

1 August 2005

The Secretary  
Senate Community Affairs References Committee  
Parliament House  
**CANBERRA ACT 2600**  
Via email only to [community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au)

## **RE: INQUIRY INTO WORKPLACE EXPOSURE TO TOXIC DUST**

Dear Secretary

The Construction Materials and Processors Association (CMPA) of Victoria is committed to ensure that its members are adequately informed about and implement appropriate practices in all matters concerning workplace safety. To this end the CMPA has undertaken a range of educative initiatives to facilitate effective safety in the workplace.

The Association recognises the potential risks associated with inhalation of silica and, in addition to promoting the use of practical safeguards by its members, has pursued the development of useful regulatory policy of this not well understood issue. The CMPA provided a submission to Workplace Australia following its publication of a Regulatory Impact Statement on this matter in 2004. At the centre of the submission are our concerns in two areas:

- The adequacy of regulation and the effectiveness of techniques used to assess airborne dust concentrations and resulting toxicity; and
- The availability of accurate records on the nature and extent of illness, disability and death arising from exposure to silica.

I understand the Terms of Reference of your Inquiry will ensure these matters are investigated.

The CMPA therefore welcomes the inquiry into workplace exposure to toxic dust. It is expected the Inquiry will need to gather information from industry for its deliberations and the Association would be most willing to participate in this to the extent practical. Please feel free to contact me to arrange meetings or to gain an on-site understanding of how the extractive industry in Victoria approaches the significant dust issue.

Yours sincerely

Ron Kerr  
CMPA Honorary CEO