



Mining & Quarrying
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH &
SAFETY COMMITTEE

MAQOHSC

SUMMER NEWSLETTER

Protecting Workers from Occupational Dust Related Diseases

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SUMMER 2022

The Mining and Quarrying Occupational Health and Safety Committee conducts its work for the Minister for Industrial Relations under Schedule 2 of the *Work Health and Safety Act* utilising the funds provided by the Mining and Quarries Industries Fund. This money is available for use under Schedule 9 of the *Return to Work Act 2014*.

After the 2022 election the new Industrial Relations Minister to which MAQOHSC report, is the Hon Kyam Maher. As Minister Maher is the Attorney-General, MAQOHSC is hosted in the Attorney-General's Department.



In Review 2022

The MAQOHSC continue forward with their work on the Strategic Plan. The plan has a focus on Silicosis with the following pillars:

- Education
- Prevention
- Research.

These strategic pillars will be at the core of the Committee's activities and thus ensuring that we can work towards a workplace which is free from Silicosis and dust borne diseases principally within the Mining and Quarrying sector.

New Staff have been engaged to assist the Committee with putting its plan into action.

New Staff 2022

MAQOHSC are pleased to welcome new admin Eva Vratis, EO Shelley Rowett, and Safety Specialist Peter Williams.



Peter is keen to share his knowledge supporting SA mining and quarrying sites. Peter's background is in quarrying and concrete production, as well as being a national vocational training specialist. Peter is both following up on the Greencap dust monitoring reports with sites as well as developing some new resources for MAQOHSC.

Sample SOPs for some common plant and some customizable risk assessments will be available soon. However, new and available now, is a snapshot on cabin cleaning:

[Respirable Crystalline Silica – Cabin cleaning Snapshot.](#)

Health Monitoring 2022

A brief program of health monitoring for a small number of sites was commenced in early 2022.

Several workers with lung issues were identified by Respiratory Specialists which are being followed up.

The State Silica Register commenced in April 2022 however to date no cases have been included.

It is reported to be accessible by Thoracic Specialists in the four major metropolitan public hospital clinics.

Interstate the other more established state registries are reporting silicosis.

Dust and Noise Exposure Monitoring 2022

The rain has suspended the 2022 dust monitoring program half way through with 30 of the 58 sites being completed before being suspended to await spring weather conditions.

Results to date have been disappointing for some tasks with similar site control issues being observed to those in previous monitoring rounds.



State Registry Reports - Silicosis

State	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	To date (new)
QLD DD Register			249 (67 new)	59	41	167
NSW DD Register	9	40	107	55 (7 deaths)	64 (10 deaths)	275
WA Screening Report 2018-2021		365 screened	24 cases			24
SA Register					0	0
Victoria (RIS) 13 fatalities		96 claims	443 claims (The Alfred)			443
NSW report SafeWork Disease #	9	40 (17 ES)	107 (71 ES)			
NSW Report SafeWork Screening #	501 workers	1395 workers (356 ES)	1134 workers (340 ES)			
SA - Screening Report		295 workers screened from ES and High exp Risk Construction	18 cases of probable, possible or confirmed simple silicosis			18

The top 5 personal exposure exceedances in respirable dust and respirable crystalline silica dust vs minerals remain as follows:

Top 5 personal respirable dust AIOH Trigger value exceedances by SEG:	Top 5 minerals associated with personal respirable dust exceedances:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crusher operators • Maintenance workers • Quarryman • Dump truck operators • Loader drivers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dolomite • Limestone • Marble • Metal Ores • Quartzite
Top 5 personal respirable crystalline silica WES exceedances by SEG:	Top 5 minerals associated with personal RCS exceedances:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crusher operators • Loader operators • Maintenance workers • Quarryman • Dump truck operators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dolomite • Metal Ores • Quartzite • Slate • Sandstone

Dust Monitoring Program 2022 (30 Sites)

The Committee’s dust monitoring program demonstrates a continued focus to engage, consult and provide support to industry in the prevention of silicosis and other dust related lung diseases.

The scope of this year’s program was the same as 2021 with a focus on small to medium mine and quarrying operations in their management of risk associated with respirable dust and respirable crystalline silica in the workplace.

