIC 3001 | DX 210082
[Redacted] www.epa.vic.gov.au

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Fwd: For archive
Chris Lord
to:
Tracey Matters
08/05/2014 08:41 PM
Hide Details
From: Chris Lord [REDACTED]
To: Tracey Matters/HAZELWOODINQUIRY@DPC,

----- Forwarded message -----

From: "Chris Lord" [REDACTED]
Date: Mar 23, 2014 7:58 PM
Subject: For archive
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]

----- Forwarded message -----

From: <Russell.Northe@parliament.vic.gov.au>
Date: Mar 21, 2014 5:41 PM
Subject: Re: Benzene at Morwell Bowls Club
To: "Chris Lord" [REDACTED]
Cc:

That's fine thanks Chris.

I will speak to Minister Smith in terms of responding to you ASAP!

Russell

Sent from my iPhone

On 21/03/2014, at 2:19 PM, "Chris Lord" [REDACTED] wrote:

Thanks russell,
Fair enough. I thought the same so i emailed your colleague ryan smith earlier this week and asked him why it took 19 days to start benzene monitoring then another 19 days to get one result which was over safe levels. I have sent 2 emails and rang his office yesterday just to get a confirmation that he got my email and i still cant even get just a confirmation?

Ive decided to start talking to people who might have a better chance than i to get some answers. I dont want to go to the media. I saw the choopers land on the oval this morning and went had a word to craig lapsley and graeme middlemiss.

I will give you a ring on a related matter of some concern.
Regards chris

On Mar 18, 2014 9:54 PM, <Russell.Northe@parliament.vic.gov.au> wrote:
Thanks Chris.

Whilst not seeking to handball the matters raised I will leave to others with more expertise than I to comment further.

Your points well and truly noted however.

Russell

Sent from my iPhone

On 17/03/2014, at 8:19 AM, "Chris Lord" [REDACTED] wrote:

Hello Russell,

The air monitoring reports for benzene were uploaded on vic EPA and Department of Health websites yesterday (Sunday 16 March 2014).

Although the health department report says it is providing 4 days of data it appears to provide only 2 days of tabulated data on 26 and 27 February. At the morwell bowls club the reading was 31 ug per cubic metre on 26 February and 44 ug/m³ on 27 February. It is commented on the website that the background level for Morwell is not known and will be measured over 12 months after the fire. The WHO guidelines for benzene state that the expected background level is 1ug per cubic metre.

Benzene exceeded the trigger threshold listed on the health department website for the morwell bowls club on every data point provided.

It is emphasised on the website that this is not a concern. Yet the Department of Health website says that this a trigger for further follow up? It is unclear just what is the further follow up. It is even more confusing when the health department website says its only just over the threshold (it is numerically greater than 50% over). It is unclear what this reference by the health department of "just over" means in relation to requisite follow-up under the international standards quoted by the department

The website makes the point that duration of exposure needs to be at least 12 months to quantify the risk of developing the luekemia types across the population. The website does not make any reference whether short term exposures at higher concentrations would mean you should reduce the duration period for it to be it to be a cancer risk.

The website should make it clear whether these concentrations (44 times higher or 31 times higher than expected background levels in the only recordings given at morwell south) is not a short term concentration level to be concerned about for groups such as young children and/or people who are in remission with the specific luekemias known to be directly impacted by benzene.

I raised my concern about benzene to the EPA on 26 February (more than 2 weeks after the fire started) and was reassured that benzene sampling commenced that day. I had subsequently made over 10 phone calls and emails to get an answer on benzene.

The first results for benzene at morwell south on 26 February were above the epa target threshold for air quality and would have been known by the epa by 28 February. Yet it is only now reported on 16 March. Is this good enough and would we have had this unacceptable delay of follow up if this happened in Brighton. I think not!

Thankyou for putting me into to contact with [REDACTED] at the epa as she has been very helpful over this last week. It is a real challenge to actually find the reports on the websites released yesterday and it was only through liz's assistance that i could locate the reports.

Chris lord



//////////*****
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Fwd: Re: Chris Lord
Chris Lord
to:
Tracey Matters
08/05/2014 08:39 PM
Hide Details
From: Chris Lord [REDACTED]
To: Tracey Matters/HAZELWOODINQUIRY@DPC,

----- Forwarded message -----

From: "Chris Lord" [REDACTED]
Date: Mar 23, 2014 8:09 PM
Subject: Re: Chris Lord
To: [REDACTED]
Cc:

Thanks rosa this goes some to explain what is going on but i dont think that 19 days to start monitoring for a carcinogen then another 19 days to report the result is acceptable.

When i sent you an email on the 5th march asking when will the results be known why could you not explain then and provided the information that it takes about 20 days. I had to keep escalating this question up the chain to endeavour an answer

On Mar 20, 2014 4:10 PM, [REDACTED] wrote:

Hi Chris,

The call centre staff have passed on your questions to me to be answered by the scientists at EPA. The responses received are below.

1. Chris is advising he would like to know why the time takes so long for results to be provided. He advises he is aware the test takes 4 hours to complete. He is also questioning why it took 2 weeks before testing started after beginning of Morwell fires.

In relation to testing, the focus and priority was on the priority pollutants that were likely to be in the highest concentrations in air, small particles PM_{2.5} and carbon monoxide. These pollutants are routinely monitored and the levels can be readily assessed against the national air quality standards. This monitoring data is critical in air quality impact assessments and guiding the issuing of smoke advisories, smoke alerts and providing data to the Department of Health to assist with understanding likely health impacts and possible relocations. After the monitoring programs for the priority pollutants were adequately in place the monitoring for other specific air pollutants such as benzene were commenced.

