V.O.T.V.

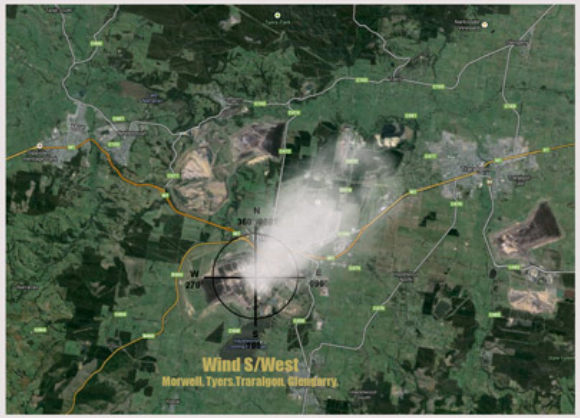
Birth Deaths & Marriages (BDM)

Death Statistics,

Latrobe Valley

17/09/2014

Ron Ipsen
votv.org.au



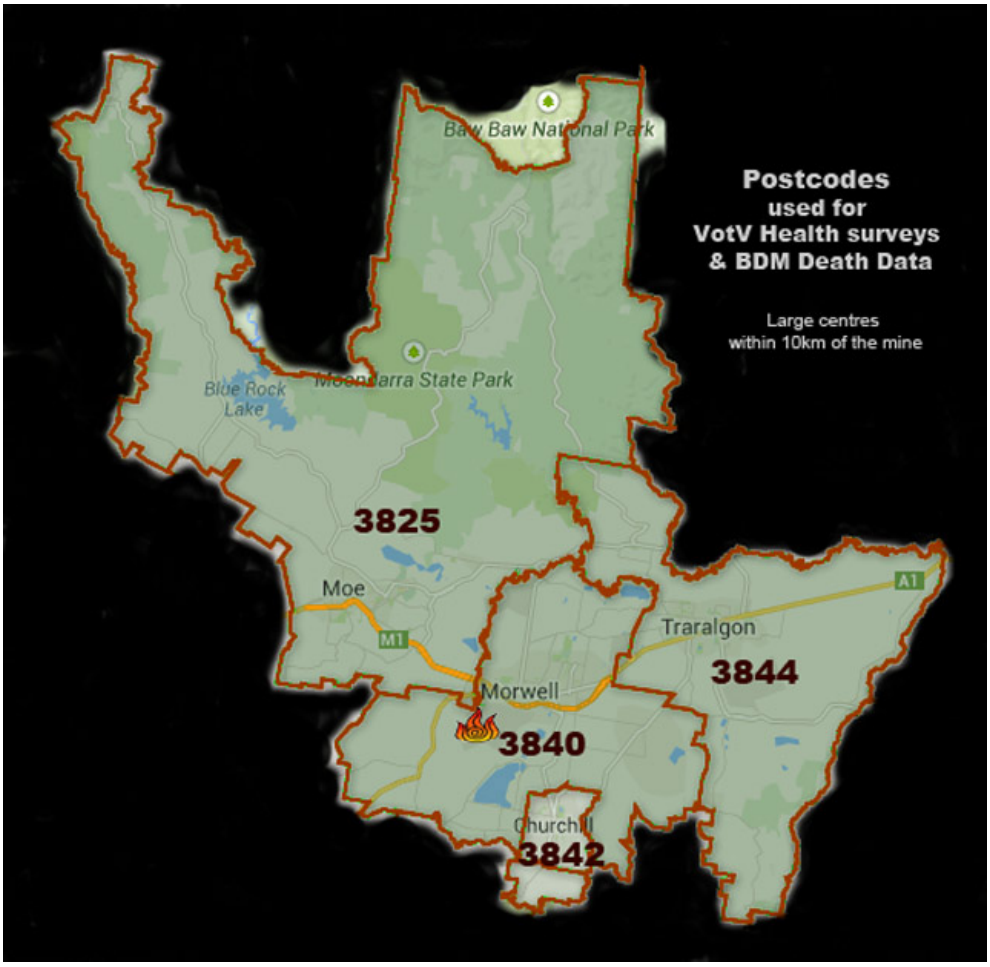
Plume strength and spread are for illustration purposes only.

