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BMD

AUSTRALIAN BLUE ASBESTOS PTY. LIMITED

88 ST. GEORGE'S TERRACE
PERTH
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

PRIVATE - P.211.
16th February, 1962.

The Managing Director,
Australian Blue Asbestos Pty. Ltd.,
SYDNEY.

Dear Sir,

WORKERS' COMPENSATION PREMIUMS: ASBESTOSIS: We attach a copy of a letter received from the State Government Insurance Office dealing with their proposal to isolate the asbestos industry from other mining enterprises, for the purpose of imposing an increased premium rate.

As we see it, prior to the recent claims being lodged with the S.G.I.O. for asbestosis or some kindred disease, we, as a company had to meet a premium rate based on the accident rate of Kalgoorlie, which at the time was particularly high. You may recall that at that time lengthy consideration was given as to whether this company should carry its own insurance policy.

We would appreciate your comments.

Yours faithfully,

General Superintendent.

PLAINTIFF'S EXHIBIT WV-04214

PLAINTIFF'S EXHIBIT 104690

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STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE OFFICE
PERTH.

[illegible]

C O P Y

The Manager,
Australian Blue Asbestos Ltd.,
WITTENOOM GORGE, W.A.

Dear Sir,

ASBESTOSIS

1. I think you are aware that the premium rates under the Workers' Compensation Act are fixed by the Premium Rates Committee usually during December in each year. Item 45%, which refers to mining industrial disease only (whether pneumoconiosis in all its forms including silicosis and asbestosis) has a premium rate of 20/-% which figure has operated unchanged since 1. 1. 55.

2. During recent years I have corresponded with you concerning the increase in the incidence of industrial disease at your Mine. Concern has also been expressed by the Public Health Department and the Mines Department at the rapidity at which the disease progressed, and I am sure that these representations have resulted in your Company doing its utmost to reduce its incidence.

3. As I am the sole insurer for all mining risks in W.A. I watch the statistics available to me in order that all employers may receive fair premium assessment insofar as that assessment is capable of being adjusted by me. Silicosis has always been rated at a flat figure throughout the State irrespective of the locality of the Mine, the depth of the working, or any other factor. This provides a satisfactory basis for all employers and there does not seem to be any need to depart from a flat rate in the future except in respect of mining of asbestos. It would seem at present that your claims cost is above average for gold mining and that future figures may prove the position to be even worse. I am watching the position closely and if the statistics justify it, as I think they will, I intend to approach the Premium Rates Committee for an increase in the rate of 20/-% as asbestos mining is concerned. If the experience of asbestos mining is considerably much worse than that of gold mining industry to have to bear part of the [illegible] abnormal cost, particularly as gold has to be sold at a fixed price, it appears that the correct action would be for asbestos mining industrial disease to be rated separately at an appropriate figure thus providing a fair rate for both the gold mining and the asbestos mining industries.

4. This information is forwarded to you now in order that you may know my intentions and to enable you to make any representations to me or elsewhere if you are so inclined. My data is incomplete and any action will be taken only if all factors have been considered. If you wish I will provide you with particulars of any data upon which my case will be based.

5. I am writing to you now to ensure that no unfair advantage is taken by me if an application is made as seems now to be probable. I emphasise I have insufficient data at present and nothing will be done until I possess what I consider to be adequate evidence, and no approach will be made unless that evidence appears to me to justify my action. It will then rest with the Premium Rates Committee to determine the issue. No doubt you are aware that there is a representative of the employers, Mr. W.P. Mark, on that Committee. I have discussed this matter with the General Secretary of the Chamber of Mines, Kalgoorlie, of which Chamber you are a Member.

Yours faithfully,