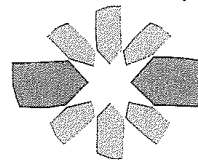


159322.



PortAugusta

CITY COUNCIL

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GJP:MJJ:1734
LEAA19926

18 December 2009

Hon John Hill MP
Minister for Health
GPO Box 2555
ADELAIDE SA 5001

Dear Minister

INCIDENCE OF CANCER IN PORT AUGUSTA

There has been a general sense amongst residents that there is a higher level of cancers amongst the population of Port Augusta than other areas.

In order to allay the fears that such impressions cause, I am requesting official statistics about the numbers of residents in our City who have suffered from the various forms of cancer and a comparison of that data with the population of the State, Adelaide Metropolitan Area and other Provincial Cities in South Australia.

Yours faithfully

GREG PERKIN
CITY MANAGER

Hon John Hill MP



2009MHE-04859

Mr Greg Perkin
City Manager
Port Augusta City Council
PO Box 1704
PORT AUGUSTA SA 5700



Government
of South Australia

Minister for Health
Minister for the
Southern Suburbs
Minister Assisting the
Premier in the Arts
Level 9
11 Hindmarsh Square
Adelaide SA 5000
GPO Box 2555
Adelaide SA 5001
DX 243
Telephone (08) 8463 6270
Facsimile (08) 8463 6277
Minister.Health@health.sa.gov.au

Dear Mr Perkin,

Thank you for your letter of 18 December requesting information on the incidence of cancer in Port Augusta.

I asked the staff responsible for the South Australian Cancer Registry within the Department of Health to investigate this matter and, in particular, to report on the number of Port Augusta residents that have been diagnosed with various types of cancer, and to provide a comparison of the incidence rate in Port Augusta, for all cancer types combined, with that elsewhere in South Australia. I am advised as follows:

While every case of cancer is deeply concerning, the overall cancer rate for residents of Port Augusta is consistent with the rate for the State as a whole, with the rate for the Adelaide metropolitan area, and with the rates for other South Australian regional cities.

Because cancer risk so clearly increases with a person's age, comparisons of Port Augusta to other areas of the State were all done after adjustment for any differences in age distribution. The rate of new cancer diagnosis in Port Augusta was the same as that in Mount Gambier (ratio 1.00), slightly less than that in Whyalla (ratio 0.89), very slightly more than that in Adelaide metro (ratio 1.03), and very slightly more than that in the rest of South Australia (ratio 1.03). None of the differences noted were statistically significant.

The table below shows the number of diagnosed cases of common types of cancer in Port Augusta during the three-year period from January 2005 to December 2007. A three-year period is preferred for such analyses, as counts for a single year are subject to too much random variation. More recent data held by the SA Cancer Registry have not yet been finalised. Where fewer than five cases apply to a given category of cancer, the policy of the Registry is not to specify the exact number, in order to avoid inadvertently identifying individual people

**Newly Diagnosed Cases of Common Cancer Types - Port Augusta
(January 2005 - December 2007)**

Cancer Sites	n
Lung	36
Prostate	29
Colon	28
Breast	17
Melanoma	15
Leukaemia	10
Non- Hodgkin's lymphoma	7
Bladder	5
Rectum	7
Stomach	<5
Uterine	<5
<hr/> Total	<hr/> 155

The number of cases of each cancer type that occurred in Port Augusta in this period was close to the number expected from State averages, except for lung cancer, where the number of cases was double the expected number. This finding, which is statistically unexpected, could result from a combination of many factors, including, most importantly, smoking history.

Available data suggest that, in past periods, a greater proportion of Port Augusta residents smoked than was true of South Australian residents generally. Reflecting, for example, on the period 1990-2003, 32.6 per cent of Port August residents aged 15 years or older reported being smokers, while the figure for the state generally was 25.7 per cent.

The number of cases of diagnosed colon cancer, at about one and one-half times the expected number, was also elevated in Port Augusta, while the number of female breast cancer cases was lower than expected, at only 64 per cent of the number that would be expected from State averages. Observed differences like these, of borderline statistical significance, commonly arise when the data of small populations are subjected to multiple comparisons.

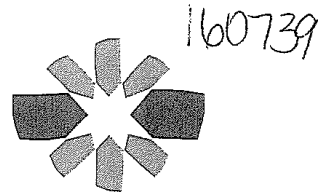
Thank you for raising this matter and I trust this information will be of assistance.