Smoke Plume Directions

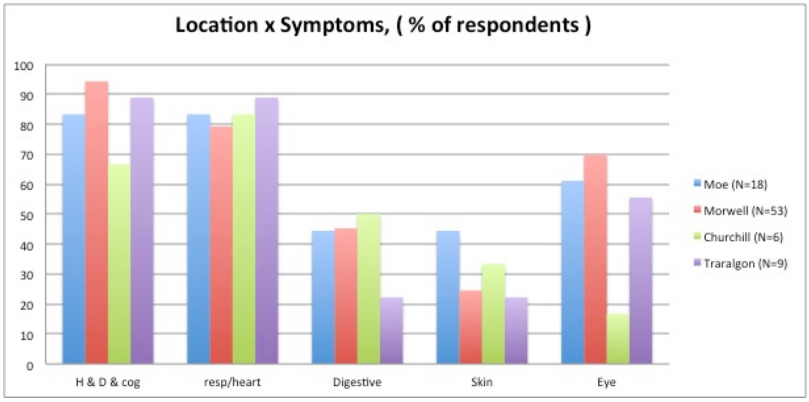
Next 48 hours in Latrobe Valley

	Weather	Temp	Wind	Chance of Rain	Cloud Cover
Tuesday, March 4					
3am	Mostly clear	15°C	NE 7km/h	5%	17%
6am	Mostly clear	15°C	ENE 7km/h	5%	15%
9am	Mostly clear	19°C	NE 10km/h	5%	15%
12pm	Clear	27°C	NE 12km/h	5%	8%
3pm	Mostly clear	30°C	E 11km/h	8%	20%
6pm	Mostly clear	30°C	E 14km/h	20%	38%
9pm	Mostly clear	23°C	NE 12km/h	6%	25%
Wednesday, March 5					
12am	Mostly clear	20°C	NNE 11km/h	8%	27%
3am	Slight chance shower	18°C	N 10km/h	50%	45%
6am	Slight chance shower	18°C	NNE 12km/h	46%	65%
9am	Rain	21°C	NNW 15km/h	80%	69%
12pm	Rain	25°C	NW 19km/h	83%	72%
3pm	Rain	25°C	SW 21km/h	85%	61%
6pm	Mostly cloudy	22°C	SW 23km/h	24%	57%
9pm	Mostly clear	16°C	SW 15km/h	5%	37%
Thursday, March 6					
12am	Mostly clear	14°C	SW 9km/h	5%	33%

The area studied.



From the previous health studies we had done we knew there was a rise in respiratory problems associated with the smoke layers and a corresponding rise in neurological symptoms (Headaches, Disorientation and Cognitive).



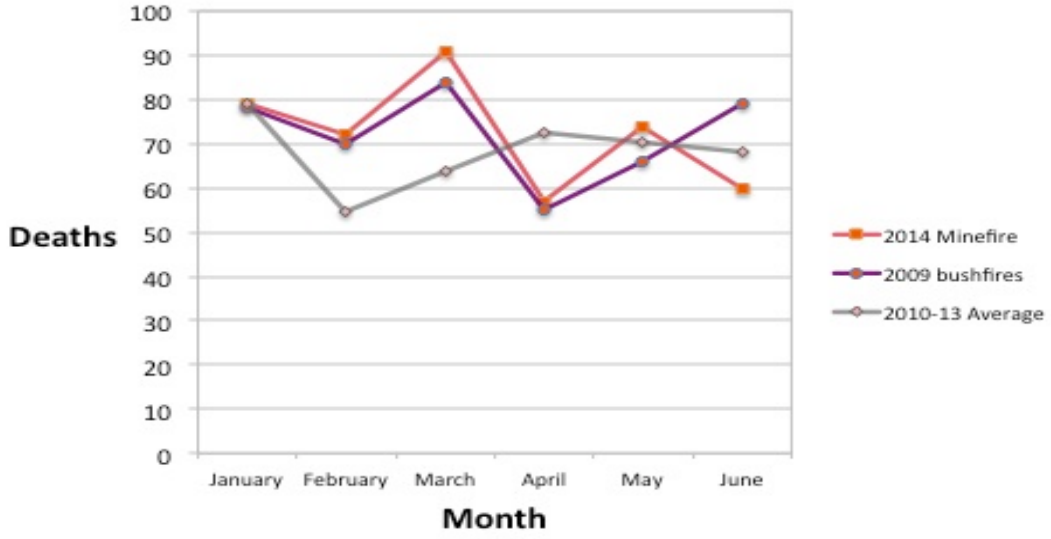
Our quest was simple, we had data on who was sick and where and with what, we wanted to check if there were deaths that corresponded with those figures.

