

31 July 2017

Queensland Parliamentary Service

By mail: Lucy.Manderson@parliament.qld.gov.au
cwpsc@parliament.qld.gov.au

Attention: Lucy Manderson
Acting Inquiry Secretary
Coal Workers' Pneumoconiosis Select Committee

Dear Ms Manderson,

re: COAL WORKERS' PNEUMOCONIOSIS SELECT COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO
OCCUPATIONAL RESPIRATORY DISEASE

Thank you for the opportunity to provide additional information to the Committee regarding occupational respiratory disease. The AIOH appreciates the opportunity to respond to your request for additional information for the expanded scope. This response has been compiled from feedback provided by several of our members that are subject matter experts in the mining industry.

The AIOH consider that the recommendations from our earlier submission apply equally to other mining processes, such as those in the metalliferous and extractive industries, as well as in coal handling operations. Based on a robust and informed risk-based process, where similar exposure groups (SEGs) with significant potential for an adverse health outcome are identified, operators of mines should **develop and implement an evidence-based dust management plan to control dust exposure in their mine**. This plan should include:

- A mine ventilation plan for underground operations that is based on the location and sources of the contaminants (dust, DPOM, heat and humidity) and the movement of these agents throughout the mining and transport areas of the mine;
- Mandated engineering controls such as closed filtered air-conditioned cabs and properly engineered crushers and other plant including the requirements for testing and maintenance of all controls;
- dust suppression on haul and travel roads including ore stockpiles and waste dumps;
- Personal respiratory protection program including fit testing and training for workers where other controls are inadequate to keep dust levels below acceptable Exposure Standards;

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- Regular and targeted personal exposure assessment of airborne dust levels, dust characterisation, and monitoring to ensure controls are in place and working, and to assess health risk;
- Submission of personal dust exposure monitoring data to a secure database that can be routinely interrogated and analysed, and the results reported to all relevant stakeholders;
- Raising awareness amongst workers and employers on the health effects of dust exposure and the techniques to control it;
- active mandatory health surveillance with clear mandated procedures and reporting requirements; and
- independent audit and review of the abovementioned elements.

This strategy is underpinned by the existence of Exposure Standards for the assessment of exposure to airborne contaminants, and a robust standards setting process.

The AIOH appreciates the opportunity to be of assistance to the Queensland Parliament Coal Workers' Pneumoconiosis Select Committee. If we can be of any further assistance, or if you require any additional clarification, please contact our office on (03) 9338 1635, or the undersigned on 0418 356 784.

Yours sincerely,

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF OCCUPATIONAL HYGIENISTS, INC.

Philip Hibbs
President 2017