Yours sincerely

MINISTER FOR HEALTH

Date: 5.12.10

Council
Correspondence
2212110



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PortAugusta

CITY COUNCIL

GJP:MJJ:1734
LEAA20088

25 February 2010

Ms E Morton
Registrar
SA Cancer Registry
Department of Health
PO Box 6 Rundle Mall
ADELAIDE SA 5000

Dear Ms Morton

INCIDENCE OF CANCER IN PORT AUGUSTA

Council recently considered a response it had received from the Minister for Health dated 5th February 2010 relating to the incidence of cancer in Port Augusta.

The information provided in the Minister's letter quoted information from your Registry; and accordingly Council has resolved that I seek further clarification from you. Council in particular would like more information about the incidence of lung cancer in Jan 2005-Dec 2007 "where the number of cases was double the expected number". The information in the Minister's letter identified that "available data suggests that, in past periods, a greater proportion of Port Augusta residents smoked than was true of South Australian residents generally". While not specifically stated there was an inference that the "double" lung cancer rate could be attributed to a slightly higher proportion of smokers in the community.

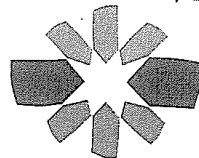
I therefore ask whether there is a direct correlation between the "double" lung cancer rate and the slightly higher proportion of smokers in the community, or whether there must be some other reason for the unusually high lung cancer rate. The question must be asked as to whether the outfall from the coal fired power stations in the City may have some part to play in this "double" rate of lung cancer.

Council has also asked if you could provide the ages of the 36 people suffering from lung cancer identified in the Jan 2005- Dec 2007 statistics provided in the Minister's letter.

Yours faithfully

GREG PERKIN
CITY MANAGER

162303



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GJP: MJJ:1734
LEAA20217

20 April 2010

Ms E Morton
Registrar
SA Cancer Registry
Department of Health
PO Box 6 Rundle Mall
ADELAIDE SA 5000

Dear Ms Morton

INCIDENCE OF CANCER IN PORT AUGUSTA

As a result of a resolution of Council, I wrote to you on 25 February 2010 seeking further information into the reasons for the "double the expected number" of lung cancer cases in Port Augusta.

In view of a response not having yet been received, I am enquiring as to whether you are able to do so and if not if you could refer me to the appropriate authority to provide a response.

Yours faithfully

GREG PERKIN
CITY MANAGER

2010-01757
eA283395

Mr Greg Perkin
City Manager
City of Port Augusta
PO Box 1704
Port Augusta SA 5700



161836 1734
Government of South Australia
SA Health

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Fax (08) 8226 0720
ABN 97 643 356 590
www.health.sa.gov.au

Dear Mr Perkin,

RE: INCIDENCE OF CANCER IN PORT AUGUSTA

Thank you for your letter of 25 February, 2010, to the Registrar, South Australian Cancer Registry.

As previously communicated to you by the Minister for Health, the number of newly diagnosed cases of the most common cancer types that occurred in Port Augusta in the period January 2005 - December 2007 was close to the number expected from state averages, except for lung cancer, where the number of cases (36) was double the expected number (with a confidence interval ranging from 1.41 to 2.78). Also previously communicated were data showing that during the period 1990-2003, 32.6% of Port Augusta residents aged 15 years or older reported being current smokers, while the figure for the state was 25.7%.

In answer to your questions, the 36 Port Augusta residents who were newly diagnosed with lung cancer in the period 2005-2007 were respectively aged:

47,50,54,57,57,58,59,60,62,63,64,64,65,65,66,66,68,68,68,69,71,72,73,73,73,76,77,
77,80,80,81,81,82,84,88,91.

When reviewing contributory risk factors for lung cancer, exposures of interest will have pre-dated the cancer diagnosis by several decades. Often the paucity and poor quality of information regarding personal and/or environmental exposures going back several decades makes attribution difficult to determine.

However, in order to determine the relative contribution of tobacco smoking to lung cancer incidence in Port Augusta, survey data on smoking rates from 1990 to 2003 was used, with the understanding that rates will have decreased over time. To determine the relative contribution to lung cancer incidence of the higher rates of tobacco smoking in Port Augusta, analysis of a longer period of incidence data will provide more robust results. As such, analyses were performed on people in Port Augusta with lung cancer diagnosed between 1998 and 2007, using data from the South Australian Central Cancer Registry.

During this time period 82 Port Augusta residents were diagnosed with lung cancer, whereas 57 would have been expected, making the actual number 1.45 times higher than expected (with a confidence interval ranging from 1.15 to 1.80).