The elements of program include:

- Review of the previous dust monitoring results and recommendations (where previously conducted),
- Review of existing site dust mitigation strategies,
- Identify sources of dust generation and worker exposure,
- Conduct personal and static monitoring which includes site observations,

- Provided and review dust monitoring results, conclusions and recommendations to improve dust management strategies to prevent workers from being exposed to an airborne concentration of a substance or mixture above an exposure standard.

Additional supporting programs include:

- Respiratory protective equipment assessment (where supplied),
- Personal noise assessment,
- Industry education sessions on occupational dust exposure and management.

MAQOHSC is also currently offering a respirable crystalline silica awareness campaign with small to medium mine and quarry operations to raise the awareness and understanding on the health risks associated with exposure to respirable crystalline silica, and the systems and strategies to manage the risks to workers health.

Meeting Location: MAQOHSC Purpose of Meeting: SA AIOH Chapter Meeting – Is it all about silica?

The Committee supports research, collaboration and networking. In 2022 the SA AIOH Chapter met at MAQOHSC to share updates and recent research papers.



(Right-Left) Dr Len Turczynowics, Shah Harmesh, Dr Michael Tkaczuk, Peter Williams, Paul Dewing, Dr Leigh Threadgold, Dr Chandnee Ramkissoon, Nathan (@oherm), Jwalit Parikh, Shelley Rowett, A/Prof Sharyn Gaskin, Yonatal Tefera, Will O’Callaghan, Prof Dino Pisaniello, Ly-Huor Ly.

MAQOHSC News Items 2022 The Committee noted a great deal of activity internationally and nationally in silica exposure prevention:

Date	Link	Dot points of discussions
April	All-Govt-Response-Final-Report-Dust-Disease-Taskforce.pdf (health.gov.au)	In April 2022 the Australian, and state and territory governments released the All of Governments' Response to the final report of the National Dust Disease Taskforce. The response provides a strong commitment from all governments to: reduce incidences of silicosis and other dust diseases among workers.
June	MAQOHSC Update on Services	MAQOHSC Update on Services.
15 June	Work Health and Safety (Crystalline Silica Dust) Amendment Bill 2022 (170k)	As introduced in Legislative Council Current sessional BILL to amend the Work Health and Safety Act 2012. Part 2 - Amendment of Work Health and Safety Act 2012 2 Insertion of Part 2A. The bill is to stop exposure to respirable silica in workplaces.
June	Guidance material published by SWA: Working with silica and silica containing products	National Guidance for all workplaces with silica exposure potential.
30 June	Progress has been made, but mineral mining industry still has work to do on respirable crystalline silica Commissioner for Resources Safety & Health (rshq.qld.gov.au)	That is the opinion of leaders in the industry that gathered recently at the Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee (MSHAC) respirable crystalline silica forum in Brisbane on 30 June 2022. Presentations available.
1 July	Administrative Arrangements (Administration of Certain Acts) Proclamation 2022 (legislation.sa.gov.au)	Minister Kyam Maher – becomes the Minister for WHS and MAQOHSC – as Minister for Industrial Relations and the Public Sector.
July-15 August	Consultation Regulation Impact Statement - Managing the risks of respirable crystalline silica Engage SWA	Consultation Regulation Impact Statement: Managing the risks of respirable crystalline silica at work (CRIS) has been developed to seek feedback from stakeholders and the general public on the impact of regulatory and non-regulatory options to manage the risks of respirable crystalline silica at work. The CRIS includes more legislation proposed for mines and quarries.
24 August	https://safetowork.com.au/millions-for-dust-lung-research/	Millions for dust lung research - Safe To Work The QLD Government has announced more than \$3 million in research grants for occupational dust lung disease.
25 August	SWSA announced they have become partners with Respfit Home Page » RESP-FIT (respfit.org.au)	Martyn Campbell on LinkedIn: #hygiene #hygienesolutions #workplacesafety SafeWork SA is proud to partner RESP-FIT to ensure respiratory protection equipment works as intended through proper fit testing.
31 August	Project: Silica Safety - Artibus Innovation This project was completed on the 19th of September, 2022.	Silica Safety Awareness Project Update The Committee noted Skills Ministers endorsed updates to three of four units for the CPC Construction Plumbing and Services Training Package – Silica Safety Awareness Project approved by the Committee at its 12 April 2022 meeting.
September 7 September	RTM App Realtime Dust Monitoring GCG	FINALISTS IN THE 199 EMPLOYEES OR LESS SUB-CATEGORY GCG Health and Safety Hygiene - Real-time monitoring (RTM) app.
14 September	DTF:SWSA Silicosis Strategy South-Australian-Government-Strategy-for-RCS-Exposure-Awareness-and-Reduction-2020.pdf (safework.sa.gov.au)	Government response - 2021 Review of the Dust Diseases scheme.pdf (nsw.gov.au) – SA could be discussing similar at the State Strategy including discussion of NSW icare role vs work of MAQOHSC.

