



**ACT**  
Government

Chief Minister, Treasury and  
Economic Development

## Freedom of Information Publication Coversheet

The following information is provided pursuant to section 28 of the *Freedom of Information Act 2016*.

FOI Reference: CMTEDDFOI 2021-031

Information to be published	Status
1. Access application	Published
2. Decision notice	Published
3. Documents and schedule	Published
4. Additional information identified	No
5. Fees	N/A
6. Processing time (in working days)	19
7. Decision made by Ombudsman	N/A
8. Additional information identified by Ombudsman	N/A
9. Decision made by ACAT	N/A
10. Additional information identified by ACAT	N/A

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [CMTEDD FOI](#)  
**Subject:** Freedom of Information request  
**Date:** Sunday, 21 February 2021 7:16:20 PM

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the ACT Government. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Please find online enquiry details below. Please ensure this enquiry is responded to within fourteen working days.

### Your details

**All fields are optional, however an email address OR full postal address must be provided for us to process your request. An email address and telephone contact number will assist us to contact you quickly if we need to discuss your request.**

Title:

First Name:

Last Name:

Business/Organisation:

Address:

Suburb:

Postcode:

State/Territory:

Phone/mobile:

Email address:



### Request for information

**(Please provide as much detail as possible, for example subject matter and relevant dates, and also provide details of documents that you are not interested in.)**

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2016 I want to access the following document/s (\*required field):

All documents relating to the proposal to implement training for crystalline silica dust awareness, including but not limited to: correspondence or any other documents between Minister Orr or Minister Orr's office and other stakeholders (including WorkSafe), advice received by the directorate or Minister Orr's office in relation to the potential requirement for mandatory training for crystalline silica dust awareness, for the period 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020.

I do not want to access the following documents in relation to my request::

Thank you.  
Freedom of Information Coordinator



**ACT**  
Government

Chief Minister, Treasury and  
Economic Development

Our ref: CMTEDDFOI 2021-031

[REDACTED]

via email: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

### **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST**

I refer to your application under section 30 of the *Freedom of Information Act 2016* (the Act), received by the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate (CMTEDD) on 21 February 2021.

Specifically, you are seeking: *“All documents relating to the proposal to implement training for crystalline silica dust awareness, including but not limited to: correspondence or any other documents between Minister Orr or Minister Orr's office and other stakeholders (including WorkSafe), advice received by the directorate or Minister Orr's office in relation to the potential requirement for mandatory training for crystalline silica dust awareness, for the period 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020.”*

### **Authority**

I am an Information Officer appointed by the Director-General under section 18 of the Act to deal with access applications made under Part 5 of the Act.

### **Timeframes**

In accordance with section 40 of the Act, CMTEDD is required to provide a decision on your access application by 23 March 2021.

### **Decision on access**

Searches were completed for relevant documents and 14 documents were identified that fall within the scope of your request.

I have included as **Attachment A** to this decision the schedule of relevant documents. This provides a description of each document that falls within the scope of your request and the access decision for each of those documents.

I have decided to grant access in full to six documents and partial access to eight documents, relevant to your request.

My access decisions are detailed further in the following statement of reasons and the documents released to you are provided as **Attachment B** to this letter.

In accordance with section 54(2) of the Act a statement of reasons outlining my decisions is below.

### **Statement of Reasons**

In reaching my access decisions, I have taken the following into account:

- the Act;
- the content of the documents that fall within the scope of your request;
- the *Human Rights Act 2004*.

### **Exemption claimed**

My reasons for deciding not to grant access to the identified documents and components of these documents are as follows:

#### Public Interest

The Act has a presumption in favour of disclosure. As a decision maker I am required to decide where, on balance, public interests lies. As part of this process I must consider factors favouring disclosure and non-disclosure.

In *Hogan v Hinch* (2011) 243 CLR 506, [31] French CJ stated that when 'used in a statute, the term [public interest] derives its content from "the subject matter and the scope and purpose" of the enactment in which it appears'. Section 17(1) of the Act sets out the test, to be applied to determine whether disclosure of information would be contrary to the public interest. These factors are found in subsection 17(2) and Schedule 2 of the Act.

Taking into consideration the information contained in the documents found to be within the scope of your request, I have identified that the following public interest factors are relevant to determine if release of the information contained within these documents is within the 'public interest'.

#### Factors favouring disclosure in the public interest:

- (a) *disclosure of the information could reasonably be expected to do any of the following:*
- ii) contribute to positive and informed debate on important issues or matters of public interest;*

Having considered the factors identified as relevant in this matter, I consider that release of the information, within the scope of the request, may contribute to positive and informed debate on a matter of public interest which is the Work Health and Safety Council Advisory Committee on Workplace Crystalline Silica Exposure. I am satisfied that this factor favouring disclosure carries significant weight. However, this weight is to be balanced with the weight of factors favouring non-disclosure.

#### Factors favouring nondisclosure in the public interest:

- (a) *disclosure of the information could reasonably be expected to do any of the following:*
- (ii) Prejudice the protection of an individual's right to privacy or other rights under the Human Rights Act 2004;*

Having reviewed the documents, I consider that the protection of an individual's right to privacy, especially in the course of dealings with the ACT Government is a significant factor as the parties involved have provided their personal information for the purposes of working with the ACT Government. This, in my opinion, outweighs the benefit which may be derived from releasing the personal information of the individual's involved in this matter.

Individuals are entitled to expect that the personal information they have supplied as part of this process will be dealt with in a manner that protects their privacy. Considering the type of information to be withheld from release, I am satisfied that the factors in favour of release can still be met while protecting the personal information of the individuals involved. I therefore weight the factor for non-disclosure more highly than the factor in favour of release in this instance. As a result, I have decided that release of this information (mobile phone numbers and email addresses of individuals not employed by the ACT Public Service) could prejudice their right to privacy under the *Human Rights Act 2004*.

Having applied the test outlined in section 17 of the Act and deciding that release of personal information contained in the documents is not in the public interest to release, I have chosen to redact this specific information in accordance with section 50(2). Noting the pro-disclosure intent of the Act, I am satisfied that redacting only the information that I believe is not in the public interest to release will ensure that the intent of the Act is met and will provide you with access to the majority of the information held by CMTEDD within the scope of your request.

### **Charges**

Processing charges are not applicable for this request because the number of pages to be released to you is below the charging threshold of 50 pages.

### **Online publishing – Disclosure Log**

Under section 28 of the Act, CMTEDD maintains an online record of access applications called a disclosure log. Your original access application, my decision and documents released to you in response to your access application will be published in the CMTEDD disclosure log 3 days after the date of my decision. Your personal contact details will not be published.

You may view CMTEDD disclosure log at <https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/functions/foi>.

### **Ombudsman Review**

My decision on your access request is a reviewable decision as identified in Schedule 3 of the Act. You have the right to seek Ombudsman review of this outcome under section 73 of the Act within 20 working days from the day that my decision is published in CMTEDD disclosure log, or a longer period allowed by the Ombudsman.

We recommend using this form [Applying for an Ombudsman Review](#) to ensure you provide all of the required information. Alternatively, you may write to the Ombudsman at:

The ACT Ombudsman  
GPO Box 442  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Via email: [actfoi@ombudsman.gov.au](mailto:actfoi@ombudsman.gov.au)

**ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal (ACAT) Review**

Under section 84 of the Act, if a decision is made under section 82(1) on an Ombudsman review, you may apply to the ACAT for review of the Ombudsman decision. Further information may be obtained from the ACAT at:

ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal  
Level 4, 1 Moore St  
GPO Box 370  
Canberra City ACT 2601  
Telephone: (02) 6207 1740  
<http://www.acat.act.gov.au/>

Should you have any queries in relation to your request please contact me by telephone on 6207 7754 or email [CMTEDDFOI@act.gov.au](mailto:CMTEDDFOI@act.gov.au).

Yours sincerely



Philip Dachs  
Information Officer  
Information Access Team  
Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate

22 March 2021



**ACT**  
Government

Chief Minister, Treasury and  
Economic Development

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST SCHEDULE

WHAT ARE THE PARAMETERS OF THE REQUEST	Reference NO.
All documents relating to the proposal to implement training for crystalline silica dust awareness.	CMTEDDFOI 2021-031

Ref No	Page number	Description	Date	Status	Reason for Exemption	Online Release Status
1	1-2	Email and draft letter to WHS Council as attachment	3 Sep 2020	Partial release	Sch 2 s2.2 (a)(ii)	Yes
2	3-4	Email trail re Fact-check of corro	3 Sep 2020	Partial release	Sch 2 s2.2 (a)(ii)	Yes
3	5-6	Email with attachment- Letter to WHS Council	8 Sep 2020	Full release	N/A	Yes
4	7	Email - WHS Council Endorsed Minutes of meetings 3 & 4	9 Sep 2020	Partial release	Sch 2 s2.2 (a)(ii)	Yes
5	8-13	WHS Council Minutes - Meeting 3	20 May 2020	Partial release	Out of Scope	Yes
6	14-19	WHS Council Minutes - Meeting 4	18 Aug 2020	Partial release	Out of Scope	Yes
7	21-23	Email - WHS Council Updates with attachment	15 Dec 2020	Partial release	Sch 2 s2.2 (a)(ii) Out of Scope	Yes
8	24-26	Attachment to above email - Draft Terms of Reference - Crystalline Silica Exposure Advisory Committee	Undated	Full release	N/A	Yes
9	27	Email - WHS Council Update - Workplace Crystalline Silica Exposure Advisory Committee with attachment	3 Feb 2021	Partial release	Sch 2 s2.2 (a)(ii)	Yes
10	28-30	Attachment to above email - Terms of Reference	Undated	Full release	N/A	Yes
11	31	Email - Workplace Crystalline Silica Exposure Advisory committee - Meeting 1	24 Feb 2021	Partial release	Sch 2 s2.2 (a)(ii)	Yes
12	32	Agenda for above meeting	Undated	Full release	N/A	Yes
13	33-43	Agenda item 2.1 from email at item 11	Undated	Full release	N/A	Yes
14	44	Agenda item 3.1 from email at item 11	Undated	Full release	N/A	Yes
<b>Total No of Docs</b>						
14						

