

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 58

asked on Wednesday, 13 February 2019

MR S ANDREW ASKED THE MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES, MINES AND ENERGY (HON DR A LYNHAM)—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise what progress has been made towards clearing the backlog of black lung health assessments?

ANSWER:

Reforms now mean that all coal mine workers receive mandatory chest X-rays and lung function tests when they enter the workforce, when they leave, and regularly while they are working.

The Health Surveillance Unit receives an average of 350 coal mine worker health assessment records each week.

Since July 2016, more than 45,000 chest X-rays of coal mine workers have been taken. They are all being read twice by qualified b-readers, proficient in reading X-rays against the ILO International Classification of Radiographs of Pneumoconioses.

The Health Surveillance Unit now holds more than 400,000 health records for coal mine workers, including records of health assessments conducted under the current scheme, as well as health assessments conducted under the previous Queensland Coal Board Medical, dating back to 1983.