MAQOHSC News Items 2022

Date	Link	Dot points of discussions
16 September	<p>Prevention of the Occupational Silicosis Epidemic in Australia: What Do Those Who Assess Workplace Health Risk Think Should Be Done Now? Annals of Work Exposures and Health Oxford Academic (oup.com)</p> <p>Kate Cole, Deborah Glass, Tracey Bence, Dino Pisaniello, Peter Knott, Shelley Rowett, Sharann Johnson</p>	<p>An Australian National Dust Disease Taskforce was established to address the re-emergence of occupational lung disease, in particular silicosis. Exposure to respirable crystalline silica (RCS) occurs in various industries in Australia. We asked occupational hygienists about their practical experiences and perspectives on RCS exposure and regulatory action. A total of 105 members of the Australian Institute of Occupational Hygienists completed an anonymous questionnaire, which addressed individual characteristics, experience, perceived level of employer awareness, effectiveness of current regulation, and recommendations for improvement, across three main industrial sectors.</p> <p>Based on professional experience, 71% were concerned about the potential for RCS over-exposure. Barriers to adequate exposure control included lack of management commitment and financial resources. The employment of specialist occupational hygiene inspectors was considered to be the most effective regulatory strategy. Given the large number of exposed workers in the construction industry, with only a moderate awareness, there is the potential for significant cost shifting of the burden of occupational lung disease from employers on to individuals and the public health system. A nationally consistent approach to RCS exposure control across all industrial sectors is now recommended, with an increased focus on measuring and controlling exposure.</p>
27 September	<p>Summary from the UK BOHS Silica (bohs.org)</p>	<p>Strongly points on health vs safety in legislation and action. It's also noted that COPD is used in the cost modelling rather than silicosis.</p> <p>We recommend that more economic modelling is undertaken to consider the potential long-term savings of RCS control and the options for incentivisation, investment and better enforcement to support RCS risk reduction.</p>
October 5 October	<p>NSW Silica Questions and Compliance ASQON - Hon Victor Dominello MP - Small Business and Fair Trading - 7 September - received 5 October 2022.pdf (nsw.gov.au)</p>	<p>The answers to the Questions on Notice to SafeWork NSW Refer to the sections on Audiometric testing, and latter sections on silica Visits. NSW answers on Silica noted that NSW Safe Work may have issues with inspector availability as they had 102 requests for services which were silica related and only got to four of them.</p>
14 October	<p>Adelaide Exposure Science and Health AESH Publish a new Paper on Engineered Stone</p>	<p>Engineered Stone Fabrication Work Releases Volatile Organic Compounds Classified as Lung Irritants https://academic.up.com/annweh/advance-article/doi/10.1093/annweh/wxac068/6760968</p> <p>Engineered stones are often characterized for their crystalline silica content. Their organic composition, particularly that of the emissions generated during fabrication work using hand-held power tools, is relatively unexplored. During active cutting, the predominant volatile organic compound (VOC) emitted was styrene, with phthalic anhydride, benzene, ethylbenzene, and toluene also detected. These results have important health implications as styrene and phthalic anhydride are irritants to the respiratory tract. This study suggests a risk of concurrent exposure to high levels of respirable crystalline silica and organic lung irritants during engineered stone fabrication work.</p>
18 October	<p>Independent review of SafeWork SA SafeWork SA</p>	<p>Review may include MAQOHSC as the review talks about collaboration.</p>
19 October	<p>Greencap Symposium on Silica</p>	<p>Representatives from SafeWork NSW, WorkSafe VIC, WorkSafe QLD, Blackwoods, AES and 3M, along with Greencap experts, for detailed presentations and workshops on the prevalence of RCS in society today, and what we can do to mitigate risk.</p> <p>Recording of Silica Symposium https://www.bigmarker.com/greencap/RCS-Symposium?bmid=cd7653b46478</p>
23 October	<p>https://www.som.org.uk/sites/som.org.uk/files/Occupational_Health_The_Value_Proposition_March_2022.pdf</p>	<p>A UK view there is a lot of generalisable points made (and some references to Australian comparisons).</p>