**From:** [Connell, Patrick \(Health\)](#)  
**To:** [Young, Michael](#)  
**Cc:** [Treasury DLO](#)  
**Subject:** Fact-check of corro - Request for WHS Council advice on silica dust training  
**Date:** Thursday, 3 September 2020 11:18:23 AM  
**Attachments:** [Draft Letter to WHS Council - Request for advice on silica dust training.docx](#)  
[image001.png](#)

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OFFICIAL

Hi Michael

Please see the attached corro that we require a fact-check on before the end of today relating to silica dust.

Give me a call if you would like to discuss.

Thanks

Pat

**Patrick Connell** | Adviser

**Office of Minister Suzanne Orr**

ACT Government

T (02) 6205 1686 | M [Sch 2.2\(a\)\(ii\)](#)





## Suzanne Orr MLA

Minister for Disability  
Minister for Community Services and Facilities  
Minister for Employment and Workplace Safety  
Minister for Government Services and Procurement  
Member for Yerrabi

ACT Work Health and Safety Council  
C/o Mr Jason O'Mara  
Chair

Via email: [ACTWorkHealthandSafetyCouncil.Secretariat@act.gov.au](mailto:ACTWorkHealthandSafetyCouncil.Secretariat@act.gov.au)

Dear WHS Council Members

Work undertaken nationally and by the ACT on silica dust exposure standards has highlighted an emerging and critical work health and safety issue. As you are aware, the ACT joined other states and territories earlier this year in setting lower workplace exposure standards for silica dust. At that time, I committed to explore further measures to improve safety including a further reduction in the workplace exposure standard.

It is my view that a training program should be developed and implemented to support reducing the risk associated with exposure to silica dust in the ACT. Raising awareness of the risks on worksites is critical and is already a cornerstone of the Government's approach to managing the risks of asbestos in the ACT. I would like the Work Health and Safety Council to explore mandatory training, with a view to providing Government with advice on the content of that training and the workers it should cover.

In developing advice on workplace exposure to silica dust, I ask that the Council consider the way the existing asbestos awareness training course provides workers with an overview of basic measures to prevent exposure to asbestos. The Council's advice should support a statutory requirement for silica dust training similar to the existing requirements for asbestos awareness training.

I thank the Council in advance for its attention to this matter and look forward to receiving your advice.

Yours sincerely

Suzanne Orr MLA  
Minister for Employment and Workplace Safety

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### ACT Legislative Assembly

London Circuit, Canberra ACT 2601, Australia GPO Box 1020, Canberra ACT 2601, Australia  
Phone +61 2 6205 1439 Email [orr@act.gov.au](mailto:orr@act.gov.au)



@SuzanneOrrMLA



SuzanneOrrMLA



SuzanneOrrMLA



**From:** [Ferguson, David](#)  
**To:** [Connell, Patrick \(Health\)](#); [Young, Michael](#); [Lukins, Ellen](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Fact-check of corro - Request for WHS Council advice on silica dust training  
**Date:** Thursday, 3 September 2020 2:04:52 PM  
**Attachments:** [image002.png](#)

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Michael, Ellen – thank you for the fact check.

This letter reflects Minister Orr’s policy perspective as Work Safety Minister, and follows on from the Government announcement and media release done in conjunction with the revised silica dust exposure standards.

She is sending it to the council for advice solely in her capacity as a Minister and in line with her statutory entitlement to ask the Council for advice.

There is no planned Ministerial media and no work is required of the public service on this matter beyond fact checking in light of your previous advice on the Government’s response to silicosis and silica dust exposure.

Thanks again

David

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**From:** Young, Michael <[Michael.Young@act.gov.au](mailto:Michael.Young@act.gov.au)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, 3 September 2020 1:00 PM  
**To:** Connell, Patrick <[Patrick.CConnell@act.gov.au](mailto:Patrick.CConnell@act.gov.au)>  
**Cc:** Lukins, Ellen <[Ellen.Lukins@act.gov.au](mailto:Ellen.Lukins@act.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** RE: Fact-check of corro - Request for WHS Council advice on silica dust training

OFFICIAL

Hi Pat

I have no concerns from a fact checking perspective.

I’m wondering whether it rises to the level of election commitment that I should then initiate monitoring on.

The information sought from the Council seems to be on how training could be mandated, rather than on whether or not it should be. And any reg change would have to be made post election.

Does the office have any plans to communicate content outside of the Council correspondence?

Thanks

Michael

Michael Young | Executive Group Manager  
02 6205 3095 | [michael.young@act.gov.au](mailto:michael.young@act.gov.au)  
Workplace Safety and Industrial Relations  
Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate | ACT Government

WORK HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING -  
WE ALL HAVE A ROLE



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**From:** Connell, Patrick <[Patrick.CConnell@act.gov.au](mailto:Patrick.CConnell@act.gov.au)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, 3 September 2020 11:18 AM  
**To:** Young, Michael <[Michael.Young@act.gov.au](mailto:Michael.Young@act.gov.au)>  
**Cc:** Treasury DLO <[TreasuryDLO@act.gov.au](mailto:TreasuryDLO@act.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** Fact-check of corro - Request for WHS Council advice on silica dust training

OFFICIAL

Hi Michael

Please see the attached corro that we require a fact-check on before the end of today relating to silica dust.

Give me a call if you would like to discuss.

Thanks  
Pat

**Patrick Connell** | Adviser  
**Office of Minister Suzanne Orr**  
ACT Government  
T (02) 6205 1686 | M [Sch 2.2\(a\)\(ii\)](#)



**From:** [ORR](#)  
**To:** [ACTWorkHealthandSafetyCouncil.Secretariat](#)  
**Subject:** Letter from Minister Orr  
**Date:** Tuesday, 8 September 2020 9:29:47 AM  
**Attachments:** [Letter to WHS Council - Request for advice on silica dust training.pdf](#)  
[image001.png](#)

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OFFICIAL

Good Afternoon,  
Please find the attached correspondence from Minister Orr.

Kind Regards

**Ciara Bowman** | Office Manager

**Office of Minister Suzanne Orr**

ACT Government

T (02) 6205 1439





## Suzanne Orr MLA

Minister for Disability  
Minister for Community Services and Facilities  
Minister for Employment and Workplace Safety  
Minister for Government Services and Procurement  
Member for Yerrabi

ACT Work Health and Safety Council  
C/o Mr Jason O'Mara  
Chair

Via email: [ACTWorkHealthandSafetyCouncil.Secretariat@act.gov.au](mailto:ACTWorkHealthandSafetyCouncil.Secretariat@act.gov.au)

Dear WHS Council Members

Work undertaken nationally and by the ACT on silica dust exposure standards has highlighted an emerging and critical work health and safety issue. As you are aware, the ACT joined other states and territories earlier this year in setting lower workplace exposure standards for silica dust. At that time, I committed to explore further measures to improve safety including a further reduction in the workplace exposure standard.

It is my view that a training program should be developed and implemented to support reducing the risk associated with exposure to silica dust in the ACT. Raising awareness of the risks on worksites is critical and is already a cornerstone of the Government's approach to managing the risks of asbestos in the ACT. I would like the Work Health and Safety Council to explore mandatory training, with a view to providing Government with advice on the content of that training and the workers it should cover.

In developing advice on workplace exposure to silica dust, I ask that the Council consider the way the existing asbestos awareness training course provides workers with an overview of basic measures to prevent exposure to asbestos. The Council's advice should support a statutory requirement for silica dust training similar to the existing requirements for asbestos awareness training.

I thank the Council in advance for its attention to this matter and look forward to receiving your advice.

