

MEDIA RELEASE

DELTA REJECTS NCC CLAIMS

Delta Electricity, the owner and operator of the Vales Point Power Station, has labelled claims made by the Nature Conservation Council as sensationalist and misleading.

Delta operates under the conditions of an Environmental Protection Licence which is regulated by the NSW Environmental Protection Authority (NSW EPA).

Company spokesperson, Steve Gurney said: 'Delta takes its duty of care to the local community and environment seriously. Delta's SO₂ emissions are well below current national standards and there have been no exceedances of the sulfur-dioxide limits in Delta's licence'.

The National Environment Protection Council is currently undertaking a review of the National Environment Protection (Ambient Air Quality) Measure which includes national standards for sulfur dioxide.

"This is another example of anti-power station activists seeking headlines in the media rather than engaging constructively in the scientifically rigorous review process" Mr Gurney said.

The WHO guidelines relied on by the NCC make it clear that they are not air quality standards and that, when setting national standards, governments should consider their own local circumstances. Unlike the USA and Europe, Australia's coal is typically low in sulfur. Even based on tighter European standards the Vales Point Power Station emissions would meet those standards.

Independent EPA analysis consistently shows that air quality on the Central Coast and Lake Macquarie is very good and amongst the best in New South Wales. It also concludes that 'levels of nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide and carbon monoxide easily meet National Standards'¹. Specifically, it found that sulfur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide met national standards in the Lower Hunter during 2018.

¹ <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/-/media/OEH/Corporate-Site/Documents/Air/annual-air-quality-statement-2018-190031.pdf>



In support of its claims about health effects, the NCC relies on the report of Newcastle GP and environmental activist, Dr Ben Ewald. A scientific peer review² has discredited this report, finding that it 'estimated emissions and potential concentrations using a very rough approach' and that a 'review of this approach indicated that it should be considered flawed and misleading, not based on good science'.

Specifically to the NCC claims, the peer review also concludes that 'the science does not support the quantification of the incidence of type 2 diabetes or low birth weights as health outcomes'.

'Once again we see activist groups seeking to create community fear based on selective and misrepresented data, which is then related to conclusions in discredited reports. The actual data and air quality monitoring do not support these sensationalist and misleading claims by the NCC.' Mr Gurney said.

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² <https://www.energycouncil.com.au/media/16734/enrisks-report-final.pdf>