We were unable to get the stats from BDM so we set about trying to find out by manually counting the death notices in the local paper, which serviced approximately the same area.

We researched the previous 6 years so that we had figures to compare the 2014 results to and what we found from our lengthy investigation was alarming. As soon as we had them correlated we had a community meeting to decide what to do. It was unanimously decided to ask the Inquiry for advice.

The previous documentation covers this and their response.

The rough graph looked like this ..



It showed we had more deaths locally than the 2009 heatwave and black Saturday bushfires combined, where 11 people died in their homes in February.

The Inquiry answered us and forwarded our rough information and concerns to the Coroner and The Department of Health (DOH!)

We were told by the Inquiry that they thought it serious and *would NOT state* in their report that "*there were no deaths caused by the minefire*."

They lived up to their word and we thank them.

Sooo…

Eventually …

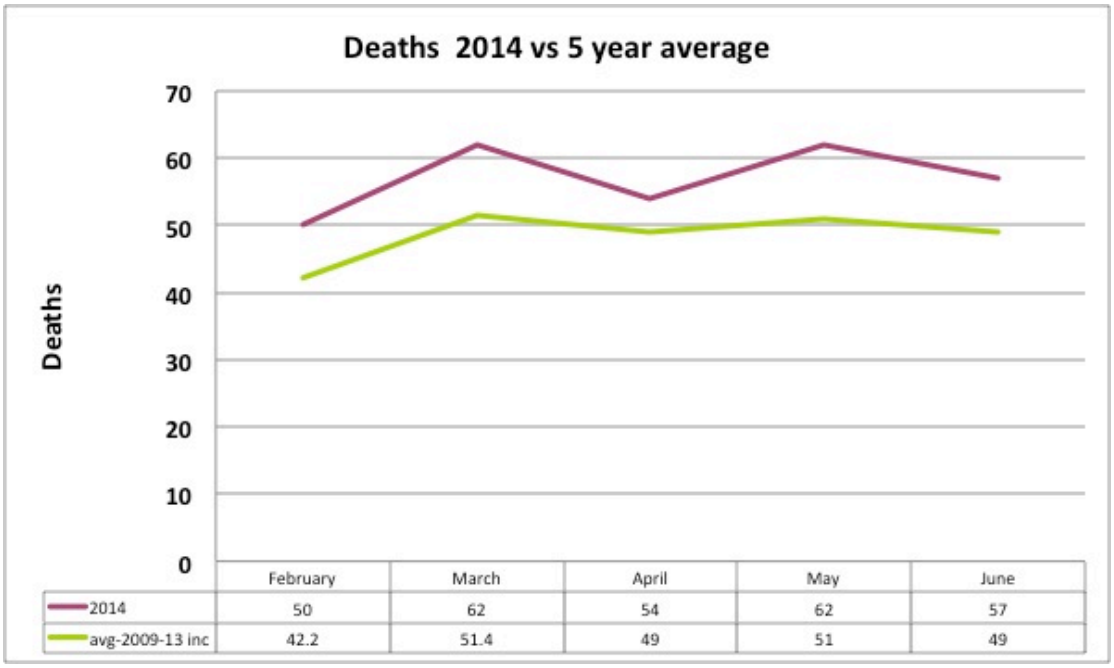
The day after the Inquiry closed we received the information we requested many months before.