Combustion-related fine particulate matter — soot emitted by cars and trucks, coal-fired power plants and factories — is a known risk factor for lung cancer. However, cases of lung cancer diagnosed in the period 2005-2007 would have resulted from exposures that occurred many decades before, and would not be directly related to present air quality. Although the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) does not currently monitor ambient air quality in Port Augusta, they license major industry in Port Augusta, and this licensing requires coal fired power stations to undertake air quality monitoring, which is regulated and audited by the EPA.

In summary, it is known that more than 80% of lung cancers are due to tobacco smoking. Although combustion related fine particulate matter may contribute to the development of lung cancer, in most cases where this occurs, it would relate to exposures several decades prior to diagnosis. While it is important for the City Council of Port Augusta to make sure that the air quality in Port Augusta is optimal and that local industry conforms to EPA standards, it is also important that the Council continues to support programs that lead to a reduction in tobacco smoking amongst Port Augusta residents.

Yours sincerely,



DR TONY SHERBON
Chief Executive

2314110

ACTION
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Greg  23/4/10

1734

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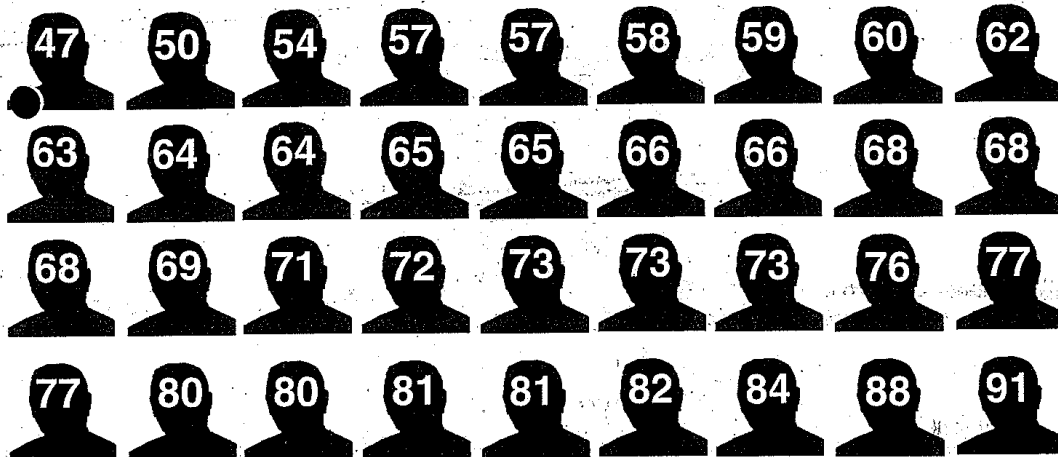
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Page 11



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Diagnosis: Lung cancer

By Aisha DOW

New information from SA Health has not explained why 36 Port Augusta residents were diagnosed with lung cancer between 2005 and 2007.

The information has revealed their ages, but little more, of the local people who discovered they had the disease – double the state average number.

SA Health has released data

showing between 1998 and 2007, 82 Port Augusta residents were diagnosed with lung cancer, a figure more than 45 per cent greater than the state average.

But in a letter to the Port Augusta City Council, SA Health chief executive Tony Sherbon could not confirm whether it was smoking or local industry that had caused the abnormal rates.

"It is known that more than 80

per cent of lung cancers are due to tobacco smoking ... although combustion related fine particulate matter may contribute to lung cancer," he said.

In fact today's Port Augusta's lung cancer sufferers and their families may never know the true cause of the cancers, as they are linked to exposure that happened many decades before.

"Cases of lung cancer diagnosed in the period 2005-2007 ... would not be directly related to present air quality," Mr Sherbon said.

While Port Augusta's city manager Greg Perkin has welcomed the new information, he says there is real community concern about air quality in Port Augusta and emissions from the power station.

- Continued page 2

“It's really what the letter doesn't say rather than what the letter does say.”

- City manager Greg Perkin on the latest response from SA Health

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- * See our feature on National Volunteers Week.
- Real Estatep16-20
- * See what you can get for your money in Port Augusta and Quorn property.
- People & Placesp9-16
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Weather FORECAST

Today: Min 5 Max 20
Mostly cloudy

Thursday: Min 6 Max 22
Sunny

Friday: Min 5 Max 23
Sunny

GULF WATERS

Today: Wind: SW/SE 8/13 knots becoming variable below 10 knots after sunrise. Sea: 0.5 m. Swell: S/SW 2 to 3 m on southern Spencer Gulf, decreasing to 1.5 to 2 m by evening, and WSW around 1 m on southern Gulf St Vincent.

