

Beryllium campaign



www.dailytelegraph.com.au

The facts

Up to 3000 sailors came into contact with Beryllium between the early 1950s and 1985 – it was used to clean guns on the HMAS Supply, HMAS Melbourne and HMAS Sydney.

The symptoms

If Beryllium dust enters the lungs, it can cause symptoms similar to asbestosis.

Between two and six per cent of those exposed to the dust will die.

The campaign

In late January 2005 the Daily Telegraph launched a web-based campaign to make the Government and the Navy accountable for the illness of former sailors who had worked with Beryllium. We did this following stories from readers of family members who had been unwell and believed it was linked to their time in the Navy.

Information

Based on the stories from former sailors, we launched our Navy Poisoning Scandal section, aimed at highlighting the cause, making former sailors aware of the dangers they had been faced with. The more sufferers we could encourage to come forward, the more able we'd be to force the Navy to admit wrongdoing and to be held accountable.

EXPOSED
Navy poisoning scandal



What to do:
[Think you might have been exposed?](#)

Background:
[A short history of beryllium](#)

Answers:
[Questions the Navy must answer](#)

Feedback:
[Get in touch with us](#)

Help:
[Groups you can turn to](#)

Did you use beryllium pistols?
E-mail us here or ring 9288 2619

Our guide

THE Daily Telegraph			No gimmicks or fancy rewards, just a simple low rate credit card.
Home + Messages of Love + Navy Poisoning Scandal + Background Information + Story			
NEWS	Groups you can turn to		Page One
Home	January 30, 2005		▶ Mercy for murderers
Breaking News	The Naval Tankerman Association has done research into beryllium exposure and is collating many of the claims. Contact them via their website www.navaltankermen.com		▶ Death-row bomber demands martyrdom
Top Stories			▶ Party tensions on
Sport			
Confidential			
Business			
Small Business	http://www.thesun.co.uk/section0,,2,00.html		
THE Daily Telegraph		Over 700 expert road tests	CARSguide Just one of hundreds of reasons to use the guide
Home + Messages of Love + Navy Poisoning Scandal + Background Information + Story			
NEWS	Short history of beryllium		Page One
Home	January 30, 2005		▶ Mercy for murderers
Breaking News	SAILORS were exposed to beryllium through using jason guns on at least three ships between the 1950s and 1985. Crews on HMAS Supply, HMAS Melbourne and HMAS Sydney used the guns to clean the ships' hulls. Beryllium was used as it does not spark and the ships contained large stocks of oil or weaponry.		▶ Death-row bomber demands martyrdom
Top Stories			▶ Party tensions on Telstra sale
Sport			
Confidential			
Business			
Small Business			Top Stories
Entertainment			
World			

Our guide

The screenshot displays two versions of a news article on The Daily Telegraph website. The top version is the full article page, and the bottom version is a 'Page One' preview.

Top Screenshot (Full Article):

- Header: THE Daily Telegraph, Travel further... (with image of a beach), Apply online for a credit card (60 second response).
- Breadcrumb: Home > Messages of Love > Navy Poisoning Scandal > Background Information > Story
- Section: **Three questions the Navy must answer**
- Date: January 30, 2005
- Content:
 - 1. Were beryllium jason pistols used on Royal Australian Navy ships as well as HMAS Supply, Melbourne and Sydney? If so, how many sailors were exposed?
 - 2. When did the RAN know beryllium jason pistols posed a danger to the crew? Abroad, the risk was known in the 1950s yet the RAN used beryllium until 1985.
- Page One sidebar:
 - Mercy for murderers
 - Death-row bomber demands martyrdom
 - Party tensions on Telstra sale

Bottom Screenshot (Page One Preview):

- Header: THE Daily Telegraph, ANZ Frequent Flyer Visa
- Breadcrumb: Home > Messages of Love > Navy Poisoning Scandal > Background Information > Story
- Section: **What to do if you think you've been exposed**
- Date: January 30, 2005
- Text: The Royal Australian Navy has admitted that sailors who served on HMAS Melbourne and HMAS Supply were exposed to beryllium between the 1950s and 1985.
- Page One sidebar:
 - Mercy for murderers
 - Death-row bomber demands martyrdom
 - Party tensions on Telstra sale

The victims

**Peter Robertson,
HMAS Supply**



"For the rest of my life I have to think about it

and no-one will give me any answers..."

**John Hosking,
HMAS Supply &
MHAS Melbourne**



"I was certainly exposed. Someone has to be held

responsible..."

We were contacted by dozens of former sailors who had experienced deteriorating health in recent years, or who believed they had been exposed to the Beryllium while serving in the Navy.

These new cases – all generated entirely through the website campaign – heightened the severity of the situation.

**Chris Bradshaw,
HMAS Supply**



"We did our bit for the Navy. Now we want the

whole story. We are everyday Joes..."

**Greg Semple,
HMAS Supply**



"The Navy preaches about

honesty. I'd like to see them practice what they preach..."

The response

Many people came forward as a result of this campaign, either volunteering information about Beryllium within the Navy, or to say that they had been ill as a result of their naval duties.

This added more weight to the campaign, but also helped present a comprehensive case to the Navy.

The outcome

As a result of the campaign, the Navy was forced to admit that they had a financial duty of care to those who had been poisoned as a result of their naval duties.

The Navy would have to take steps to ensure this would not happen again.

Web appeal

Because the campaign was online, it had the potential to be more far-reaching than the newspaper, as it was accessible nationally.

This raised the profile of the Beryllium fight, and made it a legitimate issue across Australia.

THE Daily Telegraph



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