Official BDM death stats as sent to us.

DEATHS BY DATE AND USUAL PLACE OF RESIDENCE								
	POSTCODE							
YEAR	3840		3842		3825		3844	
2009	January	19	January	5	January	23	January	21
	February	18	February	4	February	11	February	22
	March	23	march	4	March	16	March	19
	April	9	April	2	April	11	April	13
	May	11	may	2	May	24	may	19
	June	6	June	3	June	15	June	23
2010	January	11	January	1	January	16	January	18
	February	17	February	2	February	14	February	12
	March	9	March	6	March	15	March	17
	April	19	April	3	April	19	April	12
	May	17	May	1	May	20	May	18
	June	18	June	1	June	12	June	17
2011	January	10	January	4	January	13	January	20
	February	11	February	3	February	15	February	11
	March	11	March	1	March	17	March	17
	April	19	April	4	April	24	April	14
	May	7	May	3	May	20	May	15
	June	9	June	0	June	10	June	9
2012	January	10	January	3	January	17	January	20
	February	11	February	2	February	12	February	13
	March	17	March	0	March	16	March	18
	April	12	April	2	April	17	April	10
	May	22	May	1	May	14	May	22
	June	17	June	1	June	19	June	21
2013	January	13	January	3	January	22	January	10
	February	4	February	3	February	15	February	11
	March	15	March	3	March	20	March	13
	April	10	April	5	April	18	April	22
	May	9	May	2	May	15	May	13
	June	13	June	0	June	17	June	34
2014	January	18	January	0	January	17	January	19
	February	10	February	4	February	16	February	20
	March	12	March	3	March	24	March	23
	April	15	April	2	April	29	April	8
	May	15	May	1	May	26	May	20
	June	18	June	0	June	20	June	19
	NB: As extracted on 2 September 2014							

A simple interpretation of the BDM stats across all 4 postcodes

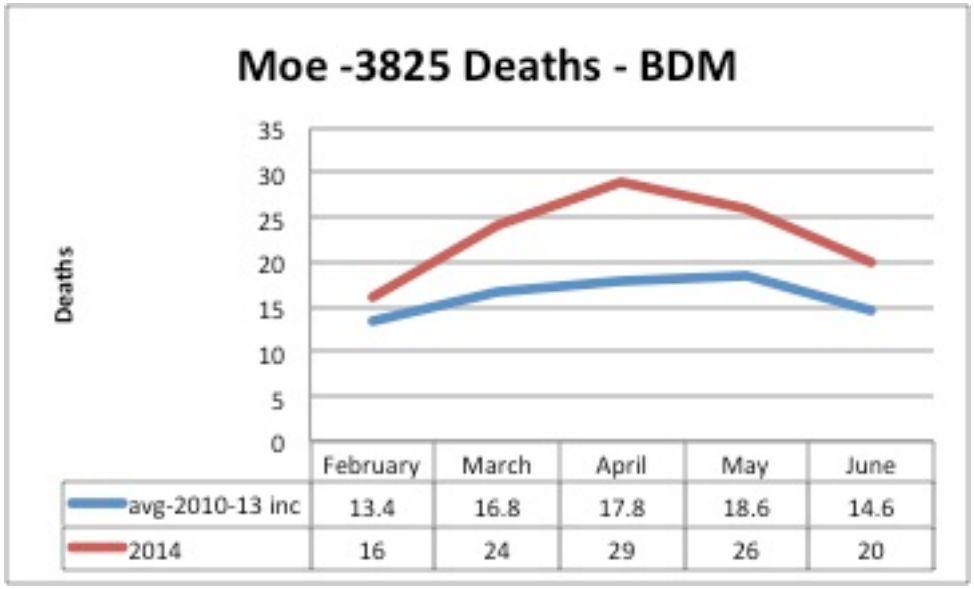
Its not rocket science to see there is something wrong this year, It's written on the RSL newsletter.



