



## Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry

25 August 2015

By email: [a.barnett@qut.edu.au](mailto:a.barnett@qut.edu.au)

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Dear Assoc Prof. Barnett

### **Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry**

This letter confirms arrangements made recently with you to assist the Board of the Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry in relation to paragraph 6 of its Terms of Reference. For your information, I have attached the Board's complete terms of reference. As you will see, by paragraph 6 of the terms of reference the Board is required to inquire into and report on:

*Whether the Hazelwood Coal Mine Fire contributed to an increase in deaths, having regard to any relevant evidence for the period 2009 to 2014*

As part of the preliminary stages of its Inquiry, the Board has been provided with a copy of your reports, namely:

1. An analysis of death data during the Morwell mine fire, A Barnett, working paper, unpublished (2014, Queensland University of Technology); and
2. An updated analysis of death data during the Morwell mine fire, A Barnett, working paper, unpublished (2015, Queensland University of Technology);

Finally, the Board has commissioned an independent report from Emeritus Professor Bruce Armstrong. Professor Armstrong was provided with your reports and those reports from Dr Flander when he was commissioned. I confirm that you have been provided with copies of all of these reports together with a copy of the report from Prof Gordon.

You will see that Professor Armstrong has a section of his report starting on page 24 entitled 'Conclusions'. As Professor Armstrong's report notes, these conclusions are also set out in the main part of his report under the relevant headings and follow from his discussion of particular matters.

To assist the important work of the Inquiry, you have each kindly agreed to participate in two aspects of the Inquiry's work:

1. A private meeting of experts on Monday 31 August 2015 in Melbourne; and
2. Giving evidence as part of a panel of experts at a public hearing in Morwell on Wednesday 2 September 2015.

**Private Meeting on Monday 31 August 2015**

The meeting will take place at level 11, 222 Exhibition Street Melbourne commencing at 10.00 a.m. There is no time by which the meeting needs to conclude although some participants may need to leave earlier than others. This will be clarified at the outset.

The meeting will be facilitated by Ms Monica Kelly, Health Lead, an employee of the Inquiry's Secretariat. The purpose of the meeting is to see if the participants are able to reach agreement about some or all of the 14 conclusions set out in Professor Armstrong's report. To the extent that such agreement can be reached, Ms Kelly will document it in a joint report that each participant will be asked to sign as an indication that it is an accurate record of the agreement. Any such joint report will be part of the evidence before the Inquiry.

**Evidence at the Public Hearing on Wednesday 2 September 2015**

The Inquiry's public hearings commence in Morwell at 10.00 am on Tuesday 1 September 2015. The hearings will take place at Kernot Hall, cnr Princes Drive and Monash Way, Morwell. You will each be called as a witness on the second day of hearings, Wednesday 2 September 2015 probably at 9.30 a.m. I will contact you on the afternoon of 1 September 2015 to confirm arrangements for the following day.

Your evidence will initially be led by counsel assisting the Inquiry, Peter Rozen. Mr Rozen will lead your evidence in two parts. Initially you will give evidence by yourself and the questioning will be limited to your professional background, relevant experience and the circumstances in which your report(s) came into existence. You may then be asked some questions by counsel for other interested parties about those topics.

After the four expert witnesses have given evidence individually on these matters, the Board will have a short break in proceedings and it will then re-convene with the four experts giving evidence as a group in what is sometimes referred to as a 'hot tub' format. In this group stage of your evidence, Mr Rozen will question you about the contents of the joint report that emerged from your private meeting on Monday 31 August 2015 as well as other matters of interest to the Board. Other counsel will then have the opportunity to question you about these matters.

At each stage of your evidence, members of the Board may also ask you questions.

I trust that the above clarifies the roles that the Board of Inquiry is asking you to perform. Once again, I thank you on behalf of the Board for making yourself available to assist the Inquiry.

Please contact me by email at [justine.stansen@hazelwoodinquiry.vic.gov.au](mailto:justine.stansen@hazelwoodinquiry.vic.gov.au) or by phone on 8689 0576 if you have any questions concerning this request.

Yours faithfully



**Justine Stansen**  
Principal Legal Advisor  
Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry