



28 November 2005

Australian Institute of Occupational Hygienists Incorporated

Elton Humphery
Secretary
Australian Senate Community Affairs References Committee
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Email: community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Mr Humphrey,

Inquiry into workplace exposure to toxic dust

I write on behalf of the Australian Institute of Occupational Hygienists (AIOH). We put a written submission to the inquiry and subsequently Mr Martin Jennings appeared before the inquiry in Melbourne on Thursday 29 September, 2005, to speak to our submission.

In providing his evidence Mr Jennings stated that he was in favour of a reduction of the exposure standard for respirable crystalline silica from $0.1\text{mg}/\text{m}^3$ to $0.05\text{mg}/\text{m}^3$ (page CA 27 of the Hansard report). This is **not** the position of the AIOH. The AIOH supports maintaining the recently amended exposure standard of $0.1\text{mg}/\text{m}^3$. The reasons for this position were detailed in the AIOH response to the *Proposed amendments to the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission exposure standards for crystalline silica* in November 2003. The main reasons for maintaining the current standard are:

- the very low incidence of silico-pneumoconiosis in Australia; and
- issues involved in accurately quantifying exposures at concentrations below $0.1\text{mg}/\text{m}^3$.

Yours faithfully,

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