



Queensland Asbestos Related  
Disease Support Society Inc.

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**20 MAR 2013**

Finance and  
Administration Committee

## **Further Supplementary Submission on Workers' Compensation Entitlements Asbestos Diseases**

Prepared for:

Queensland Government Finance  
and Administration Committee inquiry  
into the operation of Queensland's  
workers' compensation Scheme

## Introduction

The Queensland Asbestos Related Disease Support Society Inc. ("the Society") wishes to make a further supplementary submission in response to the Finance and Administration Committee letter of 27 February 2012 in respect of the Q-Comp proposal.

The Society refers to its earlier submissions but wishes to make the further following submission:-

## Proposal for Reducing Red-Tape

The proposal from Q-Comp attached to the Finance and Administration Committee's letter of 27 February 2012 does raise issues that can be applied to asbestos exposure notifications and can reduce the administrative cost to WorkCover Queensland.

Presently there are broadly speaking two types of "claims" lodged with WorkCover Queensland in respect of asbestos exposure and disease.

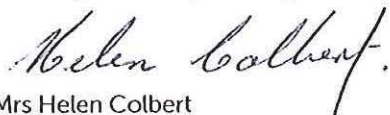
Firstly, there are claims for actual injury, be it benign asbestos disease or malignant/cancerous asbestos disease. The Society makes no submission about changing the process of applying for compensation for actual asbestos injury.

The second type of "claim" is where a worker has been exposed to asbestos in Queensland employment and has not developed any disease but is effectively just notifying WorkCover of his or her exposure. The process currently is that a claim form for asbestos injury is completed by the worker with the words "Notification Only" written at the top of the front page of the claim form. This is then submitted to WorkCover and a claim number is given by WorkCover. These claims, we understand, are referred to by WorkCover as "Report Only".

The Society in its first Submission to the WorkCover Queensland Review dealt with "Report Only" claims on page 2 of its Submission and noted that there could be some misrepresentation (inadvertently) between "Report Only" notifications and actual asbestos disease claims. In the Queensland Workers' Compensation Claims Monitoring Report prepared by Q-Comp - June 2012 page 22, there are significant spikes shown in what are referred to as "Report Only Statutory Asbestosis Lodgements". These are only notifications of exposure, not actual disease. These do not represent any spike in actual claims for compensation.

It is the Society's Submission that the notification of asbestos exposure to WorkCover Queensland and self-insurers should be streamlined and what should occur is there should be a simple email or other notification process which is not lodged as a claim for compensation and falls into a different category of simple notification. All that needs to occur following the notification of exposure is that there is a response given of an acknowledgement of that notification and perhaps a notification code can be submitted in respect of it.

This would streamline the process and would not lead to any inadvertent perception that there is an increase in claims when there is merely an increase of notifications of exposure. Increase in notifications likely only reflects the increasing awareness amongst workers that they can notify and register asbestos exposure only.



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