

Mr. Inspector, I am here to represent the community group, Cobh Action for Clean Air. We wrote to the EPA to object to the granting of the Indaver Draft License last November. At the time we requested an Oral Hearing to raise our concerns with the Environment Protection Agency before the issuing of the license.

Mr. Inspector, I would like to point out that Cobh town and its environs are one kilometer away from the proposed incinerator site. Cobh is on an Island in the Harbour with a population of 14,000 people and expected to grow to 17,000 by 2010 – it being one of the major satellite towns in Cork County.

One of our concerns is a matter raised by the Director General of the EPA, Mary Kelly. Ms. Kelly wrote to Mr Michael Kelly, Department of Health and Children on 25th March 2003 Re- Baseline Health Data – from that letter, I quote *

“Irish health information systems cannot support routine monitoring of the health of people living near waste incinerators.”

I would like the EPA to tell us, through yourself Inspector or through a direct communication from Ms. Kelly, what response Ms. Kelly has had from the Department of Health and Children. It is crucial to the people of Cobh that we have an answer to this question. I would ask, Inspector, that you reply directly to Cobh Action for Clean Air before the close of the Oral Hearing.

Our second concern is in relation to exit routes from the Island of Cobh in the event of accidents. As mentioned in our letter of objection Cobh has one main exit route on and off the Island – Belvelly Bridge. This is a small narrow hump back bridge. The only other exit route is the Cross River Ferry at Carrigaloe.

In October 2004, Cork experienced Spring tides in addition to torrential rain which resulted in Belvelly Bridge being totally impassable. Routes to and from the Island were completely blocked due to flooding on both sides of the bridge. The resulting impact was that for three hours there was no entry or exit off the Island. The only other route, the Cross River Ferry at Carrigaloe, was unable to run due to the adverse weather conditions.

We wanted, Mr. Inspector, to be able to voice our concerns directly to the EPA and ask if they had considered the risk to the health and safety of the population of Cobh when they were making the decision to grant the draft license to Indaver. We believe the health and safety of the people of Cobh wasn't taken into account. Therefore, we ask you, Mr. Inspector, on our behalf, to ask the EPA to visit Cobh and take into account the condition of our access route onto and off the Island before making the final decision about the waste license.

We care about our health and that's why Cobh Action is here today. We are now formally requesting a baseline health study of the people of Cork Harbour.

Mary Hurley – Chairperson, Cobh Action for Clean Air

* Letter on file with CHASE submission