RE: NORTHCONNEX ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT - Application number - SSI 13_6136

This is an objection to the NorthConnex proposal.

World Health Organisation
International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC): Diesel Engine Exhaust Carcinogenic
The IARC is part of the World Health Organisation. Its mission is to coordinate and conduct research on the causes of human cancer, the mechanisms of carcinogenesis, and to develop scientific strategies for cancer control. The Agency is involved in both epidemiological and laboratory research and disseminates scientific information through publications, meetings, courses, and fellowships.

Smoke inhalation of any sort is bad for humans, but smoke from wood fire heaters is not classified by the IARC as a Group 1 carcinogen.

Diesel emissions are so bad for humans that the World Health Authority (IARC) has classified them as a Group 1 carcinogen.

Dr Christopher Portier, Chairman of the IARC working group stated in the IARC press release No 213 on 12th June 2012 that "*The scientific evidence was compelling and the Working Group's conclusion was unanimous: diesel engine exhaust causes lung cancer in humans. Given the additional health impacts from diesel particulates, exposure to this mixture of chemicals should be reduced worldwide.*"

Dr Christopher Wild, Director, IARC said that "*…. today's conclusion sends a strong signal that public health action is warranted*"

Australia has not developed a network of railways to facilitate the transport of goods from city to city. As a result there is a huge volume of container traffic travelling between Brisbane, Newcastle, Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne. As successive governments have failed to provide infrastructure, both road and rail, these huge containers have to travel through suburban streets to get to their destination.   The vast majority of this container traffic is diesel-powered.

As the population grows the need to transport goods will grow. If the predictions for the increase in traffic are correct, the volume of diesel-powered traffic will be enormous. Two lanes of traffic, travelling underground for 9 kilometres and all their pollution to be emitted in just two unfiltered locations is indefensible. The morally corrupt argument that the ambient air on the surface will have an overall improvement is not acceptable.   There will be a definite, huge decrease in air quality at the portals and ventilation stacks. Group 1 carcinogens from thousands of diesel-powered vehicles concentrated in just two locations cannot be allowed to happen. As Dr Christopher Wild, Director, IARC said there is "*a strong signal that public health action is warranted*". Does the government not understand this? Where is our Minister for Health?

It is acknowledged that the current governments, both state and federal, are trying to provide some infrastructure. We all have a different view on what infrastructure should be built. I find it short-sighted to build roads instead of interstate and metropolitan railways. Be that as it may, I am glad that something is being done but I would like my tax to provide infrastructure designed for the future using the very best design and the latest proven technology. This proposed tunnel does not satisfy that criteria. I do not want my tax and my children's' tax to be paying for the health care of people injured by the poorly designed infrastructure and unfiltered pollution stacks. How much injury must there be before the government wakes up to the fact that diesel emissions are dangerous, 40 times as carcinogenic as tobacco smoke?

This unsolicited bid has all the hallmarks of something cheap and nasty built so that big business can rake in the profits and so that the governments can say that they did build new infrastructure. We, the taxpayers funding this new infrastructure, want our taxes to be used for quality projects not the cheap and nasty proposal of unfiltered pollution stacks.
The government must provide a duty of care to the community of Sydney and get all tunnels properly filtered.