	February	March	April	May	June
2014	50	62	54	62	57
avg-2009-13 inc	42.2	51.4	49	51	49

Separated into individual postcodes

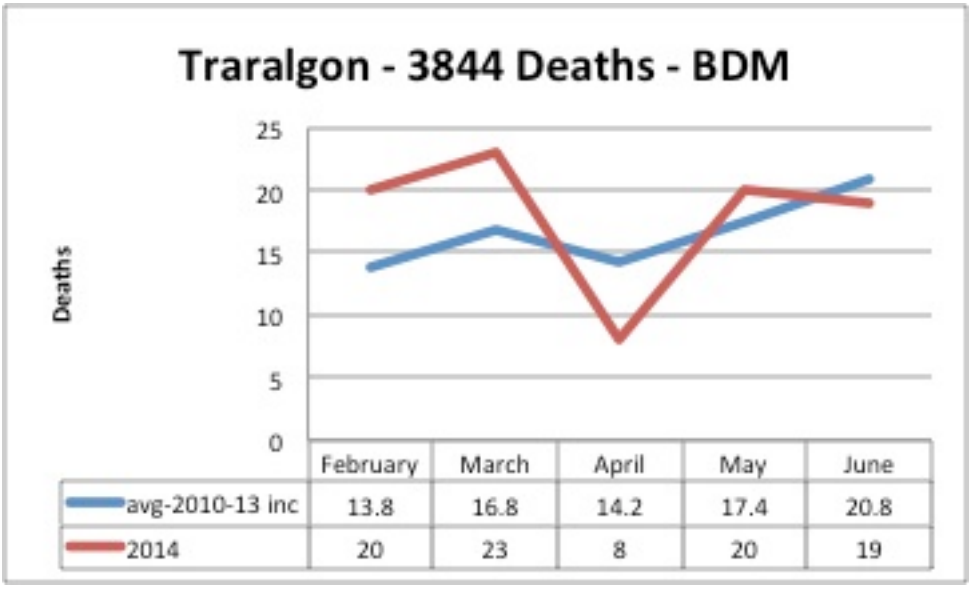
Moe 3825



Quite a worrying trend on this graph given that Moe and surrounds were considered safe, and the children were evacuated to here. It is also the place where the Shire respite/refuge centre was set up.

One theory suggests that it is probable that this is caused by the bowl effect of the geography and toxins blowing eastwards were captured in the between the two mountain ranges, flowing downwards as they are heavier than air in the same way the water does and follows the watershed to be caught in the basin. Trapped by where the Divide meets the Strzelecki ranges at the lowest point, Moe and Lake Narracan.

Traralgon 3844



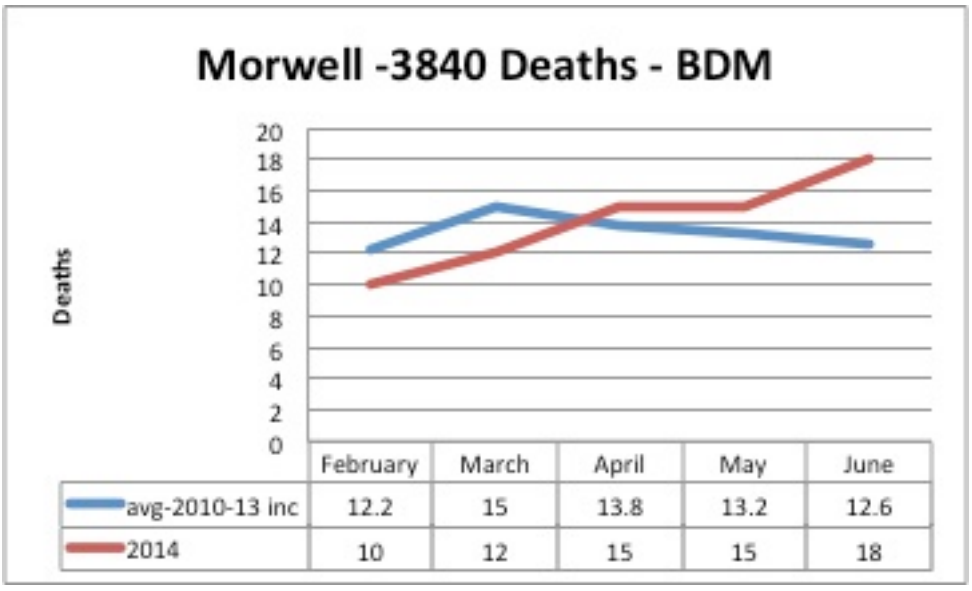
The Traralgon stats from BDM are very telling, showing what is termed a "Harvesting Effect" at the time of the fire and an increase afterwards...

