

SUBMISSION TO ORAL HEARING 15/02/05
Cllr. DANNY CROWLEY MAYOR OF COBH

As Mayor of Cobh I am glad of the opportunity to address this hearing today. However I am of the opinion that it is unacceptable in a democracy where the people have overwhelmingly rejected the very notion of an incinerator in our region, we should find ourselves at this juncture. Other than Dail Eirean members of local authorities are the only elected representatives of the people of Ireland by the people of Ireland, and for a non-elected person to be able to overturn a decision of the elected representative's of Cork Co. Council flies in the face of democracy.

Coming from Cobh, a town that has lived for generations in the shadow of unclean, unhealthy and dangerous industry, we are not prepared to accept another threat to our lives or livelihood. The closure of Irish Steel/ Ispat and I.F.I. in Cobh while having a serious effect on the local economy, has been accepted by a community that puts health before wealth. The above mentioned companies were well past their sell-by-date and were closed not for safety reasons but for financial reasons. I believe that the E.P.A.s track record in both industries leaves a lot to be desired. Indeed the mess that we are left with in the Ispat situation is a national disgrace which will cost tens of millions of euro to rectify.

Cobh is working extremely hard to develop tourism as the future of our town. We have some very ambitious projects coming on stream in the near future as well as a very progressive five year development plan. The construction of an incinerator in our harbour would be detrimental to the ambitions and future prosperity of our region.

I am an employee of the Department of Defence at Haulbowline and believe it defies logic to develop this facility in the vicinity of Irelands only Naval Base, its newly constructed National Nautical College as well as Spike Island Prison. On a recent visit to Haulbowline the Minister of Defence stated that the proposed site was completely unsuitable for such a development.

As a member of the civilian boat crew of the Department of Defence I am part of the Cork Harbour Emergency Plan, a plan that with all the practice and preparation in the world could not be of any benefit to casualties from a

mishap at the proposed incinerator especially during inclement weather. This scenario became very evident during the recent storms that the region endured. It is on public record the amount of devastation that the area endured during this time.

It has been suggested by the license applicant that there is not a major public objection to this development, nothing could be further from the truth. I can assure you that I as a public representative along with all the public representatives of Cobh Town Council could paint you a very different picture. We, not Indivar have knocked on every door in the constituency and have heard the genuine concerns and fears from the people who will have to live with this timebomb for the foreseeable future.

Three years ago the members of Cobh Town Council invited Indivar Ireland to its Council meeting to discuss Indivars plan for the proposed incinerator. The meeting commenced at 5.30 and finished at 7.30, unfortunately Indivar turned up some time after that when we had all gone home. As you can imagine it didn't fill us with confidence the way Indivar conducted its business. As the elected spokesman of the Town of Cobh I would like to convey this message to the license applicant; "That invitation to Cobh is the only invitation you will ever receive, You are not welcome in our community and you never will be."

Chairman in your housekeeping announcements yesterday you stated you would impose a 20Euro fine on anyone whose phone interrupted these proceedings. While I totally concur with your choice of recipient i.e the Chernobyl Disaster Fund, I hope the irony of such a remark in relation to the decision you will make at the end of this hearing does not come back to haunt us, our children or our grandchildren.

Thank You,
Cllr.Danny Crowley,
Mayor of Cobh.