

**Committee CWPSC**

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 25 October 2016 10:50 AM  
**To:** Committee CWPSC  
**Subject:** For Jacqui- coal dust

**Categories:** submission

Attention Jacqui

I started work at Burgowan No7 coal mine in the Burrum District on 13 September 1954 aged 14 years.

My job was to check the filling and levelling of the railway wagons . The coal came from underground to the pit head on the surface where it was tipped down a steel chute to the wagons. Within half an hour my body would be black from the coal dust.

At the age of 16 my job was to ride the empty coal wagons down into the mine and to then bring the full coal wagons to the surface- a chain runner. The mine was about 1000 metres deep with the dust in the air all the time.

At the age of 18 I went contract mining- wages were paid according to the amount of coal my partner and I could produce. The work was done with pick and shovel. The height of the places I worked in varied from one metre to 1.6 metres. I would be working on my knees picking the coal down onto my body -very dusty.

At the age of 21 I was asked to work at Burgowan No 12 mine which was a new mine started by the company. I still worked the coal face but instead of picking the coal from the coal face it was blasted out by explosives. The air was very dusty. I had studied for a deputy shot firer's certificate and did the blasting. After the explosives had been fired I would go into the dusty atmosphere to bore more holes for more explosives.

The coal released by the explosives would then be dragged by a scoop and loaded onto a conveyor by a scrapper loader.

In 1991 I had a permanent injury to the lower part of my back - caused by a fall in the mine - and was no longer able to use the very heavy borer. I had to finish work for three years.

In 1994 I was asked to go back to the mine not to do the boring of holes for the explosives but just to blast the coal for the other workers who did not have a deputy shot firer's certificate.

I stayed at the mine until it closed on 14 July 1997 [the last coal mine in the area]. I was aged 57 and have not worked since. I received no government payments as my wife continued to work full time.

My breathing gradually got worse . In March 2013 I was sent to see a specialist. My referring doctor thought I had lung cancer but this was not so. I had a breath test and my lungs were at 40% capacity. I was tested again in May 2014 and I was breathing at 32% capacity. I was told my emphysema was caused by smoking and by coal dust in my lungs.

During my working years I did not have regular chest X rays.

I am able now to drive a car but unable to do other simple tasks without losing my breath . I have always been an outdoors person - I am not a reader, TV fan or computer user . I belong to a blue water fishing club but have been unable to go charter boat fishing for the last three years. I enjoyed fishing and crabbing in the two boats I own but now cannot manage them . I live 40 metres from the beach but am unable to walk along it . I must drive even short distances to the shop and post office.

Sometimes I am able to walk about 40 or 50 metres [ with stops] . I have a ride on mower which I can handle but cannot do whipper snipping or other gardening.

I often lose my breath bending, lifting , showering and dressing.

Stanley William Wilson