Yours sincerely

Suzanne Orr MLA  
Minister for Employment and Workplace Safety

07/09/20

### ACT Legislative Assembly

London Circuit, Canberra ACT 2601, Australia GPO Box 1020, Canberra ACT 2601, Australia  
Phone +61 2 6205 1439 Email [orr@act.gov.au](mailto:orr@act.gov.au)



@SuzanneOrrMLA



SuzanneOrrMLA



SuzanneOrrMLA



**From:** [ACTWorkHealthandSafetyCouncil.Secretariat](#)  
**To:** [Jason O'Mara](#); [Erryn Cresshull](#); [Matthew Harrison](#); [Brooke Muscat](#); [Shane Carter](#); [Sch 2.2\(a\)\(ii\)@anu.edu.au](#); [Anthony Brierley](#); [Ashlee Berry](#); [Sch 2.2\(a\)\(ii\)@ywca-canberra.org.au](#); [Anthony Brierley](#); [Emily Shoemark](#); [Madeline Northam](#); [Patrick Judge](#); [Zach Smith](#)  
**Cc:** [ACTWorkHealthandSafetyCouncil.Secretariat](#)  
**Subject:** WHS Council Meeting - Endorsed Minutes of meetings 3 & 4 + correspondence from the Minister  
**Date:** Wednesday, 9 September 2020 11:46:00 AM  
**Attachments:** [FINAL WHS Council Meeting 3 20 MAY 2020 Minutes.pdf](#)  
[FINAL WHS Council Meeting 4 18 AUGUST 2020 Minutes.pdf](#)  
[Minister to WHS Council - Request for advice on silica dust training.pdf](#)

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OFFICIAL

Good morning Members

Please find attached the endorsed minutes of WHS Council meetings 3 and 4, for your information. Please also find attached a letter from the Minister dated 7 September 2020, which related to Action Item 1 of meeting 4.

With kind regards

Lucy

WHS Council Secretariat

Lucy Howe | Policy Officer, Regulatory Policy

Phone: 02 6207 5229 | Email: [lucy.howe@act.gov.au](mailto:lucy.howe@act.gov.au)

Workplace Safety and Industrial Relations

Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate | ACT Government

GPO Box 158, Canberra, ACT 2601 | [www.act.gov.au](http://www.act.gov.au)

*Please note I work Monday, Wednesday & Friday.*



I acknowledge the traditional custodians of the ACT the Ngunnawal people, and their continuing connection to land and community. I pay my respect to them, and to the Elders both past and present.

# WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY COUNCIL

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## MEETING 3 – MINUTES

**Date:** 20 May 2020  
**Time:** 12:30pm to 3:30pm  
**Venue:** WebEx

### **Apologies:**

Nadine White (ANU –*Deputy Chair*); Brooke Muscat (CPSU) and Valdis Luks (Shaw Building Group)

### **Members present:**

#### Members appointed under Schedule 2, section 2.3 (1)(a)

Jason O’Mara (CFMEU –*Chair*); Matthew Harrison (UnionsACT); Erryn Cresshull (United Workers Union ACT) and Shane Carter (Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation ACT)

#### Members appointed under Schedule 2, section 2.3 (1)(b)

Ashlee Berry (Master Builders Association); Anthony Brierley (Australian Hotels Association ACT); Frances Crimmins (YWCA Canberra) and Renessa Gray (Acting Member, Canberra Business Chamber)

#### Ex-officio Members

Michael Young (Public Sector Workers Compensation Commissioner (PSWC commissioner))

Jacqueline Agius (ACT Work Health and Safety Commissioner)

### **Secretariat:**

Ellen Lukins (Workplace Safety and Industrial Relations, CMTEDD); and Lucy Howe (Workplace Safety and Industrial Relations, CMTEDD)

### **Guest speakers:**

Alexis Wray (Psychological Health and Safety, WorkSafe ACT)

### **Minister’s representative:**

Patrick Connell (Office of Minister for Employment and Workplace Safety)

**Observing:** Patrick Judge (Australian Education Union ACT Branch and (Madeline Northam (CPSU)

The ACT Work Health and Safety Council (the Council) meeting commenced at 12:30pm

ITEM NO.	ITEM	OUTCOMES/ACTION ITEMS
3/1.1	Welcome and acknowledgements	The Chair opened the meeting, acknowledging the country and contribution of the Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander people and welcomed Members.
3/1.2	Resignations and new appointments	Out of scope
3/1.3	Welcome to the new WHS Commissioner	The Chair welcomed Jacqueline Agius to the WHS Council and congratulated her on her appointed as the new WHS Commissioner.
3/1.4	Minutes & Action Items & Correspondence	Out of scope
3/2	<b>Business arising</b>	
3/2.1	COVIC-19 discussion	Out of scope

		Out of scope
3/3	Office of Work Health & Safety Commissioner	
3/3.1	WHS Commissioner	Out of scope
3/3.2	Statement of Expectation	

# Out of scope

3/4	Policy and legislation updates	
3/4.1	Update from the Regulatory Policy Team	Out of scope
3/4.2	Silica dust Workplace Exposure Standards	<p>Ellen Lukins introduced the item and provided an overview to Members. Ms Lukins flagged with members that the proposed changes to adopt the lower workplace exposure standard for silica dust agreed through Safe Work Australia in December 2019 are due to be implemented in the ACT by 1 July 2020 and given the impact of COVID-19, asked for Members and industry views on readiness based on the current timeframe.</p> <p>Members discussed the workplace exposure standard levels for silica dust and implementation date of 1 July 2020.</p> <p>The Chair expressed views on the standards being 0.02mg/m<sup>3</sup> rather than 0.05 mg/m<sup>3</sup>. The Chair requested a meeting be organised with the Chair, Deputy Chair, Ms Berry, Michael Young and the Secretariat to discuss workplace exposure levels to silica dust.</p> <p>Members expressed views that the ACT should maintain alignment with NSW who has adopted the reduced WES commencing 1 July 2020, noting that awareness of the implementation date still needed to be communicated to industry.</p> <p><b>ACTION ITEM 6:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Secretariat to facilitate meeting with the Chair, Deputy Chair, Ms Berry and Michael Young to discuss workplace exposure levels to silica dust.</li></ul>

<b>3/5</b>	<b>Injury data</b>	<b>Out of scope</b>
3/5.1	Injury data trend report	
3/5.2	Annual Review of the Workers' Compensation Private Scheme	
<b>3/6</b>	<b>Other business</b>	<b>Out of scope</b>
3/6.1	Climate Change Impacts on WHS and workplaces	
3/6.1	Construction White Card Training – carried over from Meeting 2	
3/6.3	Silicosis Subcommittee	
<b>3/7</b>	<b>Next meeting date: 18 August 2020, 9:00am – 12:00pm</b>	<b>Out of scope</b>
3/7.1	Request for proposed agenda items	



# WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY COUNCIL

## MEETING 4 – MINUTES (DRAFT)

**Date:** 18 August 2020  
**Time:** 09:0am to 12:00pm  
**Venue:** Microsoft Teams

### **Apologies:**

Nadine White (ANU –*Deputy Chair*)

### **Members present:**

#### Members appointed under Schedule 2, section 2.3 (1)(a)

Jason O'Mara (CFMEU –*Chair*); Matthew Harrison (UnionsACT); Erryn Cresshull (United Workers Union ACT); Shane Carter (Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation ACT); and Brooke Muscat (CPSU)

#### Members appointed under Schedule 2, section 2.3 (1)(b)

Ashlee Berry (Master Builders Association); Anthony Brierley (Australian Hotels Association ACT); Frances Crimmins (YWCA Canberra); Renessa Gray (Acting Member, Canberra Business Chamber); and Emily Shoemark (Acting Member, Sneddon Hall & Gallop)

#### Ex-officio Members

Michael Young (Public Sector Workers Compensation Commissioner (PSWC commissioner))

Jacqueline Agius (ACT Work Health and Safety Commissioner)

### **Secretariat:**

Ellen Lukins (Workplace Safety and Industrial Relations, CMTEDD); and Lucy Howe (Workplace Safety and Industrial Relations, CMTEDD)

### **Minister's representative:**

Patrick Connell (Office of Minister for Employment and Workplace Safety)

The ACT Work Safety Council (the Council) meeting commenced at 09:00am

ITEM NO.	ITEM	OUTCOMES/ACTION ITEMS
4/1.1	MS Teams – introduction & etiquette	Ellen Lukins provided a brief overview of Microsoft Teams functionality and etiquette to follow during the meeting.
4/1.2	Welcome and acknowledgements	The Chair opened the meeting, acknowledging the country and contribution of the Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander people and welcomed Members.  Nadine White (Deputy Chair) was an apology for the meeting.
4/1.3	Resignations and new appointments	<h1>Out of scope</h1>
4/1.4	Minutes & Action Items & Correspondence	
<b>4/2</b>	<b>Business arising</b>	
4/2.1	COVIC-19 discussion	<h1>Out of scope</h1>

4/2.2	Extreme Weather Conditions Advisory Committee – sub-committee update	<h1>Out of scope</h1>
4/2.3	Exposure to Silica Dust & Silicosis in the Workplace – background paper	<p>Members noted the paper and discussed the seriousness of the issue of silica dust exposure in the workplace and silicosis.</p> <p>Members were advised about the potential for silica dust exposure to adversely impact the ACT community as a whole – and not just those in the construction industry – noting its potential impacts on the ACT economy, health resources and workers’ compensation.</p> <p>Council Members endorsed the establishment of a sub-committee to address the issue of silica dust and silicosis and report recommendations to the Minister through the WHS Council.</p> <p>The Secretariat confirmed that Members can self-nominate or nominate people outside of the WHS Council.</p> <p><b><u>ACTION ITEM 1:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chair and Deputy Chair to meet to discuss the purpose of the Sub-committee and develop the Terms of Reference to be endorsed by Members out-of-session.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>ACTION ITEM 2:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Secretariat will call for nominations for the Silica Dust Sub-committee, out-of-session.</li> </ul>
4/3	<b>Office of Work Health &amp; Safety Commissioner</b>	
3/3.1	<p>WHS Commissioner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Update on regulator’s activities</li> <li>- Update on outstanding implementation of the independent 2018 review recommendations</li> </ul>	<h1>Out of scope</h1>