Traralgon is an area that lies downwind of the Hazelwood Open Cut during the predominant westerly breezes that dominate the area.

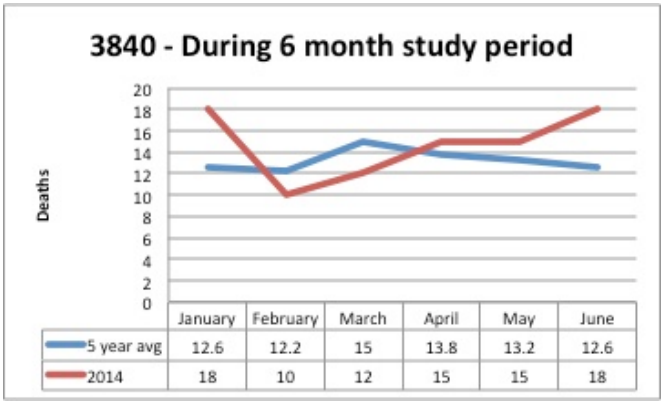
Some business's and schools relocated to Traralgon as the population were under the belief that areas outside of Morwell, or even Morwell South were safe.

It was a widely held belief that precautions in these areas, such as sheltering indoors or wearing masks, was unnecessary.

Morwell 3840



For most of these examples we have not used the January data but it does make a difference in the 3840 postcode in understanding why the starting point is so low in feb 2014.



... for this area, the month of Jan is included to show the harvesting effect had temporarily lowered the death stats during the minefire period....

This postcode has been the focus of some serious statistical manipulation by the establishment to obfuscate the obvious, that more people died in 2014 in the electorate than any previous year of the study.

The red numbers on the left are the ones quoted by David Davis on the radio, and only relate to a single towns postcode. Yes it's true, as a single set of numbers they bear little resemblance to each other.

But if you take the first 5 years and average them, a simple enough calculation, then it all starts to show up on a simple graph as a trend. (as above)

	POSTCODE	
YEAR	3840	
2009	January	19
	February	18
	March	23
	April	9
	May	11
	June	6

		86
2010	January	11
	February	17
	March	9
	April	19
	May	17
	June	18

		91
2011	January	10
	February	11
	March	11
	April	19
	May	7
	June	9

		67
2012	January	10
	February	11
	March	17
	April	12
	May	22
	June	17

		89
2013	January	13
	February	4
	March	15
	April	10
	May	9
	June	13

		64
2014	January	18
	February	10
	March	12
	April	15
	May	15
	June	18

		88

5 year avg
12.6
12.2
15
13.8
13.2
12.6

79.4

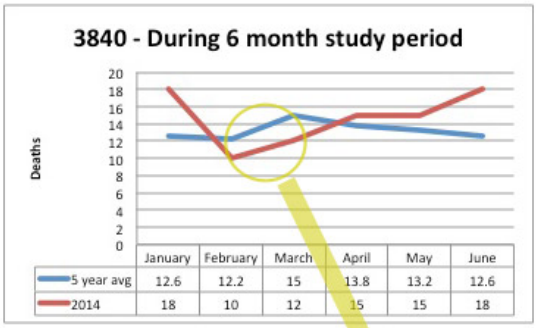
One of the questions that is being asked a lot of us by the media is how did the Govt get a decrease in deaths in Morwell of 19%, and are they using the same set of data.