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Therefore, EPA is doing a long-term air monitoring program over a 12 month period to understand:"

3. If spot urine tests Indicator/Blood test happen for Safe work Australia for benzene levels, why not for Morwell?

Question for DoH. Workers undertaking spot urine samples tend to be exposed to significantly higher levels (Worksafe Std for 8 hours is 1000ppb) compared to the

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The Morwell Fires are being taken seriously by EPA and we have committed to continue monitoring even after the fires have been fully extinguished.

I hope these answers have helped and please feel free to e-mail me any other questions you may have and I will endeavour to have the more technical questions answered by our scientists.

Regards,

Manager - Customer Service
Marketing & Communications



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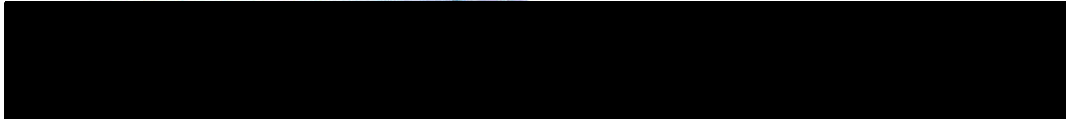


Fwd: Were these acceptable responses by the EPA regarding benzene at Morwell South?
Chris Lord
to:
Tracey Matters
08/05/2014 08:31 PM
Hide Details
From: Chris Lord [REDACTED]
To: Tracey Matters/HAZELWOODINQUIRY@DPC,

I received an automated acknowledgment of receipt of this email but no email reply

----- Forwarded message -----

From: "Chris Lord" [REDACTED]
Date: Mar 24, 2014 7:44 AM
Subject: Were these acceptable responses by the EPA regarding benzene at Morwell South?
To: <admin@firecommissioner.vic.gov.au>



TO CRAIG LAPSLEY
FIRE SERVICES COMMISSIONER

Further to my email to you regarding benzene monitoring at Morwell, the EPA have now finally provided answers as to the long delay, both on their website and in an email to me from the manager of marketing. Taken together, the EPA responses are:-

QUESTION 1. Why did it take 19 days to commence monitoring for BENZENE, a known carcinogen?

EPA RESPONSE. The first priority was ash and carbon monoxide monitoring and benzene was a second order priority.

A). Why could not the second order issue of potential carcinogens in the air be simultaneously monitored?

B). Why was it not prioritised at the commencement of the fire to at least DETECT if benzene was an issue?

If benzene analysis was eventually taken up by the EPA then was it a known possibility but not prioritised because apparently safe levels must have been predicted/expected?

QUESTION 2. Why did it take a further 19 days from sampling the benzene at Morwell South to then have the first 2 sample results uploaded (and incidentally both samples over the air quality threshold)?

EPA RESPONSES. The process requires a specialist laboratory. The canisters had to be located and then 'shipped' off to Sydney. The process had to be quality assured. The EPA had to send the results to the department of health before EPA could publish and therefore had to wait for the department of health website to develop the subsite to deal with this data.

I have been advised that it takes 4 hours to determine benzene levels.

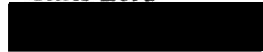
It has now taken over 15 emails and phone calls from when I first requested this information 27 days ago.

I just wonder, If benzene detection were in place in the first fortnite (and it likely exceeded safe thresholds) then this would have been an important piece of information to trigger the evacuation. That decision not to evacuate must have been a close call.

I am sure that the judicial inquiry will tell us how to do it better next time.

I should direct these matters to the minister responsible for the EPA but his office does not acknowledge emails nor return phone calls.

Chris Lord





Minister for Environment and Climate Change

Our Ref: MC004212

Mr Chris Lord

JEERALANG JUNCTION VIC 3840

8 Nicholson Street
PO Box 500
East Melbourne Victoria 8002
Australia
Telephone: (03) 9637 8000
Facsimile: (03) 9637 8100
DX 210098

Dear Mr Lord

BENZENE MONITORING - MORWELL

14 MAY 2014

RECEIVED 19 MAY 2014

Thank you for your email of 18 March 2014 regarding benzene monitoring in Morwell. *2 1/2 MONTHS LATER.*

The initial focus of incident response monitoring in Morwell was on those priority pollutants that were likely to be in highest concentrations, being fine particulate matter ("PM2.5" – particles smaller than 2.5 micrometres) and carbon monoxide. These pollutants are routinely monitored and the levels can be readily assessed against national air quality standards, which include short-term standards.

After monitoring programs for priority pollutants were adequately in place, monitoring for other possible specific air pollutants such as benzene was commenced. Benzene falls into a category of gases known as "Volatile Organic Carbons" (or VOC for short). The relevant standard for benzene is the 12 month National Environment Protection Measure Monitoring Investigation Level (of 3ppb). EPA has commenced a 12 month monitoring program to provide a representative average against this standard. *WHY WAIT?*

A VOC sampling program (including benzene) was initiated by EPA on 20 February 2014. The program required special sampling canisters, sourced from a laboratory in NSW. The first benzene samples were obtained by EPA on 26 and 27 February 2014. Following analysis by an external laboratory, the results were delivered to EPA on Friday 7 March 2014, and subsequently provided to the Department of Health on Monday 10 March 2014. *THIS WILL JUST DILUTE SEVERITY OF FIRE PHASE*

All results of air monitoring programs are available on EPA's dedicated website <http://www.epa.vic.gov.au/air-quality-lalrobe-valley-mine-fire>.

Thank you again for raising this matter with me.

Yours sincerely

THE HON BYAN SMITH MP
Minister for Environment and Climate Change

cc: The Hon Russell Northe MP

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NOTATIONS BY CHRIS LORD

Chris Lord

20 MAY 2014