MAQOHSC News Items 2022

Date	Link	Dot points of discussions
<p>November 1 November</p>	<p>NORDR legislation – DRAFT National Occupational Respiratory Disease Registry Bill 2022</p>	<p>Only specialist health practitioners that are prescribed to notify, these are registered Health Practitioners in occupational and environmental medicine; or respiratory and sleep medicine. They must notify within 30 days of diagnosis. Initially the occupational respiratory disease will be forms of silicosis.</p>
<p>1 November</p>	<p>Minister Maher Hansard Daily: Legislative Council - Tuesday, November 1 2022 (parliament.sa.gov.au)</p>	<p>SafeWork SA is the lead agency for consultation regarding silicosis, including with unions and other relevant groups. As an interim measure to the implementation of this national registry, South Australia has designed and implemented the South Australian Silicosis Registry which became operational in April 2022 in four public hospitals across South Australia. The South Australian Silicosis Registry aims to understand the silicosis disease epidemiology in South Australia and identify occupational risk factors. To date, no silicosis patients have been added to the South Australian Silicosis Registry, reflecting the rarity of the disease. The South Australian Silicosis Registry will be operational until the establishment of the National Occupational Respiratory Disease Registry.</p>
<p>1 November</p>	<p>ReturnToWorkSA Annual Report 2021-22 (rtwsa.com)</p>	<p>ReturnToWorkSA acknowledges that workplace safety is the key to a viable work injury insurance scheme. We continue to support SafeWork SA with data analytics, young worker safety strategies and workplace silicosis risks. This is complemented by the work ReturnToWorkSA undertakes with interstate work injury insurance schemes around workplace injury prevention.</p>
<p>3 November</p>	<p>The 5th Annual Dust and Respiratory Health Forum</p>	<p>Discussion of the disease rates in QLD and NSW and the systems in place to detect and treat early disease. Also an update on the characterisation of dust in terms of toxicology of different minerals and emerging trends in assessing dust exposure risk. If you missed the Forum, a video of the presentations will soon be available on the Sustainable Minerals Institute's YouTube channel.</p>
<p>21 November</p>	<p>Federal House of Representatives pdf (aph.gov.au)</p>	<p>Page 37 Federal House of Representative Hansard – Silicosis. Silicosis Ms FERNANDO (Holt) (13:45): During the last sitting week I had the honour of hosting a delegation of workers affected by silicosis. They were joined by Mark Brooke, the CEO of Lung Foundation Australia. Shane, Kyle, Tony and Josh generously shared their stories with me about the suffering they are experiencing due to exposure to silica dust. They were part of a large delegation which included, among others, the Australian Council of Trade Unions. The workers are exposed to silica dust through activities such as mining, tunnelling and road construction and through the cutting and drilling of silica infused benchtops, known as Caesarstone. The inhalation of silica dust often leads to diseases such as lung cancer and respiratory failure and can cause immune disorders and kidney disease.</p>
<p>23 November</p>	<p>IRCC Industrial Relations Consultative Council</p>	<p>IRCC to consider New MAQOHSC Members for next 3 years.</p>
<p>December 1 December</p>	<p>Hansard Daily: Legislative Council - Thursday, December 1 2022 (parliament.sa.gov.au) This is a very important issue for the health and safety of the South Australian community. The final report of the National Dust Disease Taskforce in June 2021 concluded that the past decade had seen a re-emergence of respiratory diseases associated with exposure to respirable crystalline silica, driven by the popularity of engineered tabletop stone.</p>	<p>Earlier this year, researchers from Curtin University estimated that over 10,000 Australians will develop lung cancer and over 100,000 workers will be diagnosed with silicosis as a result of their exposure to silica dust at work. At this very moment, jurisdictions around Australia are grappling with how to respond to this issue. I understand that no other state or territory has yet implemented a complete ban on working with materials containing silica in the form proposed by this bill, but some jurisdictions are exploring licensing regimes for these industries. Others are looking to amend their work health and safety regulations to prohibit the uncontrolled cutting, grinding or abrasive polishing of engineered stone, which produces silica dust. There are a range of policy options open to ensure the health and safety of South Australian workers in relation to these issues, and those options will require careful and deliberate consideration. The government supports this bill being referred to the occupational safety, health and compensation committee for inquiry, and I look forward to, if that is the course that is taken, the committee undertaking that important work.</p>