		Out of scope
4/3.2	WorkSafe Presentation – mental health impact of COVID-19	
4/3.3	WHS Commissioner – consultation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Compliance &amp; Enforcement Policy</li> <li>- Strategic Plan</li> <li>- Statement of Operational intent</li> </ul>	
4/4	<b>National Fora Update</b>	
4/4.1	Safe Work Australia update	Out of scope

		Out of scope
<b>4/5</b>	<b>Policy and legislation updates</b>	
4/5.1	Update from the Regulatory Policy Team	Out of scope
<b>4/6</b>	<b>Injury data</b>	
4/6.1	Injury data trend report	Out of scope
4/6.2	Annual Review of the Workers' Compensation Private Scheme	
<b>4/7</b>	<b>Other business</b>	
4/7.1	Construction White Card Training – carried over from Meeting 2	Out of scope

		Out of scope
4/8	Next meeting date: 18 November 2020, 12:30pm – 3:30pm	
4/8.1	Request for proposed agenda items	Out of scope



**From:** [Lukins, Ellen](#)  
**To:** [Jason O'Mara](#); "[Erryn Cresshull](#)"; "[Brooke Muscat](#)"; [Shane Carter](#); "[Matthew Harrison](#)"; [Ashlee Berry](#); [@ywca-canberra.org.au](#); [Anthony Brierley](#); [Agius, Jacqueline](#); [Young, Michael](#)  
**Cc:** [ACTWorkHealthandSafetyCouncil.Secretariat](#)  
**Subject:** RE: WHS Council Updates - Action Required  
**Date:** Tuesday, 15 December 2020 12:20:00 PM  
**Attachments:** [Draft ToR - Workplace Crystalline Silica Exposure Advisory Committee.docx](#)

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OFFICIAL

Good afternoon Members

Please note the draft Terms of Reference for the Workplace Crystalline Silica Exposure Advisory Committee (Silica sub-Committee) have been revised, as attached. These are being circulated to allow for your consideration as requested in the email below.

Happy to discuss the TORS with Members should you have any questions/concerns.

Kind regards,  
Ellen

WHS Council Secretariat

**Ellen Lukins** | Senior Director, Regulatory Policy  
02 6205 3874 | [ellen.lukins@act.gov.au](mailto:ellen.lukins@act.gov.au)  
**Workplace Safety and Industrial Relations**  
**Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate | ACT Government**

WORK HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING -  
WE ALL HAVE A ROLE



\*\*\*\*\*

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---

**From:** ACTWorkHealthandSafetyCouncil.Secretariat  
<[ACTWorkHealthandSafetyCouncil.Secretariat@act.gov.au](mailto:ACTWorkHealthandSafetyCouncil.Secretariat@act.gov.au)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 9 December 2020 5:02 PM  
**To:** [Jason O'Mara](#) [Sch 2.2\(a\)\(ii\)](#) [@cfmeu.org](#)>; '[Erryn Cresshull](#)' [Sch 2.2\(a\)\(ii\)](#) [@unitedworkers.org.au](#)>; '[Brooke Muscat](#)' [Sch 2.2\(a\)\(ii\)](#) [@cpsu.org.au](#)>; [Shane Carter](#) [Sch 2.2\(a\)\(ii\)](#) [@anmfact.org.au](#)>; '[Matthew Harrison](#)' [Sch 2.2\(a\)\(ii\)](#) [@unionsact.org.au](#)>; [Ashlee Berry](#) <[aberry@mba.org.au](mailto:aberry@mba.org.au)>; [Sch 2.2\(a\)\(ii\)](#) [@ywca-canberra.org.au](#); [Anthony Brierley](#) [Sch 2.2\(a\)\(ii\)](#) [@actaha.org.au](#); [Agius, Jacqueline](#) <[Jacqueline.Agius@act.gov.au](mailto:Jacqueline.Agius@act.gov.au)>; [Young, Michael](#) <[Michael.Young@act.gov.au](mailto:Michael.Young@act.gov.au)>  
**Cc:** [Michael Hopkins](#) [Sch 2.2\(a\)\(ii\)](#) [@mba.org.au](#)>; [Emily Shoemark](#) [Sch 2.2\(a\)\(ii\)](#) [@shglawyers.com.au](#)>; [Madeline Northam](#) [Sch 2.2\(a\)\(ii\)](#) [@cpsu.org.au](#)>; [Patrick Judge](#) [Sch 2.2\(a\)\(ii\)](#) [@aeuact.org.au](#)>; [Zach Smith](#) [Sch 2.2\(a\)\(ii\)](#) [@cfmeu.org](#)>; [Lukins, Ellen](#) <[Ellen.Lukins@act.gov.au](mailto:Ellen.Lukins@act.gov.au)>; ACTWorkHealthandSafetyCouncil.Secretariat <[ACTWorkHealthandSafetyCouncil.Secretariat@act.gov.au](mailto:ACTWorkHealthandSafetyCouncil.Secretariat@act.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** WHS Council Updates - Action Required

OFFICIAL

Good afternoon Members

As promised in my last email, please find attached a number of documents and requests relating to the work of the WHS Council.

Please find attached following items in lieu of this weeks' meeting:

1. Establishing the Silica Dust Advisory Committee:
  1. Draft Terms of Reference for the Workplace Crystalline Silica Exposure Advisory Committee (Silica sub-Committee), for endorsement by COB Monday 18 January 2021;
  2. We are seeking nominations for membership of the Silica sub-Committee. If you would like to nominate or self-nominate, please email the WHS Council Secretariat with your nominations by COB Monday 1 February 2021;
  2. Correspondence received in September 2020 from the then Minister for Employment and Workplace Safety requesting the WHS Council explore mandatory training to support reducing the risk associated with exposure to silica dust in the ACT, when developing advice on workplace exposure to silica dust;
  3. Draft 2021 Forward Meeting Planner WHS Council, for noting, the first meeting is proposed to be held on 17 March 2020 to navigate Jan/Feb leave and Assembly sitting weeks; and

4. **Out of scope**

I have included a table summary below to assist in responding.

	DOCUMENT/REQUEST	ACTION	RESPONSE DUE
1.1	Workplace Crystalline Silica Exposure Advisory Committee (Silica sub-Committee) Terms of Reference	For endorsement	Monday 18 January 2021
1.2	Nominations for Silica sub-Committee membership	Email nominations for membership to WHS Council Secretariat	Monday 1 February 2021
2	Letter to WHS Council Chair from Minister Orr re silica dust training measures dated 07/09/2020	For information	N/A
3	WHS Council Forward Meeting Planner 2021	For noting	N/A
4	<b>Out of scope</b>		

This email has also been circulated to Acting Members for information as these items would have been circulated to all (full and acting) Members as part of the planned 7 December agenda and to flag the proposed meeting dates for 2021.

Please let me know if you have any questions or would like further clarification.

I hope everyone has a safe and happy break over the festive season.

Kind regards

Lucy

WHS Council Secretariat

**Lucy Howe | Policy Officer, Regulatory Policy**

Phone: 02 6207 5229 | Email: [lucy.howe@act.gov.au](mailto:lucy.howe@act.gov.au)

**Workplace Safety and Industrial Relations**

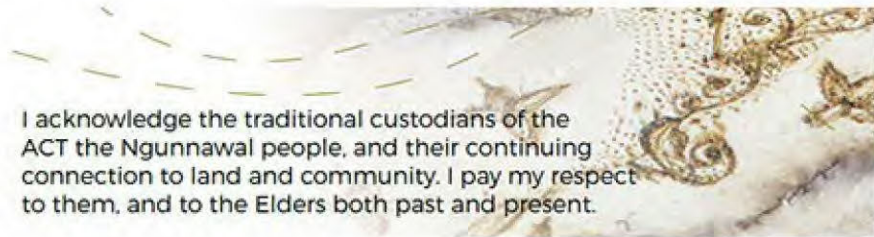
**Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate | ACT Government**

GPO Box 158, Canberra, ACT 2601 | [www.act.gov.au](http://www.act.gov.au)

*Please note I work Monday, Wednesday & Friday.*



I acknowledge the traditional custodians of the ACT the Ngunnawal people, and their continuing connection to land and community. I pay my respect to them, and to the Elders both past and present.



# WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY COUNCIL

## Workplace Crystalline Silica Exposure Advisory Committee

---

### **Terms of Reference [DRAFT]**

#### **1. Purpose**

The Workplace Crystalline Silica Exposure Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee) will operate to investigate the ways in which crystalline silica is affecting workplaces and impacting Work Health and Safety in the ACT.

The Advisory Committee will provide advice to the Minister for Industrial Relations and Workplace Safety (Minister) and the ACT Government on how best to respond to the impacts of Crystalline Silica Exposure on workers in order to improve workplace health and safety, including mandatory training.

#### **2. Term of the Advisory Committee**

The Advisory Committee will operate until 18 June 2021, or for a longer term if agreed by the ACT Work Health and Safety (WHS) Council (Council).

#### **3. Administration**

The Workplace Safety and Industrial Relations Group, CMTEDD will provide Secretariat support to the Advisory Committee.

The Advisory Committee will provide periodic updates on its activities for the information of the Council.

