



The Lead Education and Abatement Design Group  
Working to eliminate lead poisoning globally and to protect  
the environment from lead in all its uses: past, current and new uses  
ABN 25 819 463 114

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**LEAD Action News asks the question:**

## **Who will end the leaded petrol death trade?**

### **Toxic Leaded Petrol Still in Use in Six Countries**

Despite research showing that lead in petrol causes annually close to 1.1 million deaths, a loss of 322 million IQ points and economic loss of US\$ 2.4 trillion (4% of global GDP), the countries of Afghanistan, Burma, North Korea, Algeria, Iraq and Yemen continue to sell leaded petrol for road use, says Elizabeth O'Brien, President of The LEAD Group.

What's stopping these countries from ending the use of leaded petrol?

"Factors such as corruption, lack of democracy, lack of press freedom (which inhibits internal criticism of government policies) almost certainly play a role," says Ms O'Brien, "but Western countries, including Australia- where the lead is mined - could step in to end the death trade of leaded petrol.

"The supply chain starts with Australia: the lead is mined by Xstrata at Mount Isa, Queensland. The lead then goes to the UK, where it's smelted, and made into tetra-ethyl lead, the additive which turns petrol into leaded petrol. Only one company in the world makes this: Innospec, a UK company incorporated in the US. Then there's Alcor, a Swiss company which is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Innospec, involved in bribing government agents to continue the distribution of the additive."

"There are six people, any one of whom could step in and stop production of leaded petrol. They are the CEO of Xstrata (Australia's second-wealthiest citizen), the Australian and UK Prime Ministers, the US and Swiss Presidents, and the CEO of Innospec. I've asked them before [see "What has The LEAD Group been doing about the remaining use of lead in petrol?"] but they clearly need to be asked again.

"Innospec could immediately stop producing the additive for road-use petrol, and buy back and pay for the return to the UK of all stocks. If the world relies on the final six country governments to take the single most important action they could take to protect their populations from lead poisoning," said Ms O'Brien, "we'll be waiting too long."

"The US Securities and Exchange Commission, and one man, Barack Obama, could even exact reparation from Innospec by ordering the US-incorporated company to not only stop producing the lead additive for road-use, but also to buy back and pay for the return of all stocks."

Contact: Elizabeth O'Brien, mobile 0431 184 933

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**The LEAD Group Inc. PO Box 161 Summer Hill NSW Australia 2130**  
**GLASS Phone: Freecall 1800 626 086; +61 2 9716 0132**  
**Email: [www.lead.org.au/cu.html](http://www.lead.org.au/cu.html) Web: [www.lead.org.au/](http://www.lead.org.au/)**