

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **RESPONSE TO ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AUSTRALIA CLAIMS RELATING TO COAL ASH**

Delta Electricity, the operator of the Vales Point Power Station, has strongly rejected the claims by Environmental Justice Australia, labelling them as factually incorrect and deliberately misleading.

Company spokesperson, Steve Gurney, stated that the Vales Point Power Station operates in accordance with strict environmental licence conditions, with diligent oversight by the Environmental Protection Authority.

'Environmental Justice Australia is a group of anti-coal activists with one objective, to shut down coal fired power stations', Mr Gurney said.

The water sampling undertaken by the Hunter Community Environment Centre (HCEC) and relied on by Environmental Justice Australia has been shown to be inaccurate, without scientific methodology and sensationalises the issue in an attempt to create uncertainty and community fear regarding the safe operation of ash dams.

Power Stations are licensed and highly regulated, with significant oversight by the EPA. Unlike the water sampling by HCEC, Delta's testing is conducted in accordance with the EPA's required methodology and this data is posted on Delta's website monthly for all to see.

'Even Hunter Community Environment Centre data demonstrates that results for heavy metals are far below the Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council (ANZECC) Guidelines for fresh and marine water quality' Mr Gurney said.

Despite Environmental Justice Australia assertions of ash being a toxic by-product, coal ash is a product which has many beneficial uses including in cement manufacturing, road paving products, soil reconditioning and building products. Delta actively works to find opportunities for the recycling and reuse of ash, including a current study by the University of Sydney using coal ash to create high strength concrete products.

Earlier this year these environmental activists were calling for greater recycling and reuse of power station ash. They now call it a toxic by-product which poses a threat to the community. It is just another example of spreading community fear to achieve their aims to close power stations down.

Mr Gurney stated 'Delta takes its environmental responsibilities and its relationship with the local community very seriously. Delta maintains a constructive relationship with its nearby community, conducting quarterly forums which include inspections and information on plant upgrades.

Environmental Justice Australia are a Victorian based environment group with an anti-coal platform who want to shut down coal fired generators now. This would see the lights go out, cost industry jobs and decimate the NSW economy.

For further enquiries, contact Steve Gurney, Company Secretary on 02 43 526 003 or 0438 229 043