#### **4. Functions**

The Advisory Committee will meet to:

- discuss, analyse and identify the ways in which Crystalline Silica Exposure is impacting workplaces, and the potential, current and future safety risks these issues pose to workers and persons conducting a business or undertaking (PCBUs);
- review the existing WHS obligations (including training), guidance and tools available to assist PCBUs in managing the risks of Crystalline Silica Exposure in the workplace;
- consider whether there are any gaps in the existing WHS responses and how potential, current and future safety risks from Crystalline Silica Exposure can be best responded to ensure the health and safety of workers;
- explore mandatory training for Crystalline Silica Exposure as requested in the letter of 7 September 2020 from the then Minister for Employment and Workplace Safety, including advice on the scope, coverage and requirements of any proposed training;

- provide a report on the recommendations and advice of the Advisory Committee to the Minister, endorsed by the Council, by 9 June 2021 on how best to address risks arising from Crystalline Silica Exposure, with the same level of response as any other WHS risk/hazard impacting workplaces and inform the development of other WHS policies and reforms in response to Crystalline Silica Exposure.

## **5. Membership**

The Advisory Committee Members will be comprised of four representatives, in equal representation, from key employer and employee bodies from in the ACT.

The Public Sector Workers Compensation Commissioner and Work Health and Safety Commissioner will participate in the Advisory Committee as an active observers.

Members are to be nominated by Members of the Council.

Members will not be remunerated for their work in relation to the Advisory Committee and will bear their own costs of participating.

Members will nominate a representative to act as a Member of the Advisory Committee if the Member is unable to attend.

## **Meetings**

Members of the Advisory Committee must elect a chair at the first meeting.

A meeting quorum will be 75% of Members, excluding the WHS Commissioner.

Decisions must be made by the consensus of Members (i.e. members are satisfied with the decision even though it may not be their first choice). If not possible, the Advisory Committee Chair will make a final decision.

The Advisory Committee may at times invite subject matter experts to attend a meeting.

Meeting agendas and minutes will be provided by the Secretariat on behalf of the Chair, this includes:

- preparing agendas and supporting papers; and
- preparing meeting notes and information.

Meetings are to be based on the availability of Members and must be held at least four times during the term of the Advisory Committee at intervals of no longer than six weeks. Meetings will be no longer than 2 hours in duration. Meetings may be held either in person or digitally.

## **6. Formal Mechanism for Reporting Key Matters**

The Council will monitor the activities of the Advisory Committee, however the advice provided by Committee members is not subject to Council oversight unless there is a need for a high-level decision or Members agree that endorsement on a particular matter should be sought.

The Subcommittee will report progress to the Council after each meeting. The Council will be required to approve/ adopt/ or reject any recommendations from the Committee prior to their being sent to the Minister.

## **7. Confidentiality**

To facilitate a frank and open engagement at meetings, Members are expected to respect the confidentiality of all discussions. Information provided to and comments made at meetings should not be disclosed to third parties without the knowledge and consent of all Members. This restriction does not apply to Members disclosing information on a need to know basis within their organisations for the purposes of the Advisory Committee's work.

The Secretariat will provide updates to the Council only after Committee Members agree to the content of the updates.

As an Advisory Committee established by the Council, Advisory Committee Members are subject to the confidentiality requirements outlined in section 271 of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*. The provision makes the unauthorised disclosure of information obtained in certain circumstances an offence.

Where Members are in doubt as to whether information is confidential they should assume that it is and seek the guidance of the Chair before disclosing that information to the public.

**From:** [ACTWorkHealthandSafetyCouncil.Secretariat](#)  
**To:** [Jason O'Mara](#); "[Erryn Cresshull](#)"; "[Brooke Muscat](#)"; [Shane Carter](#); "[Matthew Harrison](#)"; [Ashlee Berry](#); [Sch 2.2\(a\)\(ii\)](#) [@ywca-canberra.org.au](#); [Anthony Brierley](#); [Agius, Jacqueline](#); [Young, Michael](#)  
**Cc:** [ACTWorkHealthandSafetyCouncil.Secretariat](#); [Lukins, Ellen](#)  
**Subject:** WHS Council Update - Workplace Crystalline Silica Exposure Advisory Committee  
**Date:** Wednesday, 3 February 2021 7:34:36 AM  
**Attachments:** [ToR - Workplace Crystalline Silica Exposure Advisory Committee.pdf](#)

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OFFICIAL

Dear Members

Thanks to everyone for your responses to the Terms of Reference for the Workplace Crystalline Silica Exposure Advisory Committee (Silica sub-Committee), which has now been endorsed. Sub-committee membership has been established and will be made up as follows:

Matthew Harrison (UnionsACT)  
Zach Smith (CFMEU)  
Kristie Burt (MBA)  
Faraz Jafri (HIA)

The Secretariat will contact sub-committee Members this week, with a view to holding the first meeting of the Silica sub-Committee in the in the week commencing 1 March 2021.

Kind regards

WHS Council Secretariat

Lucy Howe | Policy Officer, Regulatory Policy  
Phone: 02 6207 5229 | Email: [lucy.howe@act.gov.au](mailto:lucy.howe@act.gov.au)  
Workplace Safety and Industrial Relations  
Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate | ACT Government  
GPO Box 158, Canberra, ACT 2601 | [www.act.gov.au](http://www.act.gov.au)

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# WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY COUNCIL

## Workplace Crystalline Silica Exposure Advisory Committee

---

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**From:** [ACTWorkHealthandSafetyCouncil.Secretariat](#)  
**To:** "Matthew Harrison"; Zach Smith; [\[REDACTED\]@hia.com.au](#); Kristie Burt; Young, Michael; Agius, Jacqueline  
**Cc:** [Lukins, Ellen](#); [Howe, Lucy](#)  
**Subject:** Workplace Crystalline Silica Exposure Advisory Committee - Meeting 1  
**Date:** Wednesday, 24 February 2021 5:09:35 PM  
**Attachments:** [Agenda - Silica Subcommittee Meeting 1 3 March 2021.docx](#)  
[Agenda Item 1.3 - Terms of Reference - Workplace Crystalline Silica Exposure Advisory Committee.pdf](#)  
[Agenda Item 2.1- Exposure to Silica Dust and Silicosis in the Workplace.docx](#)  
[Agenda Item 3.1 - Forward meeting planner.docx](#)

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OFFICIAL

Good afternoon Members

Please find attached the papers for the first meeting of the Workplace Crystalline Silica Exposure Advisory Committee (Silica sub-committee) on Wednesday 3 March 2021.

I will be in contact shortly to confirm the location of the meeting which will be somewhere on London Circuit/Constitution Avenue. Apologies for what will be short notice with the meeting location, we process of moving office buildings.

Looking forward to meeting you all next week.

Kind regards

Lucy  
WHS Council Secretariat

Lucy Howe | Policy Officer, Regulatory Policy  
Phone: 02 6207 5229 | Email: [lucy.howe@act.gov.au](mailto:lucy.howe@act.gov.au)  
Workplace Safety and Industrial Relations  
Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate | ACT Government  
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# WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY COUNCIL

## Workplace Crystalline Silica Exposure Advisory Committee

Meeting 1: 3 March 2021, 10:30am – 12:30pm

Venue: TBC

### Agenda

Item	Time	Item	Presenter	Type	Action
1/1.1	10.30am	Welcome, acknowledgement	Secretariat	Verbal	Nil
1/1.2	10.05am	Terms of Reference	Secretariat	Verbal	Nil
1/1.3	10.15am	Election of Chair	Secretariat	Verbal	For decision
<b>1/2</b>	<b>Business arising</b>				
1/2.1	10.25am	Exposure to Silica Dust & Silicosis in the Workplace – presented at WHS Council meeting 4 (18 August 2020)	Members	Paper	For discussion
1/2.2	11:00am	Update on national activities	Secretariat	Verbal	For discussion
<b>1/3</b>	<b>Other business</b>				
1/3.1	12.15pm	Forward Meeting Planner 2021	Secretariat	Paper	For decision
1/3.2	12:20pm	Other business raised by Members	Members	Verbal	For noting
<b>1/4</b>	<b>Next meeting date: Wednesday, 14 April 2021, 12:30 pm – 3:30 pm</b>				
4/4.1	12:25pm	Request for proposed agenda items for the next meeting	All Members	N/A	For noting

# WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY COUNCIL

## Workplace Crystalline Silica Exposure Advisory Committee

**For DISCUSSION**

### Agenda Item 2.1

#### Exposure to Silica Dust & Silicosis in the Workplace

Prepared by WHS Council Secretariat

#### **Recommendation:**

It is recommended that Members:

- **discuss** silica dust exposure in the workplace, noting the information provided below to WHS Council Members;
- **endorse** the sub-committee's approach to meeting the Terms of Reference; and
- **note** the current national and state/territory responses to the emergence of accelerated silicosis in Australia at [Attachment A](#).