Safety Alerts

NSW Consolidated Report contaminants.

The consolidated report includes key assessment findings as well as recommendations to industry. NSW compliance audits highlighted the need for greater education and clarity on WHS expectations. The NSW reports highlighted there was a lack of awareness among workers about the risks to their health from exposure to dust at quarry operations.

[Targeted intervention program – Respirable Dust in quarry operations](#) | [Resources Regulator publication \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)

[Airborne contaminants and dust](#) | [NSW Resources Regulator](#)

[PowerPoint Presentation \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)

NSW Dust Disease Toolkit

The Take Action to Prevent Dust Disease toolkit is designed to provide mine workers and mine operators with information, advice and guidance related to managing dust.

The member organisations of the Mine Safety Advisory Council have combined resources to create this dust toolkit. The toolkit is designed to provide mine workers and mine operators with information, advice and guidance related to managing dust.

[Dust Disease Toolkit](#) | [NSW Resources Regulator](#)

3 March 2022

SafeWork SA – New guidance on Respiratory Protective Equipment

We have published new information and [guidance on Respiratory Protective Equipment](#) after recent compliance audits highlighted the need for greater education and clarity on WHS expectations.

[Read more](#)

30 August 2022

Respirator Fit Testing – Training Course

Be able to fit test respirators for your workplace.

RESP-FIT seeks to provide an easier way for workplaces and individuals to educate and demonstrate competence when it comes to respirator fit testing.

Legislation requires respiratory protective equipment issued to workers as a hazard control to be suitable for the nature of the work. It must also be a suitable size, fit and reasonably comfortable.

Fit testing for all tight fitting respirators (positive and negative pressure) is a mandatory part of AS/NZS 1715 Respiratory Protection Programs and mandated by all international respiratory protection programs.

[Home Page » RESP-FIT \(respfit.org.au\)](#)

August 2022

WA Mine Safety Management System (MSMS) information sheets

The WA Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, released two new information sheets in August following the information sessions they provided to the public in July.

The two information sheets relate to the WA requirements for a Mine Safety Management System. These information sheets should be read in conjunction with the WA Code of practice – Mine Safety Management System.

- [Information sheet: Overview of the mine safety management system code of practice](#)
- [Information sheet: Content of mine safety management system.](#)

Further information from the WA Department of Mines Industry Regulation and Safety

- [Guide to the Preparation of a Health and Hygiene Management Plan.](#)

Annual Report



The Mining and Quarrying OHS Committee Annual Report was presented to the House of Assembly on 16 November 2022.

[2021-2022 Annual Report](#)

Upcoming IQA Training Webinars

[quarry.com.au](#)

Virtual Workshop Topic
[Respirable Crystalline Silica](#)
[Introduction to Quarrying](#)
[Supervising for Safety](#)

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Merry Christmas

& HAPPY NEW YEAR



*From the MAQOHS team,
we wish you a wonderful festive
season and a safe a prosperous
New Year!*

MAQOHS 2022/23 CHRISTMAS CLOSURE
 Closing: 3.00PM Friday 23 December 2022
 Opening: 8.30AM Tuesday 4 January 2023



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