Yes, I believe they have the same dataset from BDM.

The devil of course is in the detail.

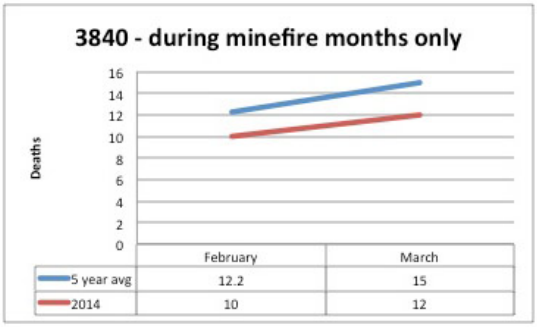
"No increase in deaths in Morwell during the period of the minefire"

"A decrease in death by 19% during the minefire"



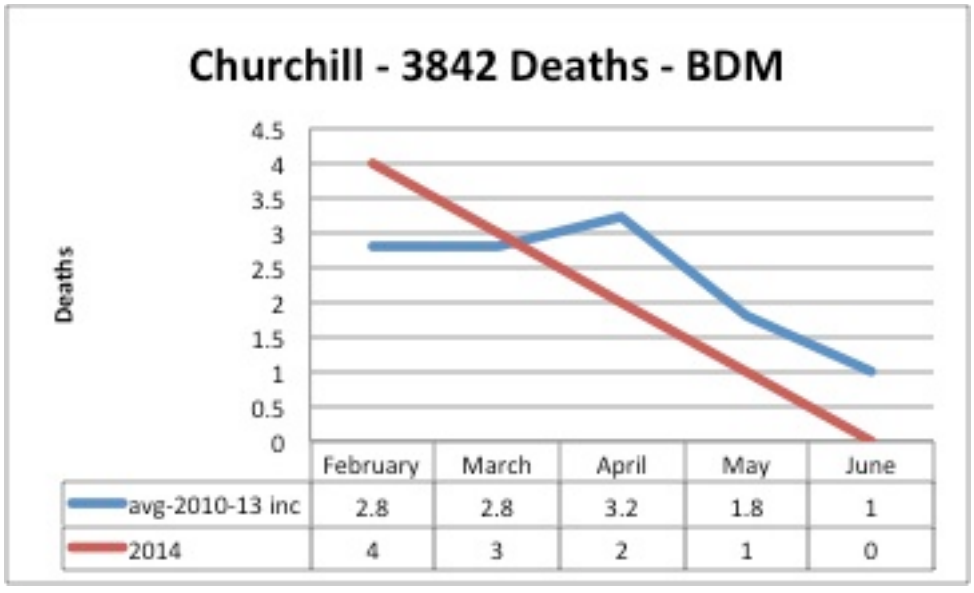
How to get a 19% decrease in deaths?

Limit the data to what suits your purpose only.



Churchill 3842

Is a small area of predominantly young population with a graph showing a downward trend, not as reliable as the others because of the small population of the postcode and small numbers involved. I'm waiting for some bright spark to come up with, "but they got better in Churchill, see the minefire was a good thing."



So to sum it all up, we have had 27 more people die this year than our previous high in 2009 when there was both a heat wave and the black Saturday fires in combination, and 52 more than the average of the previous 5 years.

It would be good to get further access to BDM data particularly as to cause of death, and some commitment to and help in righting the historic health deficit pointed out so succinctly in the Minefire Inquiry's report.
We need specialist to hold training sessions with our doctors to give guidance on what to look for and how to treat it.
We need a Health Conservation area and regulatory measures taken to make sure that our area is safe to live in.
This minefire was an industrial spill on a massive scale, not a natural disaster. Our Cities are surrounded by privatised mines that the government regulates, we are asking that they are made safe for our health and our children's health.