



Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry

6 May 2014

Mr Peter Stewart
Victorian Government Solicitor
Victorian Government Solicitor's Office
PO Box 4356
Melbourne VIC 3001

By email: peter.stewart@vgso.vic.gov.au

Dear Mr Stewart

Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry

The Board of Inquiry seeks a witness statement from the Department of Human Services (**DHS**), in relation to relief, respite and recovery from the Hazelwood Mine Fire, both during and after the fire. We understand that you have identified Alan Hall, the Director, Performance Regulation & Reporting, as a suitable witness. If he is unable to address all of the matters identified, you may wish to suggest one or more additional witnesses.

In addition to addressing the matters set out in Attachment A, DHS witnesses may include in their witness statements any other matters that they consider will assist the Board in inquiring into the matters specified in its terms of reference. The witness statements should attach supporting documents, and include relevant maps, graphs and photographs where available.

Please provide the statements no later than Friday, 16 May 2014, in both hard copy and electronic form.

If you have any queries in relation to this request, please contact me on 9223 1706.

Kind regards

Justine Stansen
Principal Legal Advisor

1300 442 972
hazelwoodinquiry.vic.gov.au

PO Box 3460
GIPPSLAND MC VIC 3841
20 Hazelwood Road
Morwell VIC 3460

Attachment A: Department of Human Services

Background

1. Provide a brief overview of the structure of DHS and its general role and responsibilities.
2. Outline the role of DHS in relation to the Hazelwood Mine Fire.
3. Identify the agency with primary responsibility for relief, respite and recovery from the Hazelwood Mine Fire.
4. Identify any other agencies or organisations, including local government and the mine operator, involved in the delivery of relief and recovery assistance, and describe their involvement.

Assistance with relocation

5. Describe the assistance provided to members of the Latrobe Valley community to relocate during the Hazelwood Mine Fire.
6. Identify the agency with primary responsibility for providing this assistance, and any other agencies involved in its delivery.
7. Identify the eligibility criteria for assistance with relocation, for example place of residence, membership of a vulnerable group, age, holding a Health Care Card. Explain the rationale for the adoption of each criterion.
8. Was the provision of assistance to an individual contingent on proof that the individual had actually relocated? If not, why not?
9. Provide your views about what worked well, what did not work well and what could have been done better in providing assistance with relocation during the Hazelwood Mine Fire.

Other relief during the fires

10. Describe any other relief and respite made available to members of the Latrobe Valley community during the Hazelwood Mine Fire.
11. Identify the agency with primary responsibility for providing this relief, and any other agencies involved in its delivery.
12. Identify the eligibility criteria for the provision of this relief and explain the rationale for the adoption of each criterion.

13. Provide your views about what worked well, what did not work well and what could have been done better in providing relief to the community during the Hazelwood Mine Fire.

Clean up

14. Describe the assistance made available to members of the Latrobe Valley community to clean up soot and ash from the Hazelwood Mine Fire.
15. Identify the agency with primary responsibility for providing this assistance, and any other agencies involved in its delivery.
16. Identify the eligibility criteria for the provision of this assistance and explain the rationale for the adoption of each criterion.
17. Provide your views about what worked well, what did not work well and what could have been done better in providing clean up assistance.

Assistance to business

18. Describe the assistance provided to businesses in the Latrobe Valley affected by the Hazelwood Mine Fire.
19. Identify the agency with primary responsibility for providing this assistance, and any other agencies involved in its delivery.
20. Identify the eligibility criteria for the provision of this assistance, for example location, nature of business and number of employees. Explain the rationale for the adoption of each criterion.
21. Provide your views about what worked well, what did not work well and what could have been done better in providing assistance to businesses.

Recovery

22. Describe any other recovery plans developed in relation to the Hazelwood Mine Fire, and provide a copy of the plans.