#### **Background**

Crystalline silica is a natural mineral found in construction materials such as concrete, bricks, tiles, mortar and engineered stones. Dust containing respirable crystalline silica particles is commonly called silica dust. Activities such as cutting, grinding, sanding, drilling, loading or demolishing products that contain silica can generate respirable particles of crystalline silica dust that may not be visible, but are small enough to breathe into the lungs. This dust may be harmful when inhaled into the lungs over a long period of time at low to moderate levels, or short periods at high levels. Inhalation of silica dust can cause silicosis, a scarring of the lungs. Silicosis is a serious and incurable disease and the damage caused by silicosis can require a lung transplant or lead to death. Inhalation of silica dust can also cause other serious diseases such as lung cancer, kidney disease and autoimmune disease – such as scleroderma.

Silicosis has historically been associated with a variety of industries including mining, stone masonry and glass manufacture. Examples of activities that can generate respirable silica dust particles include:

- fabrication and installation of composite (artificial) stone benchtops;
- excavation, earth moving and drilling plant operations;
- paving and surfacing;
- brick, concrete or stone cutting (especially if using dry methods);
- abrasive blasting;
- foundry casting; and
- angle grinding, jack hammering and chiselling of concrete or masonry.

Silicosis has always been present in a more latent form in relation to workers working with natural stone products that contain up to 40% silica content.

However, an increasing trend of accelerated silicosis has been observed in several Australian states since 2018 and is concentrated in workers and workplaces involved in the manufacture, fabrication and installation of engineered stone products. In contrast to naturally occurring products, the silica content of engineered stone is 93% or higher.

## Issues

The ACT's work health and safety legislation adopts the nationally agreed model work health and safety laws in the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (WHS Act). These work health and safety laws include a range of obligations on persons conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) when working with crystalline silica found in the WHS Act and associated *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011* (WHS Regulation).

As with all risks and hazards in the workplace, PCBUs have a general WHS duty to, as far as reasonably practicable, to ensure the health and safety of their workers in the workplace:

**section 19 WHS Act.** Silica dust is a known health and safety risk and exposure should be either eliminated or minimised through the hierarchy of WHS controls implemented at a workplace.

There are also specific WHS obligations on PCBUs of workplaces where there is a risk of exposure to silica dust.

## Workplace Exposure Standards set limits for airborne contaminants in the workplace

Mandatory obligations apply in relation to the limits for exposure to hazardous chemicals in the workplace. These are known as the Workplace Exposure Standards (WES) and are declared in the ACT via section 48A of the WHS Regulation.

The ACT adopts the WES limits that are set out in the *Workplace exposure standards for Airborne Contaminants* document published and maintained by Safe Work Australia (SWA). Recently, the ACT adopted the WES published by SWA on 16 December 2020 via the *Work Health and Safety (Workplace Exposure Standards) Declaration 2020 (No 1)*.

From 1 July 2020, the WES limit for silica dust levels in the workplace is 0.05mg/m<sup>3</sup> over an eight-hour time weighted average (TWA). PCBUs must ensure that workers are not exposed to silica dust in airborne concentrations that exceed 0.05mg/m<sup>3</sup>: **section 49 WHS Regulation.**

In adopting the 0.05mg/m<sup>3</sup>, the ACT Government has further encouraged businesses to go lower than the mandated WES<sup>1</sup>. This is based on scientific evidence and information that the recommended health- based exposure standard is actually closer to 0.02mg/m<sup>3</sup>. The Minister for Employment and Workplace Safety has indicated support for decreasing the silica dust WES as better technology becomes available that is more able to reliably measure the lower 0.02mg/m<sup>3</sup> level.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/open\\_government/inform/act\\_government\\_media\\_releases/suzanne-orr-mla-media-releases/2020/better-protections-for-act-engineered-stone-workers-from-silica-dust](https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/open_government/inform/act_government_media_releases/suzanne-orr-mla-media-releases/2020/better-protections-for-act-engineered-stone-workers-from-silica-dust)

## Other safety measures when working with silica containing products

Health monitoring:

PCBUs must provide health monitoring for workers if they carry out ongoing work using, handling generating or storing crystalline silica and there is a significant risk to the worker's health because of exposure: **section 368 WHS Regulation**. Health monitoring is used to identify changes in workers health and must be carried out by a registered medical practitioner with experience in health monitoring: **section 371 WHS Regulation**.

Crystalline silica (or silica dust) is listed in schedule 14, table 14.1, item 7 of the WHS Regulation and engineered stone products are considered to pose a significant risk to the health of workers that work with them. Consequently, health monitoring must be carried out for workers using, handling, generating or storing these silica containing products: **section 368 (a) WHS Regulation**.

The minimum type of health monitoring requirements for silica dust include:

- collection of demographic, medical and occupational history;
- records of personal exposure;
- standardised respiratory questionnaire;
- standardised respiratory function tests;
- chest x-ray and full PA view (baseline and high-risk workers only).

PCBUs must provide information about the health monitoring requirements to its workers or persons likely to be engaged by the PCBU before commencing work using, handling, generating or storing silica containing products: **section 369 WHS Regulation**. A health monitoring report must be provided to the employer (s377), worker (s375) and regulator (s376). The report must outline the test results and whether the worker can continue working in this area.

Air monitoring:

Air monitoring must be conducted if there is a potential risk to health or a possibility that the exposure limits could be exceeded or the PCBU is not certain, on reasonable grounds, whether or not the WES limits have been exceeded: **section 50 WHS Regulation**. Air monitoring results must be readily available to workers and PCBUs must retain records of results for 30 years.

Labelling and safety data sheets:

Manufacturers and importers of products containing silica need to determine if workers can be exposed to the respirable fraction of airborne dust when working with these products. Products must be labelled, and safety data sheets provided. PCBUs must ensure that a copy of the safety data sheet is obtained and readily accessible to workers.

## Guidelines for working with silica or silica containing products

There is no nationally agreed model code of practice for working with silica or silica containing products. WorkSafe ACT issued guidance for working with silica dust in 2018.

National silica dust guidance

Safe Work Australia has published in September 2019 a national WHS guide for working with silica and silica containing products: <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/working-silica-and->

[silica-containing-products-pdf-doc](#). The guide explains what PCBUs must do to keep their workers safe from the risks of silica dust.

## National health monitoring guide

Safe Work Australia has published a national WHS health monitoring guide for working with silica and silica containing products: <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/book/health-monitoring-persons-conducting-business-or-undertaking-guide>. The guide is for use by registered medical practitioners and provides practical guidance on the WHS requirements for health monitoring. Health monitoring guides are also published by Safe Work Australia for PCBUs and workers.

## Silica dust training in the ACT

There is no mandatory training for silica dust in the ACT. However, PCBUs must as part of their primary duty of care provide “*information, training, instruction or supervision that is necessary to protect all persons from risks to their health and safety arising from work carried out as part of the conduct of the business or undertaking*”.

While training is not mandatory, the following courses are available in the ACT in relation to working with silica dust:

- Creative Safety Initiatives offers the 10830NAT *course in crystalline silica exposure prevention* for participants to be able to recognise the workplace health and safety risks and hazards inherent in working with crystalline silica containing products and determine and plan for the implementation of safe systems of work aimed at reducing exposure to within mandatory exposure limits: <http://csisafety.com.au/courses-overview/10830nat-course-in-crystalline-silica-exposure-prevention/>
- the Master Builders ACT offers a *course in silica awareness* designed to provide an awareness and overview of silica dust encountered during construction activities: <https://www.mba.org.au/training/courses/course/course-in-silica-dust-awareness/>.

## Union responses to silica dust exposure in the ACT

The CFMEU has developed a contractual clause on silica dust with the intention for it to be used by parties entering into an Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA) with a PCBU. The draft clause proposes to hold the PCBU to a lower standard of exposure for silica dust as an airborne contaminant of 0.025mg/m<sup>3</sup> over an 8-hour TWA and includes mandatory training requirements.

## Industry responses to silica dust exposure in the ACT

The construction industry has also developed initiatives and responses to the emergence of silicosis in the workplace.

Some of these initiatives include facilitating individual tailored workshops for groups (such as large HIA members, regional HIA committees and women’s groups); both the Housing Industry Association, ACT (HIA) and the Master Builders ACT (MBA) have published guidance material on their websites; run events for construction industry members and their families; and the HIA conducted a national seminar series on silica dust exposure now available as five webinars.

## Silicosis and workers compensation

The *Workers Compensation Act 2951* (WC Act) provides supports timely and durable return to work for injured workers.

Generally, if a worker contracts a disease and the employment of the worker was a substantial contributing factor a workers compensation claim may be made under the WC Act: **section 27 WC Act.**

However, there are a number of recognised employment-related diseases that are deemed (unless proved to the contrary) to have been substantially contributed to by the workers employment: **section 28 WC Act.**

Relevantly, both silicosis and lung diseases for employment involving exposure to silica [dust] are deemed to be employment-related for the purposes of workers' compensation claims.

Workers' compensation for the private sector in the ACT is privately underwritten by approved workers' compensation insurers. As a result, premiums are competitively priced by insurers and responsive to factors such as the employer's risk profile and claims history.

Should claims for silicosis in the ACT take on the same trajectory as seen in other jurisdictions, workers' compensation premiums could impact the viability of the engineered stone industry.

### **Next Steps**

This paper is provided for the discussion of Members of the WHS Council and Workplace Crystalline Silica Exposure Advisory Committee (Silica sub-Committee). Next steps will be informed by the discussions and decisions reached by Members.

### **Attachments**

Attachment A – jurisdictional responses to silica dust exposure and silicosis.