Thursday: Wind: NE/NW 5/15 knots.

Tide Times

	high	low	height
WEDNESDAY	7.24am	1.25am	0.60
			2.43
THURSDAY	7.11pm	12.56pm	0.97
			3.38
FRIDAY	7.59am	1.55am	0.35
			2.49
SATURDAY	7.34pm	1.21pm	1.00
			3.54
SUNDAY	8.31am	2.23am	0.19
			2.48
MONDAY	7.56pm	1.49pm	1.06
			3.65
TUESDAY	9.01am	2.52am	0.12
			2.41
WEDNESDAY	8.18pm	2.02pm	1.13
			3.72
THURSDAY	9.30am	3.20am	0.12
			2.30
FRIDAY	8.41pm	2.20pm	1.19
			3.72
SATURDAY	9.58am	3.49am	0.21
			2.17
SUNDAY	9.04pm	2.37pm	1.24
			3.64
MONDAY	10.27am	4.19am	0.56
			2.04
TUESDAY	9.30pm	2.56pm	1.29
			3.47

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10-year health plan out soon

A 10-year local health service plan will be released for Port Augusta this month.

Peter Blacker from the Country Health SA Board said the plan had been in the works since late 2008 and aimed to "put the decision making back into the hands of the local community".

It is one of 83 draft plans that will be released state-wide in May and Mr Blacker said he would be welcoming public comment on the document.

"I encourage country people and clinicians to again contribute feedback to these local draft plans," he said.

"Local Health Advisory Councils will collate the respective feedback and use this information to make revisions to the final draft 10-year local health service plans.

"By June 30 2010 local Health Advisory Councils will endorse and submit the final draft plans."

"The plan" will be published at www.countryhealthsa.gov.au.



MEET AND GREET: Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education Jack Snelling (middle) meets Port Augusta TAFE SA staff: Steve Bravington, who works in fitting machinery and senior program manager John McAuliffe.

Study into Port Augusta engineering hub

A feasibility study into a heavy engineering and manufacturing hub in Port Augusta has the go ahead, after it received \$500,000 from the State Government.

It is expected to be completed by mid next year.

As the State Government comes good on its election promises, Port Augusta TAFE will also get a \$250,000 slice of a \$70 million pie being spent on TAFE facilities state-wide.

Employment, Training and Further Education Minister, Jack Snelling was in Port Augusta last week to make the announcements.

The TAFE funding, which also comes from federal coffers, will address Port Augusta's health and safety issues regarding machinery "to make sure it's a safe working environment for people".

While Whyalla will receive more than \$7 million in refurbishments, Mr Snelling says "it's early on in the portfolio and we are trying to find what's needed in the region".

The purpose of the minister's visit was mainly to meet people on the ground, see the services, and see what was and was not working.

In another funding commitment, more than \$750,000 has been committed to the Upper Spencer Gulf Transport Project, which will provide 50 locals with work and offer opportunities to gain skills across a range of industry jobs.

"This project will target recently retrained workers with current skills in the transport, logistics and rail sectors, as well as mature age workers, members of Aboriginal communities and disadvantaged young people."

State-wide a further \$20 million has been allocated to improve computer systems allowing students to enrol online.

Crack down on drivers

Police arrested a Port Augusta woman for drink driving on Saturday, as part of a state-wide drug and alcohol blitz on the weekend.

The woman, 32, was also found driving without a licence and without a seatbelt after being pulled over by police on Stirling Road.

The same day two men in their thirties were detected driving under the influence of drugs.

At 2.46pm highway patrol officers caught one man, 31, on Main Street. At 4.10pm a Port Augusta resident, 35, was tested positive and charged, after being randomly tested.

Across the state 6193 tests were conducted as part of Operation Consequence Phase VII and 103 drink driving and 12 drug-related offences were detected.

Locals may miss BHP boom

By Aisha DOW

The fate of the BHP's Olympic Dam expansion is on the line, following the release of the Federal Government's new Resource Super Profits tax.

While the company has yet to shelve the project, BHP's chief executive officer Marius Kloppers said the new 40 per cent tax proposal "does upset the apple cart there a little".

