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Thursday 5 June 2008: **At midnight Launceston is invaded by smoke from the massive burn to the northeast. It penetrates and settles across the town. In the predawn, river fog mixes with it and you can't smell the green smoke content of it anymore. The town wakes to one-block-at-a-time visibility. Radio announcers talk about fog, without realising how it's masking the smoke. From Mt Direction Launceston is completely hidden. In the Georgetown direction, all you can see is a smoke plume from Bell Bay and the top of Mt George.**



Maybe it's early afternoon when the fog starts to lift.



We see a familiar scene. Georgetown is in the background, covered in smog. Emissions can be just made out coming from parts of the town. In the central part of the photo is seen Bell Bay where the woodchip is loaded. It's between this area and the smoke stack that the pulp mill is intended.



The situation is developing. As the fog clears, the air mass begins to move up the Tamar towards Launceston. It's no help that those Melbourne City consultants said this sort of thing would be highly unlikely and found all fancy ways to make it sound as if it wouldn't happen, but it does and it did.



Back in Launceston, the sun is breaking through. As the fog component of the smog begins to lift, we see the town from Rocherlea and the air is shocking to behold.

[Note: this smog is chiefly from the burn, though of course there is a presumed yet comparatively minor household component as well]

The [Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994](#) tells us that serious or material environmental harm is occasioned when any adverse effect on the environment:

5 (a) (ii) ...involves an actual adverse effect on the environment that is of a high impact or on a wide scale;

and

5 (b) (i) ...consists of an environmental nuisance of a high impact or on a wide scale.

Clive Stott (www.cleanairtas.com) tells us his own story.

"As a result of the forestry smoke this year (2008), I was admitted to the local hospital's Accident and Emergency department on April 13 with chronic airflow limitation about two weeks after the burns started (March 28) and after trying unsuccessfully to manage my condition at home. I was treated and sent back home in amongst the smoke to recuperate. As a result of having to remain indoors confined to a chair because of the wood smoke outdoors and my exacerbation, I was back in A & E again on the May 25; this time the diagnosis was deep vein thrombosis (DVT) and pulmonary emboli which is clots in the leg and lung, a potentially life threatening condition (in addition to my induced asthma). I was released to free up a bed because I had learnt to inject myself at home with blood thinners. I now also take blood thinning tablets, probably for

the rest of my life. I am in a great deal of pain in my leg because of the clots and breathing is extremely difficult because of them. I should be taking up a bed in hospital until I am well enough to be at home, but I feel guilty for the time I have been in there already taking up valuable resources when they are short of beds! One week latter (1/6/08) I had another trip to A & E to sort out clot pain that couldn't be managed at home. Then it's back outside to 'enjoy' Launceston and the Tamar Valley's smoke, not to mention further trips in it to my local doctor, chemist, pathology, hospital, specialist, and so it goes on. "

"You know before all this I was quite well."

The EMPC Act, Section 5 also has clauses which define serious or material environmental harm by having adverse effects on human health or safety.



How many asthma sufferers are there in this town?

Towards the end of the day the haze dissipated to an extent.

From high in Trevallyn one could see the silent menace.



City of Launceston



Mt Barrow



Ben Lomond



A puzzled and tired sunset

*By the rivers of Babylon,
There we sat down, yea, we wept,
When we remembered Zion*

**A man who protested against this
by letting off a smoke flare
in government offices
has been charged by police.
There have been no reports of police charging
anyone over this last week's forestry outrages.**

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451 Faster Combustion Stoves Promised Soon 451 Wife Sues Hubby-Smoke Deprivation 451
451 Fire Me Says Hedonist 451 Smoke Cleanses 451 How Smoke Improves Your SexLife 451**