## Jurisdictional responses to crystalline silica and silicosis in the workplace

As of 1 July 2020, all states and Territories have adopted and implemented the reduced WES of 0.05mg/m<sup>3</sup> over an eight-hour time weighted average (TWA). Victoria adopted the reduced WES on 17 December 2019.

The below table sets out recent activities and jurisdictional responses to the emergence of accelerated silicosis in the workplace.

Jurisdiction	Activities
ACT	<p><b>Legislation:</b> <i>Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 (ACT)</i></p> <p><b>Recent activities</b> Adopted WES: 0.05mg/m<sup>3</sup> over an 8-hour time weighted average (TWA) as of 1 July 2020.</p> <p><b>Silica Dust Project:</b> The ACT developed the Silica Dust Project in March 2019 to tackle awareness and address concerns of an emerging trend of silicosis amongst the manufacturing and construction industries. The Project focused on the safety of workers in the stone benchtop manufacturing and stone cutting businesses. The Project scope can be accessed at <a href="https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/app/answers/detail/a_id/4646/~silica-dust#!tabs-2a">https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/app/answers/detail/a_id/4646/~silica-dust#!tabs-2a</a>.</p> <p><b>Regulator website:</b> <a href="https://www.worksafe.act.gov.au/about-worksafe-act">https://www.worksafe.act.gov.au/about-worksafe-act</a></p>
NSW	<p><b>Legislation:</b> <i>Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017 (NSW)</i> <i>Work Health and Safety Regulation Amendment (Silica) Regulation 2020</i></p> <p><b>Recent activities</b> Adopted WES 0.05mg/m<sup>3</sup> over an 8-hour time weighted average (TWA) as of 1 July 2020. The NSW Government supports Safe Work Australia undertaking further research on whether a reduction to 0.02 mg/m<sup>3</sup> is achievable.</p> <p><b>Ban on uncontrolled dry cutting - Work Health and Safety Regulation Amendment (Silica) Regulation 2020</b> An amendment was made to the <i>Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017 (WHS Regulation)</i> effective 1 July 2020, to ban the uncontrolled dry cutting of manufactured stone containing crystalline silica. The amendment makes it an offence for a PCBU to direct or allow a worker to cut manufactured stone containing crystalline silica without controls in place to reduce workers' exposure to the dust generated by the cutting, and allows Work Safe NSW to issue on-the-spot fines for non-compliance.</p> <p><b>Silicosis Health Register</b> NSW intends on establishing a Silicosis Health Register. Plans to make silicosis a notifiable disease and creating a Silicosis Health Register, is expanded in this article: <a href="#">NSW unveils strategy to stamp out silicosis</a>.</p> <p><b>Work Safe NSW Initiatives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Manufactured Stone – Silica Safety Rebate</b> - SafeWork NSW introduced silica stone rebate of up to \$1000 from October 2019-June 2020 to assist PCBUs in implementing measures to reduce exposure to silica dust in the workplace.</li> <li>• <b>Manufactured Stone Industry Taskforce</b> - SafeWork NSW convened a Taskforce from July 2017 - June 2019, comprising of industry, peak bodies, medical professionals, unions and other government agencies including the Lung Foundation, Australian Industry Group and Unions NSW. The role of the Taskforce was to review safety standards and consider safety improvements to better protect workers from crystalline silica dust exposure.</li> <li>• <b>Hazardous Chemical and Materials Exposures Baseline and Reduction Strategy 2017-2022</b> launched in October 2017.</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Silica Symposium</b> - SafeWork NSW held a Silica Symposium on 7 May 2019, which coincided with the multi-channel awareness campaign (radio, digital advertising, social media).</li> <li>• <b>Research</b> - SafeWork NSW's Centre for WHS has conducted research on the viability of other means to assess worker exposure i.e. in between air monitoring or when air monitoring costs are prohibitive (small businesses) e.g. nasal swabs, urine tests, other monitors etc: <a href="http://www.centreforwhs.nsw.gov.au/research-to-practice/Projects/silica-detection">http://www.centreforwhs.nsw.gov.au/research-to-practice/Projects/silica-detection</a></li> <li>• <b>The Silica Roadshow</b> – is touring regional NSW to provide training and to people working with silica in regional areas. This is a free event to promulgate information on latest in silica best practice to keep assist workplaces in maintaining a safe workplace.</li> </ul> <p><b>Minister for Better Regulation NSW</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On 26 June 2020, the NSW Government introduced amendments to the Public Health Regulation 2012 through the <i>Public Health Amendment (Scheduled Medical Conditions—Silicosis) Regulation 2020</i> made under the <i>Public Health Act 2010</i>, which requires medical practitioners to notify NSW Health of any diagnosed a case of silicosis. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ medical practitioners will need to notify NSW Health when they diagnose a case of silicosis</li> <li>○ a penalty will apply for failure by a PCBU to notify SafeWork NSW of an adverse health monitoring report.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Further information about these reforms can be found at <a href="https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/notify-safework/important-changes-to-silicosis-reporting">https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/notify-safework/important-changes-to-silicosis-reporting</a>.</p> <p><b>NSW Resource Regulator Initiatives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The NSW Resource Regulator published a report to share safety learnings about a reported case of coal worker pneumoconiosis (CWP). <a href="#">Investigation Report Coal Worker Pneumoconiosis – Worker Y</a> (May 2019) and <a href="#">investigation information report Worker A</a> (January 2020).</li> <li>• The NSW Resources Regulator is urging current and former coal mine workers to maintain regular health screening after releasing the findings of its investigation into a former coal mine worker diagnosed with a mixed dust disease in 2017.</li> <li>• The NSW Resources Regulator amended the <i>Work Health and Safety (Mines and Petroleum Sites) Regulation 2014</i> to require notification of exceedances of the silica exposure standard to the regulator.</li> </ul> <p><b>Regulator website:</b> <a href="https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/hazards-a-z/hazardous-chemical/priority-chemicals/crystalline-silica">https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/hazards-a-z/hazardous-chemical/priority-chemicals/crystalline-silica</a></p>
Qld	<p><b>Legislation:</b> <i>Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011</i> (Qld)</p> <p><b><u>Recent activities</u></b>  <b>Adopted WES</b>  As of 1 July 2020 the WES has been reduced to 0.05mg/m<sup>3</sup> over an 8-hour time weighted average (TWA).</p> <p><b>Code of Practice</b>  The Queensland Government published a 2019 <a href="#">Code of Practice: managing respirable crystalline silica dust exposure in the stone benchtop industry</a> on 18 September 2019. The Code took effect on 31 October 2019.</p> <p><b>Ban on uncontrolled dry cutting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In September 2018, Queensland banned uncontrolled dry cutting or processing of engineered or natural stone without the use of engineered controls.</li> <li>• Office of Industrial Relations Queensland will consider regulatory changes to respond to the emergence of silicosis, including further reinforcing the existing prohibition on dry cutting and specific requirements for health monitoring, training, limiting use of particular equipment and written exposure control plans.</li> </ul> <p><b>Notifiable lung disease register</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Queensland introduced legislative amendments to establish a Notifiable Dust Lung Disease register, which commenced on 1 July 2019. This register requires medical practitioners to notify Queensland Health about cases of dust lung diseases, including silicosis, and enable health authorities to better monitor cases of silicosis in industry.</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further information can be obtained at <a href="https://www.health.qld.gov.au/public-health/industry-environment/dust-lung-disease-register/about-the-register">https://www.health.qld.gov.au/public-health/industry-environment/dust-lung-disease-register/about-the-register</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Regulator website:</b> <a href="https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/">https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/</a></p>
Vic	<p><b>Legislation:</b>  <i>Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (Vic)</i>  <i>Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)</i></p> <p><b><u>Recent activities</u></b>  <b>Adopted WES</b>  As of 17 December 2019 the WES has been reduced to 0.05mg/m<sup>3</sup> over an 8-hour time weighted average (TWA).</p> <p>WorkSafe Victoria recommends PCBUs take a precautionary approach and reduce exposure levels to below 0.02mg/m<sup>3</sup> over an 8-hour TWA, where possible, and Victorian Workplace Minister Jill Hennessy has indicated that Victoria would lobby for the national standard to be dropped to 0.02mg/m<sup>3</sup>.</p> <p><b>Compliance Code</b>  In February 2020, Work Safe Victoria released a <a href="#">Compliance Code: Managing exposure to crystalline Silica - Engineered stone</a> which came into effect on 11 February 2020. The compliance code provides practical guidance for employers and employees working with engineered stone on how to comply with their duties and obligations under Victorian Occupational Health and Safety legislation. The compliance code is also relevant to manufacturers, suppliers and importers of engineered stone.</p> <p><b>Ban on uncontrolled dry cutting</b>  Victoria amended the <i>Occupational Health and Safety Amendment (Crystalline Silica) Regulations 2019</i>, effective 20 August 2020. The amendment prescribes the minimum level of controls that must be used when cutting, grinding, or undertaking abrasive polishing of engineered stone with power tools. The amended regulations define engineered stone as manufactured composite stone that contains resins and has crystalline silica content of at least 80 per cent.</p> <p><b>Licensing scheme</b>  The Victorian Government has announced it intends to introduce a licensing scheme for working with engineered stone: <a href="https://www.premier.vic.gov.au/licensing-scheme-boost-engineered-stone-safety">https://www.premier.vic.gov.au/licensing-scheme-boost-engineered-stone-safety</a>, under the scheme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the supply of engineered stone will be restricted to businesses or individuals who hold a valid license;</li> <li>existing users of engineered stone would need to apply for a license within 12 months, allowing time for review of their work practices and implementation of any necessary changes;</li> <li>any employer who plans to work with engineered stone will be required to obtain a license before doing so.</li> </ul> <p>Consultation is underway to design the scheme. The scheme will ensure licensees have appropriate safety measures in place to protect workers from exposure to silica dust - including compliance with the prohibition on uncontrolled dry cutting of engineered stone and Victoria's <a href="#">Compliance Code: Managing exposure to crystalline Silica - Engineered stone</a>.</p> <p><b>Regulator website:</b> <a href="https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/crystalline-silica">https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/crystalline-silica</a></p>
SA	<p><b><u>Legislation</u></b>  <i>Work Health and Safety Regulation 2012 (SA)</i></p> <p><b><u>Recent activities</u></b>  <b>Adopted WES</b>  As of 1 July 2020 the Workplace Exposure Standard (WES) has been reduced to 0.05mg/m<sup>3</sup> over an eight-hour time-weighted average (TWA).</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South Australia’s <a href="#">MAQOHSC</a> has a Silicosis Scheme that is currently conducting measurement activities and research on dust mitigation strategies in the mining and quarrying sector. MAQOHSC also has a resources portal under development.</li> <li>• South Australia held a health monitoring forum and chest clinic for the stone industry with respiratory physicians.</li> <li>• SafeWork SA has recently published the <a href="#">Respirable Crystalline Silica Compliance Program Audit Report 2019</a> as part of a proactive compliance campaign for exposure risks and controls.</li> </ul> <p><b>Regulator website:</b> <a href="https://www.safework.sa.gov.au/">https://www.safework.sa.gov.au/</a></p>
NT	<p><b>Legislation</b>  <i>Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011 (NT)</i>  <i>Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Regulations 2011 (NT)</i></p> <p><b>Recent activities</b>  <b>Adopted WES</b>  As of 1 July 2020 the Workplace Exposure Standard (WES) has been reduced to 0.05mg/m3 over an eight-hour time-weighted average (TWA).</p> <p><b>Compliance and Enforcement Campaign</b>  Following a recent increase in the number of silicosis diagnoses across Australia, NT WorkSafe will be <a href="#">undertaking a Territory-wide compliance and enforcement campaign</a> (11 September 2019).</p> <p><b>Regulator website:</b> <a href="https://worksafe.nt.gov.au/">https://worksafe.nt.gov.au/</a></p>
WA	<p><b>Legislation</b>  <i>Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 1996 (WA)</i></p> <p><b>Recent activities</b>  <b>Adopted WES</b>  As at 6 August 2020, the reduced WES of 0.05mg/m3 over an eight-hour TWA has not be implemented.</p> <p>Amendments to the OHS Regulations were discussed at the <a href="#">March 2020 Commission for Occupational Safety and Health meeting</a> – revising the Workplace Exposure Standard for silica, and the amendments were endorsed to allow the revised workplace exposure standards for silica to be implemented, as a matter of urgency.</p> <p><b>Campaign</b>  WorkSafe Directorate (WorkSafe) has been conducting a <a href="#">proactive campaign</a> inspecting the stone fabrication industry since 1 July 2018 which includes a focus on health surveillance for stone fabricators.</p> <p><b>Regulator website:</b> <a href="https://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/worksafe">https://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/worksafe</a></p>
Tas	<p><b>Legislation</b>  <i>Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012 (Tas)</i></p> <p><b>Recent activities</b>  <b>Adopted WES</b>  As at 6 August 2020, Tasmania is yet to implement the updated WES of 0.05mg/m3 over an eight-hour time-weighted average (TWA).</p> <p><b>Ban on dry cutting</b>  Tasmania banned uncontrolled dry cutting, grinding and polishing of engineered stone benchtops in December 2019. Engineered controls must be used when cutting, grinding or polishing – such as water suppression, local exhaust ventilation (LEV).</p> <p><b>Silica dust awareness campaign</b>  WorkSafe Tasmania launched a silica dust awareness campaign on 1 November 2019 with the taglines ‘Don’t breathe dust’ and ‘Be silica safe’. The campaign was aimed at tradespeople and others who may be exposed to silica dust through their work. The campaign ran for three months over television, radio and print commercials, bus advertised, social media posts, and posts and flyers distributed to workplaces.</p>