He said BHP had not yet had enough time to draw conclusions about how significantly the tax would affect the much heralded \$20 billion expansion. "What I can say though is that if you move the tax rate from about 44 per cent to 57 per cent or possibly more, that doesn't make it any easier," he said. "There will be an impact on investment, jobs and growth if the tax is implemented in its unchanged form."

A shelved Olympic Dam project would be devastating to many local people and businesses, who were confident they would eventually see big economic benefits from the northern mine. Port Augusta is expected to undergo significant population growth, and enjoy new industry and investment in the city, if the expansion goes ahead.

Now mining communities across the nation are edgy following criticism from mining CEOs, who have labelled the new tax "a revenue grab".

But Treasurer Wayne Swann has dismissed the mining bosses comments as "threats and abuse".

"If you are a shareholder ... I encourage you to make your views known to your company's management: calm down, get into the process and engage properly," he said.

Yet Port Augusta city manager Greg Perkin is less confident that the tax will not affect the economic future of the region.

"We don't know enough details to know if it's good or bad," he said. "The reaction to it is a concern in the Upper Spencer Gulf because it does raise concerns about our future in mining, not only in Olympic Dam but also other areas of the Upper Spencer Gulf."

He is also unconvinced that the new resource tax will actually be seen through, in light of the recent government back-down on the promised emissions trading scheme.

"One month ago the emissions trading tax had to happen - now it's gone," he said.

If the resource tax does become a reality however, he hopes much of the revenue will be reinvested into infrastructure to support development in the region.

"It is my understanding that's what it's going to do ... provide the infrastructure to support those (mining) ventures through rail, roads, schools..." he said.

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Diagnosis: Lung cancer

- From page 1

He wants the state's Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) to monitor air quality in the city and ensure that power station owner Alinta Energy is not producing unsafe levels of pollutants.

"The question is still out there: Is this industry still causing the lung difficulties in the community?" he said.

"This possibility has not been dismissed properly," he said.

Earlier this year State Health Minister John Hill suggested Port Augusta's high lung cancer rates were linked to the city's smoking rates - which between 1990 and 2003 were 26 per cent higher than the state average.

Mr Parkin said council wished to find out whether this was a "statistically valid" link to make.

"But that hasn't been answered," he said.

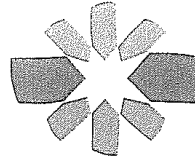
Instead SA Health has recommended council make sure air quality "in Port Augusta is optimal and that local industry conforms to EPA standards".

"It is also important that the council continues to support programs that lead to a reduction in tobacco smoking amongst Port Augusta residents," Mr Sherbon said.

Last week the city management committee recommended the council write to the Minister for Environment and Conservation, Paul Caica, to ask him to guarantee air quality in Port Augusta.

It will also seek advice from Mr Hill about the best community programs to assist people to quit smoking.

162616



Port Augusta

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GJP:MJJ:1734
LEAA20320

27 May 2010

Hon P. Caica MP
Minister for Environment & Conservation
GPO Box 1047
ADELAIDE SA 5001

Dear Minister

INCIDENCE OF CANCER IN PORT AUGUSTA

Council has recently become aware of the high incidence of lung cancer amongst residents of Port Augusta and has been corresponding with the Minister for Health, Hon John Hill MP and the SA Health in this regard.

The attached letter (161836) from Dr Tony Sherbon, Chief Executive of SA Health, identifies that:

"...it is important for the City Council of Port Augusta to make sure that the air quality in Port Augusta is optimal and that local industry conforms to EPA standards."

Council has limited authority to ensure that this occurs; it is rather the role of the EPA.

Council therefore seeks advice from you as the responsible Minister as to how the EPA will ensure that air quality in Port Augusta is optimal and that local industry conforms to EPA standards.

Yours faithfully

GREG PERKIN
CITY MANAGER

2010-01757
eA283395



161836 1 154
Government of South Australia
SA Health

Mr Greg Perkin
City Manager
City of Port Augusta
PO Box 1704
Port Augusta SA 5700

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ABN 97 643 356 590
www.health.sa.gov.au

Dear Mr Perkin,

RE: INCIDENCE OF CANCER IN PORT AUGUSTA

Thank you for your letter of 25 February, 2010, to the Registrar, South Australian Cancer Registry.

As previously communicated to you by the Minister for Health, the number of newly diagnosed cases of the most common cancer types that occurred in Port Augusta in the period January 2005 - December 2007 was close to the number expected from state averages, except for lung cancer, where the number of cases (36) was double the expected number (with a confidence interval ranging from 1.41 to 2.78). Also previously communicated were data showing that during the period 1990-2003, 32.6% of Port Augusta residents aged 15 years or older reported being current smokers, while the figure for the state was 25.7%.

