

PUBLIC

Submission to the Inquiry into Cockburn Cement.

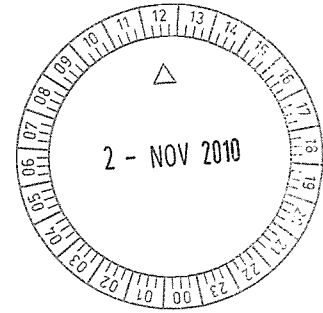
My submission. Mr Barry Jones

My History at Cockburn Cement. (CCL)

Employed at Cockburn Cement for 31 Years and 6 Months.

Roles within my employment are as follows.

Electrical/Instrument Technician, Occupational First Aider/First responder, OHS Representative,
CEPU Union Representative, Site Convenor.



Submission to the inquiry.

1. Health.

Impact on Employees Health.

As the nature of the production at CCL includes many variables that could have an impact on the health of the employee's, it's hard to quantify what is being required by the inquiry on health. I would think that the medical fraternity would submit a case rather than the general public.

The production of Clinker, Cement and Lime has a great need of the use of fossil fuels i.e. Natural Gas, Coal, and in the past Oil. All have safety and health issues if managed incorrectly. There is bi-product that remains after the process' is completed. Kiln Dust. (High Alkaline Dust).

All of these required safety measures, which are controlled under the OHS Act and Regulations, and other Australian safety standards.

Employees are encouraged to be proactive in the area of safety. All PPE (Personnel Protective Equipment) is freely available and enforced on the sites. As I represent the workforce I am always interested in anything that may affect the health of the employees. Most health issues within the Industry arise from human error and the way we handle the processes, not from what is produced. We at CCL have a fitness to work program, which allows employees access to Medical help if required with any problems that they may have. This includes Lung Function testing.

I personally have no health problems caused by working at CCL.

2. Environmental.

The Environment at CCL is one that by its very nature has an impact on the working environment of the plant. The Cement and Lime manufacturing Industry is well documented in many studies around the World as well as in Australia. On this matter, it's the way that the Industry handles the impact and the counter measures that are put in place to combat the impact on the surrounding areas.

CCL has put in many such measures over the time I have been employed. Committing this year to the latest project costing 24 million dollars (New bag house on Kiln 6) and shutting down Kiln 2. By these action the emission level will drop.

All Kilns have an emission monitoring system, which are recorded and are overseen by the DEP.

As I am involved with the Analysers, that monitor the stack emissions at CCL. I know that the Company works well within their Licenses requirements and continue to look for ways to lower its emissions and its impact on the plant and its neighbours.

3. Dust.

Dust is what is made at CCL in the form of Cement, Clinker and Lime.

The dust that is around the site is due to faults that at times causes spillages from a number of screw, conveyors and elevators as well as the human error factor.

The transporting of materials around the site can lead to some spillages on the roadways which can be picked up by the wind, and blown around the plant before the dust can be suppressed by the water truck and the road sweeper, this is no different to any roadways where spillage happens.

4. Odour.

The odours that are carried towards the areas of Beeliar, Success and Yangebup could be from a number of sites, with the prevailing southerly wind path. When the wind is from the south there are a number of industrial plants that have odour problems. This was clearly outlined in the Kwinana GAP Emission Study.

Along side CCL in one of our old quarries is the Cockburn Shire rubbish tip, and on the CCL boundary is a Chicken farm. Both contribute to the odour problems.

The prevailing southerly winds will carry the odours, to the now very close residential areas. This is clearly the case as is explained in the Kwinana GAP Emission Study of 14th June 2004 the study can be viewed on the Internet at. <http://portal.environment.wa.gov.au>.

5. Property.

I believe the effect on property is the result of poor planning, areas that were once a designated buffer zone. Which has been eroded since the first plant (Kiln 1) was built in 1953.

The authorities have allowed the property developers to build new housing estates in areas that now border on to the boundaries of CCL and other local industries. This has brought about the problem that is now a political hot potato.

The question that begs to be asked is “ Why would you build a house or allow development within an area that has a Rubbish Tip, a Chicken Farm and a Cement Works and a Major Industrial Estate down wind of your new house. Where the very potent chemicals spillages can carry right over the areas north. The real sale value of your house will never grow to the levels of other areas when you live close to this type of Industry.

6. Concerns.

We the employee's at CCL are under many threats at the present time. Where the strength of the Australian Dollar can bring pressure on CCL to purchase over-sea Clinker or inferior Cement cheaply.

We are the only manufacture of Clinker in the State. All other manufactures are overseas or on the Eastern side of Australia.

With the current cost of overseas Clinker against the Clinker in West Australia it wouldn't be hard to lose our jobs to overseas suppliers.

We already have imports of Clinker putting pressure on our jobs. Lime is now being brought into the state from overseas suppliers and being unloaded at the Kwinana port.

Currently Cockburn Cement is helping to build our States future by employing Western Australians, supplying the Construction Industry with locally made products.

By meeting the Australian Standards of its products, and supplying the Lime market.

We at CCL know that the emission levels from our plant are well below the required levels by the DEP and are well below our competitors from other parts of the world.

CCL currently have a workforce of approx 300 at its Munster site. 190 of the employees are blue-collar employees who have grave concern that the campaign that is currently being run is not a true reflection of the community's views on this matter.

I have raised this matter with the Local MP Fran Logan on behalf of the employees through a personal meeting and through the Union movement.

Summary.

The State Government inquiry will help to inform the General public that CCL is currently meeting their emission levels. We the employees welcome this inquiry.

Keeping License levels for improved emissions control set at achievable goals. Not at levels that may cause the closure of our Plant.

The Planning of future housing and property development near Industry, and be aware of the impact that their decisions will have on others.

Wattleup area is a prime example of what can happen when industry and housing come too close.

Many studies have been done on the Cement and Lime Industries, through out the world.

In the UK and USA where it is on record that emissions from a Kiln stack can carry on the prevailing wind currents for a great distance.

The Towns of Kwinana and Medina were located to avoid the emissions that may be carried on the wind currents in the early 50s from the Kwinana Industrial estate.

The governing bodies should be aware of the consequences in the form of job loses, and of local industries being reduced or closed down.

Overseas suppliers of Clinker, Cement and Lime can control our States Construction Industry with its products and its availability in the long and short term. There would be increase cost to the Building Industry if there were no local suppliers.

Barry Jones.