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	<p><b>Compliance</b></p> <p>As at 9 Jan 2019, a compliance program was under development that inspects compliance with obligations for health monitoring to be conducted. Information gathered from the inspections will inform future strategies. As at 1 April 2019, this program is being undertaken.</p> <p>WorkSafe Tasmania has an ongoing field program targeting legislative compliance in workplaces focussed on the quarrying sector and engineered stone sector in particular, as well as in coal mining. Risk mitigation strategies will be customised to suit the differing risk profiles of individual work sites.</p> <p><b>Regulator website:</b> <a href="https://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/">https://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/</a></p>
Commonwealth	<p><b>Legislation</b></p> <p><i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth)</i></p> <p><b>Recent activities</b></p> <p><b>Adopted WES</b></p> <p>On 30 June, 2020 the Commonwealth announcement amendments to the <i>Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011 (Cth)</i> to lower the enforceable exposure standard for crystalline silica to 0.05 mg/m<sup>3</sup>, effective 1 July 2020.</p> <p><b>National Dust Disease Taskforce</b></p> <p>In April 2019 the Federal Government announced the establishment of a National Dust Disease Taskforce to develop a national approach for the prevention, early detection, control and management of dust diseases in Australia, committing \$5 million to fund the Taskforce.</p> <p>The Taskforce was established on 26 July 2019, with the following members, Chaired by Professor Brendan Murphy, Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer.</p> <p>The Taskforce published <a href="#">Interim Advice</a> to the Health Minister in December 2019 which identifies five early recommendations and findings on the prevention, early identification, control and management of occupation dust diseases in Australia.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop and implement a prevention strategy, with an initial immediate targeted education and communication campaign.</li> <li>2. Develop a national approach to understand the extent of occupational dust diseases in Australia through identification and capture of data, information collection and sharing</li> <li>3. Apply a strategic approach to research to better understand accelerated silicosis with the ultimate aim of improving prevention and treatment options. This includes establishing a research collaboration platform across Australia to ensure resources are targeted, activities address identified research gaps and efforts are not duplicated.</li> <li>4. Develop national guidance on an approach to actively search for people at risk from respirable crystalline silica dust exposure at the workplace.</li> <li>5. Develop a strategic national approach to improve Australia’s ability to detect and rapidly respond to any future emerging occupational diseases of significance.</li> </ol> <p>Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the delivery of the final report of the Taskforce has been pushed back 6 months to 30 June 2021.</p> <p>The terms of reference for the Taskforce include reviewing the action across Australia to address occupational dust disease, considering the establishment of a National Dust Diseases Register and reviewing the policy and regulatory arrangements to protect those at risk from occupational dust disease.</p> <p><b>Safe Work Australia</b></p> <p>Safe Work Australia has produced a range of guidance material on silica dust for PCBUs and workers working with silica and silica containing products. On 30 June 2020 SWA published translated versions of the national guide <a href="#">Working with silica and silica containing products</a> in Arabic, Chinese (traditional and simplified), Italian, Vietnamese and Greek.</p> <p>National Silicosis Strategy - the <a href="#">2019-2020 Operational Plan</a> refers to progressing the agreed strategy to address occupational lung disease, including silicosis. SWA is progressing the development of a national education and awareness campaign and will target micro, small and medium sized enterprises, in at-risk industries of construction and agriculture.</p>

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As part of SWA's review of workplace exposure standards (WES) for airborne contaminants, SWA has engaged Glossop Consulting to provide a report on limitations and solutions to measuring respirable crystalline silica dust at 0.02 mg/m<sup>3</sup> and SLR Consulting Australia to provide a report on a short-term exposure limit for respirable crystalline silica.

SWA is continuing to implement the occupational lung diseases workplace under the three key initiatives of:

- Education and awareness
- Research; and
- Data investigation, collection and analysis.

### Research

*Report: Occupational lung diseases in Australia 2006-2019*

On 7 August 2020 SWA published the above report, which was prepared by Monash University. The report outlines the current landscape of occupational lung diseases in Australia and presents changes in their extent and incidence since the 2006 report [Occupational Respiratory Disease in Australia](#).

# WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY COUNCIL

## Workplace Crystalline Silica Exposure Advisory Committee

### Agenda Item 3.1

For DECISION

#### Forward meeting planner

Prepared by WHS Council Secretariat

#### Recommendation:

It is recommended that Members:

- **discuss** the proposed dates in the forward planner; and
- **agree** to the proposed dates or provide alternative dates.

MEETING	DATE	TIME	LOCATION	MILESTONE
1	Wednesday, 3 March 2021	10:30am- 12:30pm	Face-to-face (TBC)	
2	Wednesday, 14 April 2021	1:00pm-3:00pm	Face-to-face (TBC)	
3	Wednesday, 19 May 2021	1:00pm-3:00pm	Face-to-face (TBC)	
4	Wednesday, 9 June 2021	1:00pm-3:00pm	Face-to-face (TBC)	Final Report