In answer to your questions, the 36 Port Augusta residents who were newly diagnosed with lung cancer in the period 2005-2007 were respectively aged:

47,50,54,57,57,58,59,60,62,63,64,64,65,65,66,66,68,68,68,69,71,72,73,73,73,76,77,
77,80,80,81,81,82,84,88,91.

When reviewing contributory risk factors for lung cancer, exposures of interest will have pre-dated the cancer diagnosis by several decades. Often the paucity and poor quality of information regarding personal and/or environmental exposures going back several decades makes attribution difficult to determine.


However, in order to determine the relative contribution of tobacco smoking to lung cancer incidence in Port Augusta, survey data on smoking rates from 1990 to 2003 was used, with the understanding that rates will have decreased over time. To determine the relative contribution to lung cancer incidence of the higher rates of tobacco smoking in Port Augusta, analysis of a longer period of incidence data will provide more robust results. As such, analyses were performed on people in Port Augusta with lung cancer diagnosed between 1998 and 2007, using data from the South Australian Central Cancer Registry.

During this time period 82 Port Augusta residents were diagnosed with lung cancer, whereas 57 would have been expected, making the actual number 1.45 times higher than expected (with a confidence interval ranging from 1.15 to 1.80).

Combustion-related fine particulate matter — soot emitted by cars and trucks, coal-fired power plants and factories — is a known risk factor for lung cancer. However, cases of lung cancer diagnosed in the period 2005-2007 would have resulted from exposures that occurred many decades before, and would not be directly related to present air quality. Although the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) does not currently monitor ambient air quality in Port Augusta, they license major industry in Port Augusta, and this licensing requires coal fired power stations to undertake air quality monitoring, which is regulated and audited by the EPA.

In summary, it is known that more than 80% of lung cancers are due to tobacco smoking. Although combustion related fine particulate matter may contribute to the development of lung cancer, in most cases where this occurs, it would relate to exposures several decades prior to diagnosis. While it is important for the City Council of Port Augusta to make sure that the air quality in Port Augusta is optimal and that local industry conforms to EPA standards, it is also important that the Council continues to support programs that lead to a reduction in tobacco smoking amongst Port Augusta residents.

Yours sincerely,



DR TONY SHERBON
Chief Executive

- ACTION
- RESPOND
- INFO ONLY

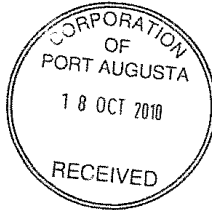
2314110

Greg  23/11/10

The Hon Paul Caica MP
Member for Colton

Ref: 10MEC1107

12 October 2010



Government
of South Australia

Minister for Environment
and Conservation
Minister for the River Murray
Minister for Water

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Tel 08 8463 5680

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minister.caica@sa.gov.au

Mr Greg Perkin
City Manager
Port Augusta City Council
PO Box 1704
PORT AUGUSTA SA 5700

Dear Mr ^{Greg} Perkin

Thank you for your letter regarding the incidence of lung cancer amongst residents of Port Augusta and the possible impact of air quality. I apologise for the delay in responding.

I was advised that monitoring for coarse and fine particulate material, oxides of nitrogen and sulphur dioxide is undertaken by Alinta as a requirement of its EPA licence. The EPA receives this data on a monthly basis and has not observed any results that indicate a breach of compliance conditions. Further to this, the data is consistent with previous information, which indicates that regional weather conditions are the major factor in any variations in air quality at Port Augusta.

I understand that the EPA provided a summary of the data collected by Alinta to Council in previous correspondence dated 19 May 2009. I also understand that, Council has been receiving this data directly from Alinta since January 2010.

I am informed that the EPA has written and subsequently spoken to SA Health to seek their advice on air quality in Port Augusta. The EPA was advised that efforts should be made to ensure that the concentration of all air pollutants including particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide and sulphur dioxide are kept as low as reasonably possible using the Australian National Environment Protection Measures as a guide to achieve ambient air quality that adequately protects health. The EPA has reviewed the air monitoring regimes in Port Augusta to ensure that they are appropriate to determine if Alinta is conforming to required air quality standards. In the event that monitoring results did indicate a breach of compliance conditions, the EPA would take immediate action to investigate the matter.

I thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.

Yours sincerely

PAUL CAICA
MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION